

REDUCE FOOD WASTE

In Our Lunchrooms

The lunchtime recycling and composting sorting at all the District 97 schools has had a huge impact in reducing landfill waste. For example, since last year when the program restarted at Lincoln Elementary, the total waste going to landfill was cut by over 80%, and instead recycled or composted. Many of the other schools have been reducing waste significantly for many years.

This is amazing, but we can do more. Help us cut even more lunchroom food waste.

Why it matters!

- Food waste has a huge impact on the climate crisis. All the energy it took to grow, harvest and transport the food and all the greenhouse gases produced are wasted if it is not eaten. Composting is better than landfill, but it should be saved for inedible food like apple cores and banana peels, not whole sandwiches, cheese sticks and cookies.
- There are still hungry people in the world, even in our own communities. It is not a fair use of resources to throw away food when others don't have enough to eat.
- Wasting food wastes all the money, time and effort that parents took to buy and prepare it.

How you can help!

- **Talk to your kids about food waste.** Let them know it's important to eat what we take, or return it home unopened. This allows you to see what they are eating and what isn't eaten.
- **No food should be opened just to be composted!** Many items are tossed in the trash uneaten each lunch period. They can eat it at home later or give it to a family member.
- **Discuss food choices with kids.** Give them a say in what's for lunch. Be open when they are tired of a certain kind of food or want the same thing every day, as long as it's reasonably healthy.
- **Buy in bulk and use reusable containers.** This allows for better portion control and less plastic waste. One jar of applesauce spooned into a small container is better than the waste of applesauce in squeezable single-serving packages.