

# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Cafeteria Staff/ Lunchroom Support

- Review sorting signage to be sure you are an expert on what is recyclable, compostable and garbage. If you have any questions, contact [recycle@federalwaywa.gov](mailto:recycle@federalwaywa.gov)
- Make sure recycling, composting and garbage containers have signs on them with photos.
- If you display slides on a screen during lunch, add one about which items are recyclable and compostable. Use the actual container signs if possible.
- Help students know where items go and how to sort their own items after lunch. Some Cafeteria staff recruit students daily to stand by containers to help students sort. Student helpers point to where items go- they do not touch materials. They provide friendly assistance. It is key that student helpers know which items are recyclable or compostable.
- Make announcements while students eat, to help them know where items go. Consider making announcements at the beginning of the year- often- and again in January. Ideally every day you will remind students where items go. Using actual items to hold up- can be helpful. See example announcements from the City of Federal Way



# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Kitchen Staff

- Review sorting signage to be sure you are an expert on what is recyclable, compostable and garbage. If you have any questions, contact [recycle@federalwaywa.gov](mailto:recycle@federalwaywa.gov)
- When substitute staff assist, be sure to help them know what containers are for and which items are acceptable for compost and recycling.
- Be sure you have blue collection containers for recycling with a sign on it and a green compost collection container with a sign on it.
- Break down boxes when finished with them. Work out how items are collected with custodial.
- Remember, no plastic gloves or plastic bags in the compost containers. No shiny paper (plastic lined) in the compost container.
- Custodial may line your compost container with a plastic bag. Know they will be emptying materials loose into the outside cart.

# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Custodial - Setup

Review sorting signage to be sure you are an expert on what is recyclable, compostable and garbage. If you have any questions, contact [recycle@federalwaywa.gov](mailto:recycle@federalwaywa.gov)

#### Set up:

- Place blue recycling, green composting, and grey garbage containers out before lunch. Group composting and garbage beside each other since most items will be these two categories. Middle and high schools will have more recyclables- so you may want to add a blue recycling to your grouping. Since elementary schools will not have many recyclables in the cafeteria, it is ok to have recycling containers on the edge of the room.
- If students will be emptying materials down a line, place recycling first, garbage second and food composting last.  
Students will:
  1. Drop bottles at the first container- recycling
  2. Pick out plastic, milk cartons and garbage at the second container – garbage.
  3. Flip and tap their tray at the third container- food compost - to get items like mashed potatoes to go in the compost without having to handle them.



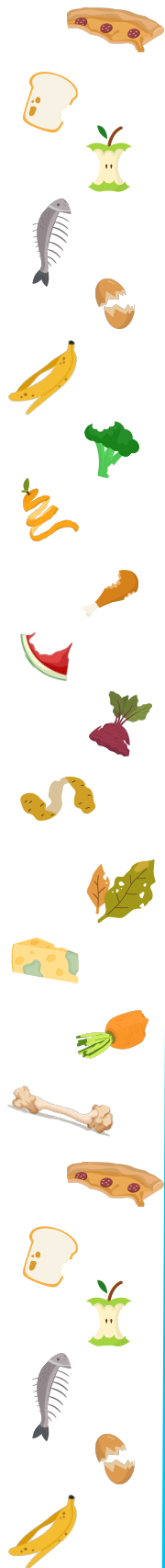
# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Custodial - Sorting & Contamination

#### Sorting and contamination:

- Students are to sort materials themselves. Custodial is not responsible for picking out contaminated material from containers.
- If recycling or composting has more than a few wrong items in it- it is contaminated. 95% of material, by volume, should be correct to be able to empty it in recycling or composting. If a recycling or composting indoor container is contaminated, tie off the bag and throw it in the garbage. Let administrators know about the contamination so they can improve education efforts to correct issues.
- Be specific with contamination issues. For example, if students are throwing plastic bagged food in the compost, let administrators know those details so that education can specifically address that. Administrators would help educate students to empty food loose out of plastic bags and throw the plastic bag away.





# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Custodial - Emptying Containers

#### Beyond the cafeteria:

- Composting may be collected in the staff room- if emptied daily. At this time, composting is not permitted in classrooms or restrooms (for paper towels.)
- Recycling should be collected and emptied from classrooms. Bottles, cans, clean paper, and cardboard can be included in classroom recycling containers.

#### Emptying inside containers into outside dumpsters or carts:

- Composting and garbage containers need to be emptied daily outside. Recycling can be emptied every other day.
- Plastic bags are great to line containers so that containers do not need to be washed out frequently. Plastic bags are not permitted in recycling or composting. The photo below shows how to line recycling or composting containers with plastic bags, dump material loose into the cart or dumpster (depending if it is recycle or compost) and then throw the empty plastic bag in the garbage.



# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Custodial - Washing Carts

#### Washing carts or inside containers

- If you wash containers, water must be dumped into an indoor mop drain, NOT an outside storm drain. Storm drains empty directly to lakes and streams. Nothing but rain down the storm drain. Outside carts can be swapped for clean carts, if requested to WM. Most area schools do this once a year.

#### Health Department requirements

- Outside composting carts are not allowed to be rolled inside. They must stay outside.



# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Administrators

- Review sorting signage to be sure you are an expert on what is recyclable, compostable and garbage. If you have any questions, contact [recycle@federalwaywa.gov](mailto:recycle@federalwaywa.gov)
- Make sure all staff and students know that sorting recycling and composting is an expectation. Review this often.
- Beyond the classroom:
  - Composting may be collected in the staff room- if emptied daily. At this time, composting is not required in classrooms or restrooms (for paper towels.)
- Consider recruiting parent help for the cafeteria. This guide shows a sample parent request [New Composting Program at Puesta Del Sol](#)
- Include messages about what is recyclable and what is compostable in:
  - New staff information and orientations
  - Staff meetings.
  - Assemblies.
  - Parent and community newsletters.

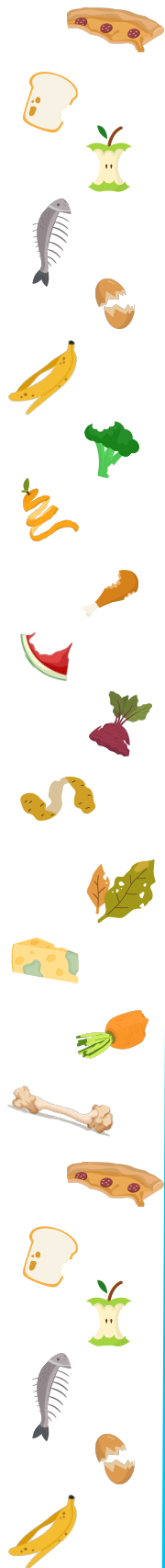
# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Student Teams- ASB, Leadership, Green Teams, Etc.

Students teams can help a lot at schools! Here are ideas to assist. We recommend picking 3-5 of these methods to help with in September/October and again in January/February.

- Announce recycling expectations at assemblies, especially at the beginning of the school year. Consider skits, large signs or props or contests.
- Include messages in PA announcements once each week or month.
- Make recycling and waste reduction announcements at lunch time.
- Stand by cafeteria sorting stations in pairs to help students know which items are recyclable or compostable. Do not handle lunch items, rather, point at where items go. Offer friendly assistance.
- Write an article for a student newsletter.
- Create posters for classrooms, hallways, and lunchrooms. Make posters about the benefits of recycling and composting. Most posters about which items go in recycling, composting or garbage. Consider taping actual items on sorting posters.
- Create a display of materials that can be recycled. Place it in a common area such as the library, lunchroom or main office.
- Hold a recycling contest during a school event to test recycling knowledge.
- Celebrate America Recycles Day in November and Earth Day in April.



# Federal Way Schools

## SCHOOL ROLES

### Teachers

- Review sorting signage to be sure you are an expert on what is recyclable, compostable and garbage. If you have any questions, contact [recycle@federalwaywa.gov](mailto:recycle@federalwaywa.gov)
- Federal Way School District has a PowerPoint that can be shown in classes to train students on proper sorting. The compost lesson is available on Canvas under Elementary Instructional Planning 2025-26 and Secondary Instructional Planning 2025-26. If not available, request this from the TFL department.
- Right now, composting collection is not in classrooms to be mindful of not increasing custodial workload since composting needs to be emptied daily. If your class has food waste that you want to compost, it can be placed daily in the cafeteria compost containers.
- Additional resources for teachers: Note these are not Federal Way specific and would need to be tailored.
  - King County resources: [extensive-resource-list.pdf](#)
  - Reducing wasted food curriculum; National: [Be A Food Waste Warrior](#) | [Educators Toolkits](#) | [WWF](#)