



Lunch Court & Cafeteria Zone

Zero Waste Project

SDUSD
Recycles

LUNCH TIME RECYCLING PROGRAM

➤ How does school culture benefit from lunch court & cafeteria recycling?

- Is your lunch court or cafeteria left a mess? Do students leave trash on tables or on the ground? Is litter blowing everywhere? Making small changes in lunch court processes by starting a lunchtime recycling program can create leverage towards a more orderly and clean lunch court or cafeteria.
- Custodians & Lunch Duty Staff: If employees are spending an extraordinary amount of time cleaning up after students, then increasing student responsibility for their lunch waste by requiring they clean up their area before dismissal, and having them properly sort and recycle their waste should lower the amount of time spent cleaning up after students.
- Faculty & Administration: Teaching responsibility and campus pride through recycling and litter reduction at lunch time can help translate responsible behavior at recess.
- Students: Develop personal responsibility, campus pride, and have opportunities for leadership as part of a team helping other students recycle.

➤ What is recyclable in the lunch court and cafeteria?

- Molded fiber lunch trays (some food residue is okay) ~ 10 million lunch trays are generated at our schools every year!
- Milk and juice cartons & boxes (empty) ~ 6.5 million milk & juice cartons are served to elementary students every year! A Carton Council grant helps with recycling equipment.
- Paper lunch bags & food boxes (raisin boxes, Lunchables, etc.)
- Aluminum cans and plastic bottles, clean foil, aluminum trays
- Hard Plastic (Lunchables trays, fruit & pudding cups, drink bottles, yogurt containers, etc.)

➤ How do we recycle at lunch time?

- Contact Janet Whited, Recycling Specialist for equipment and resources (jwhited@sandi.net)
- Set up a lunch court Recycling Zone(s); modify dismissal practices, if needed; recruit student leaders to help others properly recycle
- Make announcements at assemblies or rallies; show presentations on how to participate.

➤ Why recycle at lunch time?

- Kids learn by doing and develop personal responsibility for the waste they create.
- Saves natural resources and keeps recyclables from heading to our landfill.
- Saves SDUSD money! Recycling service is nearly free, but trash disposal costs 29X more!
- Recycling is the law in San Diego. AB 341 regarding solid waste diversion requires schools, to participate in recycling efforts to divert their waste from landfills.

FACULTY & STAFF: LUNCH TIME RECYCLING LAUNCH

(sample)

Dear Faculty & Staff:

Beginning on _____ (date) our school will begin a cafeteria/lunch court recycling program. We will launch this initiative through any or all of the following: school announcements, video/slide presentations, signage, special recycling containers, etc.

Your help is needed to:

- Show a brief program video and/or slide presentation to students about the new program
- Remind students about the program prior to leaving your classroom for lunch
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their lunch waste before rushing out to recess
- Let them know that they make a big difference for the environment by keeping as much of their lunch waste out of the landfill as possible

What will students recycle during lunch time? Mostly milk and juice cartons and boxes, school lunch trays, paper products (lunch bags, Lunchables boxes, etc.), plastic and aluminum beverage containers, plastic food containers, etc.

With a little effort up front, I know this will become an easy part of every school day. I'm confident that lunch time recycling will have a positive impact on student's behavior and our school's culture. With students recycling more, we also hope to curb littering in the cafeteria/lunch court and around the school.

If you have students interested in leadership roles as part of a lunchtime recycling team, please submit their names to _____. This team will assist other students determine what can be recycled, monitor the tray stacking area, and help at the liquids pouring station (where students will empty milk/juice cartons for recycling).

I will keep you posted on progress, and thank you in advance for your support. I welcome your feedback and suggestions to improve the program as we move forward.

Regards,

Name
Principal or Program Coordinator

