



## Signal Tribune

### BACK TO SCHOOL

#### Sanitation Districts of LA County to help schools divert trash from landfills

Skip the ziplock, recycle your milk carton, and please compost that banana peel. That's the lesson the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County want to teach area school children this year. The agency recently announced that it will partner with Grades of Green, a Manhattan Beach-based nonprofit group, to conduct its first "Trash Free Lunch Challenge." The contest will divert thousands of bags of trash from area landfills and save schools thousands of dollars in supplies and trash hauler fees. "The goal of the program is to not only reduce trash at schools, but to educate kids, hoping they'll develop positive recycling habits for a lifetime," said Steve Maguin, the Sanitation Districts' chief engineer and general manager. "So Grades of

Green is helping us fulfill our mission— to protect public health and the environment through innovative and cost-effective solid-waste management— both now and for the future." "Grades of Green developed this fun, hands-on Trash Free Lunch initiative to teach students how to protect the environment while saving both parents and schools money," said Lisa Coppedge, Grades of Green co-director. "We're thrilled that the Sanitation Districts are helping us reach more schools with this educational and empowering program." Participating schools will ask students to bring lunches that eliminate trash by using reusable lunch containers, reusable water bottles and cloth napkins. All students, including those who buy lunch, will

Sort waste into recycling and composting. Any school within the Sanitation Districts' service area is eligible to participate. The first qualified 10 schools to register will receive an Eco Starter Kit worth more than \$1,500 from Grades of Green. All schools must register at [gradesofgreen.Org/trashchallenge](http://gradesofgreen.Org/trashchallenge) by Oct. 15, 2011 And complete implementation of the Trash Free Lunch program by March 1, 2012. A panel of environmental experts and other judges will evaluate the implementation and success of the two finalists' programs. The winning school will receive a Chevron Grand Prize of a \$1,000 education grant. ----