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Westside Neighborhood School to Implement Environmental Program

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Westside Neighborhood School has partnered with the Grades of Green organization to expand on going green. Grades of Green is a nonprofit organization, "with a vision of making environmental protection 'second nature' in young minds."

Environmental stewardship is a core value at WNS and is reinforced at every Morning Assembly with its Pledge to the Earth. WNS is always looking for authentic and meaningful ways to put words into action. Through its partnership with Grades of Green, WNS is rolling out a new program this year that we hope will grow over the years to come.

WNS is partnering with Grades of Green to both educate its school community on the importance of reducing trash and to see how much lunchtime trash can be reduced at the school. To help implement the program, volunteer middle and elementary division WNS students have been separated into two student-led green teams.

With the support of WNS elementary science teacher Shellinda Barre and middle school math and science teacher Kaitlin Lester, these students will help lead WNS in this important initiative.

Shellinda adds, "Partnering with Grades of Green enables us to provide opportunities for our students to practice their leadership skills as they help to implement a program that will help to keep trash out of our landfills and preserve our natural resources. Already, our students have displayed their dedication to the cause by showing up to our green team meeting and helping to create informative posters and assembly presentations during their free time."

One element of the Grades of Green program that our student green teams are in the process of introducing to the WNS community is “Trash Free Tuesdays.” The ultimate goal of the Trash Free Tuesday program is to reduce the amount of trash sent to the landfill. Students are encouraged to bring lunches that contain reusable containers and utensils instead of disposable ones.

A new waste sorting system will be introduced at a Trash Free Tuesday kick off that includes a bin for landfill trash, recyclables, compostable items, and liquids. Several other Los Angeles County schools will also be participating to reduce lunchtime waste.

Collectively, schools will divert thousands of bags of trash destined for landfills this year alone. Even more importantly, the Grades of Green program will teach kids better habits that will protect the environment in the years to come.

If you are interested in learning more about WNS or Grades of Green head to <http://www.wnsk8.com> or visit <http://www.gradesofgreen.org>.