



## 2023-2024 School Year Report

### Reusable bottle Program:

- **324 students** (88%) of first to eighth graders **brought in a reusable bottle every day in marking period 4** and earned the fourth reward!
  - o If each of those students brought in **just one single-use bottle every day instead of a reusable one** in the fourth marking period, it **would have come to 13,932 single use plastic water bottles!**
  - o 13,932 single use water bottles, if lined up, would measure about 1.76 miles, and would weigh 292 pounds!!!
- **So far this year our school has prevented the waste from about 54,743 single use bottles from being created!**
  - o 54,743 single use plastic bottles would weigh 1,147 pounds and measure 6.9 miles if lined up end to end.
  - o 6.9 miles is the distance from the southern point of Absecon Island in Longport to Bally's Hotel and Casino Atlantic City!!!
- Excellent work preventing that waste from even being created in the first place VECC!!!

### Beach Cleanups:

- 2 beach cleanups took place this marking period (Ventnor City Beach Volleyball Courts/Playground and Ski Beach.)
- **165lbs of trash and 9lbs of recycling collected at the two cleanups** this marking period!!!
  - o For detailed reports, see the VECC Green Team tab on our website or the data sheet on Mr. Capizola's door (room 301).
  - o All data was sent to Surfrider National to help advocate for environmental legislation.
- **Yearly total of 1,049 pounds of litter (Trash and recycling) was collected by VECC students at the 9 beach cleanups we hosted around Ventnor this school year!**

### Single Sided Paper:

- Marking period 4:
  - o Elementary office: 5lbs of single sided paper saved for reuse!
  - o Elementary copy room: 2lbs of single sided paper saved for reuse!
  - o Middle school office: 4lbs of single sided paper saved for reuse!
  - o Middle school copy room: 3.5lbs of single sided paper saved for reuse!
  - o Nurse's office: 2.5lbs of single sided paper saved for reuse!
  - o Library: 1lb of single sided paper saved for reuse!
  - o Marking Period 4 total: 17.5lbs
- **Yearly total of single sided paper saved for reuse so far: 122.75 pounds!**

### Printer Ink Recycling:

- **25 used printer cartridges (about 32lbs!) were collected** in marking period 4 and will be brought to Staples for recycling instead of being thrown out in the landfill!
- **Total pounds of printer cartridges recycled this year so far: 190 pounds!**
- **Individual cartridges collected in marking periods two, three and four: 93 cartridges!**

### Save for Snack Initiative:

- In marking period four, **599 snacks and 7 plastic utensils were saved** by 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade student breakfasts and lunches to be eaten or used later in the school day instead of being thrown away!
- Our yearly total for snacks and utensils saved this year was **1,307 snacks and 83 utensils!**



#### Crayon and Marker Recycling:

- Collection bins were placed in the elementary and middle school teachers rooms at the end of the school year to collect the following items to be recycled at Staples:
  - o **Dead markers: 30 pounds** collected for recycling! (In marking period 3 we also collected 8 pounds)
  - o **Crayons: 12 pounds** collected for recycling!
  - o **Pencils/colored pencils: 8 pounds** collected for recycling!

#### Earth Week:

- **Earth Day was Monday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>!** Themed dress up day schedule was distributed to students on reused paper so they could show their support for our earth throughout the week.
- **Tuesday April 23: Ocean Friendly Garden Weeding and Cleanup** after school from 3:30 to 4:30.
  - o Surfrider South Jersey attended with 4 volunteers.
  - o A total of 17 Ventnor students from both elementary and middle school attended along with 3 parents!
- **Wednesday April 24: Tree planting!** Two Swamp White Oak trees were planted in the grass strip between the playgrounds and Bayside Parking Lot.
  - o Middle School Students dug holes for both trees and planted the one on the middle school side.
  - o Elementary students planted the tree on the elementary school side of the building.
  - o Information about Swamp White Oak trees was presented including what animals they are a host plant for and how those animals benefit our local ecosystems.
  - o Tree plantings were attended by all students, their teachers, and administration!

#### VECC Food Garden:

- ACUA delivered an eco-soil donation of 20 cubic yards on May 7<sup>th</sup>
- Four raised beds measuring 5ft by 20ft were constructed by eighth grade students along with chicken wire to protect the young plants from being eaten.
- The maintenance department transferred the soil into each of the beds.
- Students planted the pepper and tomato plants they started growing in the school greenhouse earlier this spring.
- The community is encouraged to enjoy the fruits and vegetables from the garden over the summer. Beds include the following plants:
  - o Bed 1: blueberry bushes
  - o Bed 2: Blackberry Bushes and Strawberry Plants
  - o Bed 3 and 4: Variety of Pepper and tomato plants

#### VECC Green Fair:

- VECC's first Green Fair took place in the community room the night of the Educational Expo!
- **Five environmental groups** including ACUA, Jacques Cousteau Reserve, Earth First Native Plant Nursery, Surfrider South Jersey, and Watershed Ambassadors all attended to teach families about our local ecosystems and the importance of protecting the natural world around us.

#### Spreading the Word:

- Three articles were published to make the public aware of our work at VECC in hopes to inspire additional environmental efforts in the area.
  - o *Pollinator Garden Thrives from Community Outreach*
    - Gabriella Bancheri (Shore Local Magazine: October 26, 2023)
  - o *Earth Week at VECC Signals Perennial Effort to Save the Planet*
    - Nanette LoBiondo Galloway (Downbeach.com: April 26, 2024)
  - o *Ventnor's Green Team Report Shows Local School's Sustainability Efforts*
    - Gabriella Bancheri (Shore Local Magazine : May 2, 2024)