

# MINIMIZING WASTE - SUPPORT PACKAGE



## Recycling at School

Recycling at school starts with each individual making a discovery:

“What goes where?” It’s not always easy to figure out, and we all have questions sometimes! One great strategy for sorting our waste is helping each other by training student leaders to teach other students how to sort their waste properly.

When recycling at school, it’s important to stay active! You can keep the momentum rolling with enthusiastic positive reinforcement, peer-to-peer coaching, and by maintaining a recycling group or Green Team. This group could have a few different core activities such as using waste to create art and to reimagine waste as a resource. Another focus could be collecting beverage containers for refunds to fundraise for a community organization like a shelter. Recycling isn’t just about refundables. It’s about paper, plastic, glass, cans, organics, and more! Discover all about waste sorting with appropriate labeling for bins, and handy education resources from Divert NS. Read on for our recommended steps to be successful with your recycling initiative.

## Action Plan

**Step 1-** Use source separation bins, indoors and outdoors, and eliminate stand-alone bins where there are no sorting options. For example, use bins that have separate, uniquely shaped openings for each waste type (that helps us think before we toss our waste). Alternatively, use “cluster stations” which means a grouping of containers side-by-side with options for paper, organics, recyclables, and garbage.

**Step 2-** Label your bins clearly, and use photos of typical waste items to help identify the correct bin. Download free signage at the Divert NS link below, or promote these practices by posting the Divert NS [Sorting Guide for Schools](#) in every classroom.

**Step 3-** Start a Green Team of enthusiastic students, teachers, or operations staff. Get in touch with your Green Schools Engagement Officer for assistance or ideas on how to get started!

**Step 4-** Start an education campaign that helps students learn and reinforce best practices for waste sorting. Peer education is a great idea if you have a keen group of student leaders. A group could write and perform a waste-sorting play at an assembly, tour the campaign to different classrooms, or alternatively, turn the education campaign into a short video. You may be inspired to look into other waste-related initiatives that divert waste from the landfill and have a great community component such as a [WasteLess Assessment](#), [Stuff Swaps](#), and bottle drives. Encourage teachers to incorporate some of the great resources listed below in everyday lessons from social studies to math and health!

**Step 5-** Host a virtual engagement with Green Schools Nova Scotia to kick-off your education campaign on recycling. Engagement Officers can appear in your classrooms using video conferencing technology (computer, projector, webcam, microphone and speakers) to deliver engaging presentations. Let’s connect virtually to make an effort to reduce our ecological footprint!

**Step 6-** Host a Waste Educator from [Divert NS](#). These skilled experts can teach good practices and introduce great learning opportunities. There is also [Eddie the Cat](#) from the [Clean Foundation](#) who can visit and talk to Grades P-3.

**Step 7-** Host and [Upcycling Event](#): Capture clean waste and use it for crafts! Make decorations, sculptures, puppets, greeting cards, gifts, wall art, and more! For more inspiration on using waste as a resource, check out [Green Schools NS on Pinterest](#). Here are a few seasonal craft ideas:



Try using an old CD and some yarn to create a wreath decoration.



You can upcycle a clean carton into a beautiful star with minimal tools and effort!

## Resources

[Green Schools NS WasteLess Assessment Support Package](#)

[Green Schools NS WasteLess Wednesday Support Package](#)

[IWMC PEI: Waste Sorting Colouring Sheet](#)

[Kids Love 2 Learn - Waste & Our World Resources](#)

[Multi-Materials Stewardship Board, Newfoundland: Host a Swap Meet](#)

[Waste Free Lunch Challenge - YouTube Video](#)

[Waste Reduction Week Canada - School Resource Kit](#)

[Teaching for Ecological Sustainability: Incorporating Indigenous Philosophies and Practices](#)

[IWMC PEI: Wasteless Lunch Lesson Plan](#)

[NS Department of Environment: Recycling & Waste](#)

[Redefining Progress - Lesson plans](#)

[AFTeRWear - Association For Textile Recycling](#)

[Divert Nova Scotia](#)

[Clean Foundation](#)