

Food Waste Reduction Pilot: Beecher Road School May 22 & 23rd 2018

Overview:

- Parent volunteers assisted with the sorting of recyclables, food waste and trash during all lunch waves from 10:50-1:15 Tuesday May 22nd and Wednesday May 23rd.
- All materials were sorted and weighed (Trash, Plastic, Paper, Food Scraps)

Results:

Day 1: Total Amount of Mixed Waste Collected: 144 lbs

Trash: **68 lbs (47.2%)** Recyclables (Paper & Plastic): **28 lbs (19.4%)** Food Scraps: **48 lbs (33.3%)**



Day 2: (Ernie's Pizza Day- 72 pizza boxes): Total Amount of Mixed Waste Collected: 210 lbs

Trash: **45 lbs (21.4%)** Recyclables (Paper & Plastic): **60 lbs (28.5%)** Food Scraps: **105 lbs (50%)**



Observations & Recommendations:

- The children responded really well to sorting and separating. Many were enthusiastic and by the 2nd day they were pausing before they threw away trash to see where things needed to be sorted.
- Having lots of volunteers was helpful for sorting especially with the added compost.
- Bins had some signs but it was difficult to read them at times when there were lots of children up at once. Having different color bins would help with separation and easy identification.
- Continued education for children and staff around “Pause & Think” before you throw away would be needed as well as some signs indicating what can and cannot be included in recyclables.
- Reducing the frequency with which trash is removed from the cafeteria will decrease the amount of plastic bags used (removing bags when they are $\frac{3}{4}$ full instead of $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ full).
- Clarifying if pizza boxes can be recycled is important information since the school purchases around 72 boxes of Ernie’s pizza every 2 weeks.
- Having children assigned as “recycling helpers” on a rotational basis would give extra oversight and assistance for sorting trash from recyclables. (4th & 5th graders, Student Council, Boy/Girl Scouts...)