Recycling Guide

This guide outlines recycling best practices, offers suggestions to increase recycling in your school, and builds recycling and sustainability knowledge. It includes:

» Getting Started
» Recycling & Trash Materials - What Can and Can’t Be Recycled
» Recycling How-To
» Logistics
» Above & Beyond

**WHY RECYCLING IS IMPORTANT TO BPS**

1. Recycling is educational. From ecology, economics, and global citizenship, recycling is a hands-on activity that connects students to their learning, & literally gets their hands dirty (not required!).

2. Recycling saves money. Trash hauling is expensive, while recycling is FREE. The more money BPS saves on operations, the more money is available to go back into our classrooms.

3. Recycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions. BPS is working with Mayor Walsh to reduce 40% of waste-related greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, as mandated in Boston’s Climate Action Plan.

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Successful recycling programs teach building users about the importance of recycling, create efficient use of the best available trash and recycling equipment, and bring together everyone involved to discuss process and best practices. Establish a recycling team and order equipment that makes sense for your school; teach everyone in your building about why and how to recycle.

**RECYCLING TEAM**

» **Principal or Administrator** → establish recycling as part of school culture, empower staff to promote recycling best practices, lead by example, actively oversee recycling improvement strategies in building

» **Recycling Coordinator** → serve as point of contact between BPS Facilities and school building, report recycling numbers monthly, reach out for help when needed and lead improvement strategies with help from Facilities, coordinate education and recycling outreach in school

» **Custodian** → utilize available recycling equipment, maintain best practice set-ups, collaborate and provide feedback about trash and recycling contents to education team

» **Cafeteria Staff** → educate cafeteria team about back of the house recycling, educate monitors and mothers about front of the house waste materials

» **Students** → actively recycle in classrooms and cafeteria, encourage peers and staff to recycle more, encourage parents to recycle at home

**Available Equipment**
- Recycling Carts
- Recycling Boxes
- Hampers (cardboard collection)
- Posters and Signs

PLUS: Assistance with strategic waste station set-ups

**SUCCESSFUL RECYCLING PROGRAM!**

The following pages outline common waste materials found in schools; print and hang in classrooms or eating spaces!
METAL, PLASTIC, & GLASS RECYCLING
YES & NO

Recycle in single-stream carts must be clean and dry!

- All plastics with recycling symbols #1-7
- Plastic bottles (clean and dry)
- Plastic trays, cups, containers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Clean aluminum foil (crumble into sphere)
- Metal cans
- Large rigid plastics
- Spiral cans (chips, nuts)
- Plastic lids (wider than 3”)

Other items that can be recycled: paperboard, newspapers, magazines, paper bags, white and colored paper, corrugated cardboard (separate BPS hamper), BPS electronic equipment (fill out Form 57 for BPS OIIT pick-up)

Not recyclable single stream

- No dirty or wet food containers
- No dirty aluminum foil
- No paper towels or napkins
- No plastic bags (recycle at grocery stores)
- No peel-off plastic tops (cereal, yogurt)
- No plastic utensils
- No juice pouches
- No plastics without recycling symbol
- No candy wrappers
- No styrofoam
- No food waste!!!
PAPER PRODUCTS RECYCLING
YES & NO

Recycle in single-stream carts

*must be clean and dry!*

- Softcover books (rip off hard covers)
- Paper board (tissue & cereal boxes, if it rips)
- Phone books / junk mail (remove samples)
- Newspapers
- Magazines & catalogs
- Paper bags
- White & colored paper (staples, paper clips, spirals ok)
- Wrapping paper
- Shredded paper (in clear plastic or paper bag)

Other items that can be recycled: aluminum foil, plastics #1-7, glass, milk and juice cartons

Recycle in BPS hamper

- Corrugated cardboard

Not recyclable single stream

- No photographs or blueprints
- No hard cover books
- No paper towels, napkins
- No three-ring binders
- No plastic bags (recycle at grocery stores)
- No candy wrappers
- No styrofoam
- No electronics, VCR tapes
- No food waste!!!
CAFETERIA RECYCLING AND TRASH

RECYCLABLE SINGLE STREAM

Clean paper lunch trays
Paper trays should be stacked and recycled, as long as they are clean and dry.

EMPTY cereal bowls, plastic salad containers, fruit cups, and yogurt containers with #1-7 recycling symbol
These types of plastics can be recycled as long as they are free of food and liquid.

EMPTY milk cartons/ juice cartons
Dump liquids into a separate bucket or sink before recycling.

Plastic, glass and aluminum containers

Other items that CAN be recycled: clean aluminum foil (crumble into a ball), paper, and paperboard

NOT RECYCLABLE SINGLE STREAM

Plastic bags, plastic wrappers, plastic wrap
Plastic bags can be recycled at local grocery stores, but not single stream

Food soiled paper trays or other wet materials
*Styrofoam trays can be dirty and recycled separately through BPS recycling; please contact Facilities @ 617-635-9138 to arrange

Chip Bags, candy wrappers & juice pouches
Schools can recycle these items for money through Terracycle.com

Lid to breakfast cereal bowl

Other items NOT recyclable single stream: Grab & Go breakfast bag, breakfast bar wrapper, straws, plastic cutlery, tissues, napkins, food, gum, and Styrofoam*
Recycling How-To.

Classrooms, Offices and Hallways

1. Place recycling box or barrel next to trash barrel.
2. Hang signs displaying photos or actual items of trash and recycling materials in classrooms and hallways.
3. Place small recycle bin next to water cooler to collect used dry cups.
4. Attach both trash and recycling signs to respective barrels (or hang on the wall above).

Cafeterias and Eating Spaces

1. Confirm cafeteria staff is stacking cardboard in collection hampers, and is rinsing & recycling metal cans.
2. Create waste stations that make it easy for both monitors and students to efficiently discard trash and recycling.
3. Encourage students to disassemble and separate waste into trash and recycling before getting up from their seats.
4. **Stack lunch trays** together like puzzle pieces to significantly decrease waste volume. Keep 2 separate piles: clean (recyclable) and dirty (trash).

> **Do you want to start recycling milk and juice cartons?**

BPS Facilities has extra equipment and educational materials to make milk and juice carton recycling easy – and cleaner than cafeteria waste that isn’t being recycled! Contact BPS Sustainability Manager @ 617-635-9138 OR visit [bostongreenschools.org/recycling](http://bostongreenschools.org/recycling) for guides, waste station example photos, and carton specific signs & posters.
# BPS RECYCLING – Tips & Best Practices

## SIGNAGE

**Visuals:** Use signs with pictures (not just words) of which items are trash and recycling.

**BONUS:** Glue physical materials of items commonly found in your school to posters to make it as clear as possible!

## PLACEMENT

**1: 1 Ratio:** Always keep trash and recycling containers next to each other.

- **Classrooms** – 1 recycling box next to 1 trash can;
- **Hallways** – 1 recycling barrel next to 1 trash barrel.

## COLOR

**No Liner Recycling:** Don’t use a black liner for blue recycling barrels.

*Why?* It will look different than the trash, the bag can’t be recycled, AND recycling has to be clean and dry anyways!

## WASTE STATION

Put all the tips together to create the ultimate WASTE STATION – one gray trash barrel with a black liner next to one blue recycling barrel with no liner in a fixed location & the items of what goes where on posters above each barrel.

## OTHER IDEAS

1. **LIDS:** Use barrel lids with paper & beverage container “cut-outs” as another way to make the trash and recycling look different.
2. **LESS IS MORE:** Hallways rarely need more than one set of containers. Reduce the number of hallway barrels so there is more space for a waste station AND the waste station is more noticeable.
3. **FIXED LOCATION:** Keep your recycling and trash in the same spot so it can easily be found and there are always signs nearby. **BONUS:** Mark the waste station territory with tape on the ground so it has a permanent home.

## CONTAMINATION

**“What if there is trash in my recycling?”**

If there is over 5% trash contamination by volume in your recycling, trash it.

**DID YOU KNOW?** It is **illegal** to throw away recyclables in Massachusetts, so recyclables in your trash is also considered contamination! Review these tips to help figure out why you have contamination and what you can do to fix it.

## RECYCLING TEAM

Maintain regular communication with everyone involved with recycling at your school – students, teachers, custodians, cafeteria staff, & administrators. Ask everyone what is working and what isn’t to help improve your program.

Contact: BPS Facilities Management  pbeierle@bostonpublicschools.org  (F): 617-635-9206 (P): 617-635-9138
Logistics.

Visit [bostongreenschools.org/recycling](http://bostongreenschools.org/recycling) to:

» Find out your recycling collection day  
» Order recycling equipment and signs  
» Access recycling education materials, including training and curriculum ideas  
» Download the Recycling Self-Reporting Worksheet

» Is the internet not your thing? «

Call BPS Sustainability Manager @ 617-635-9138 for the above information via mail or fax.

“What if my recycling didn’t get picked up?”

Call the Boston Mayor’s Hotline at 617-635-4500.

Put it All Together!

Complete the worksheet on the next page and hang it in the front office so it’s clear who does what! If there are blanks, work with your recycling team to fill in the gaps for a comprehensive recycling process.
Our Recycling Team

Recycling Coordinator(s): ________________________________

Administrator: ________________________________________

Custodian: ____________________________________________

Cafeteria Staff: _________________________________________

Student Leader: _________________________________________

How We Recycle

Our Recycling Day is ________________.

______________ takes classroom recycling to recycling carts.

______________ takes recycling carts to the curb and back.

______________ fills out our recycling reporting sheet.

When there is a Monday holiday, our recycling day is ________________.

Recycling Checklist

☐ Signs on every trash can and recycling bin

☐ Posters of trash and recycling items hung above containers

☐ Trash cans and recycling bins always next to each other

☐ Trash cans and recycling bins always found in the same spot

☐ Recycling barrels never used as trash cans

“Help! What if…”

- ...the recycling didn’t get picked-up?

  Call the Mayor’s Hotline ASAP @ 617-635-4500

- ...there is too much recycling and more carts and posters are needed?

- ...there is always trash in the recycling and/or there is always recycling in the trash?

  Contact BPS Sustainability Manager Phoebe Beierle @ 617-635-9138 or pbeierle@bostonpublicschools.org

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Above and Beyond.

Recycling Education Resource Center

Education is a crucial part of a successful recycling program. It can include:

» leading by example
» regularly reviewing which materials go where
» hosting assemblies or presentations about why we recycle and how to take responsibility for our Earth

Visit our online recycling education resource center for lesson plans, videos, projects, and education partners to schedule assemblies and presentations. bostongreenschools.org/resources/curriculum/

Beyond the Barrel

Some materials cannot be placed in the big blue carts – but that doesn’t mean they’re trash! Start a collection pile for items frequently used at your school and visit search.Earth911.com to find the closest location to recycle them. Suggestions:

» Batteries
» Ink/toner cartridges (*get cash for your school at Staples or contact Facilities to schedule free regular pickups)
» Textiles and clothes
» Plastic bags
» Small electronics and appliances (not BPS-owned)

Other Programs Ideas

Do you want to take recycling to the next level in your school? Consider some of the activities below, or contact BPS Sustainability Manager for more ideas.

» Start a recycling club and appoint students to help with your program
» Conduct a waste audit for a math project; communicate the results to the rest of the school
» Host an educational assembly or presentation about recycling and sustainability
» Organize a recycling competition between classrooms or other schools
» Host an end of the year Green Out to recycle and donate end of the year excess
» Celebrate America Recycles Day on November 15th by starting new recycling projects