

ECO Happenings 2013-2014

Here is an overview of some of the events and happenings over the last school year:

- October 2013 Waste Free Lunch Challenge-whole school
- September/October 2013: final harvests of Victory Garden; donated to Good Shepherd
- Fall 2013: with input from Cecilia, myself and Mary Jane, Mrs. Prangley put in an application for a School Ground Greening grant from Toyota. We recently found out we were successful!! Big things to follow.
- November 2013: City of Hamilton Forestry presentation-gr. 3 and free tree planted on the field
- Ongoing: compost pickup in the classrooms 2x/week, bins taken to curb for pickup
- Compost “spot checks”; results shared with school
- Energy conservation and waste worksheets; results shared with school on announcements
- Eco-Mentors: Mac students met with each grade and designed and carried out activities around science curriculum expectation of the teacher’s choice (usually with an environmental message)
- Science in the Schools “Bring Back the Salmon” initiative: Mac students led the grade ½ and 5/6 classes through the hatching and care of Atlantic Salmon. They provided many interactive activities and lessons re: conservation, ecosystems, life cycle of salmon etc. The program culminates in the release of the salmon fry into a creek in Burlington. Ms. Pavelka’s class to monitor and care for the salmon.
- January 2014: members of the Eco team wrote, produced, and filmed a skit “The Sorting Problem” that was aired at the monthly assembly to remind students in a humorous way about proper sorting of waste.
- February 2014: Wear Yellow for City of Hamilton Winter Walk Day. The whole school wore yellow to celebrate being active and walking to school whenever possible
- March 2014: installation of 2 Hydration Stations. Students are encouraged via posters to bring refillable water bottles and use City of Hamilton fresh, clean tap water
- April 2014: school participated in the City of Hamilton “Team Up to Clean Up” program. All classes involved in school yard and field clean up.
- April 2014: planting of seeds for Victory Garden. Consultation with senior members of Eco team led to choice of vegetables that did well last year. Ms. Pavelka’s class to water and monitor the seedlings.
- April 2014: planning/discussion re: a “butterfly garden” (addition of butterfly attracting plants in the garden by the front doors). Attempted germination of milkweed was not successful; we do have some Black-Eyed Susan to add.

Students are asked to see if their home gardens have any of the listed plants. This project, which increases biodiversity, is in its early stages.

- May 2014: Bay Area Restoration Committee's "Mini Marsh" program. All classes have a little piece of the bay in their classroom and can watch the aquatic plants grow. They will be returned to Cootes Paradise at the end of June to help "Bring Back the Bay".
- May 2014: After consultation with Public Health nurse Manuela Trombetta, and City of Hamilton's Donna Weldon, we will be "rebranding" our Victory Garden. There is a push for students to be connected to the source of their food (food literacy), and it was recommended that we share the harvest with the school community in the fall for this purpose. We will continue to donate our summer harvests to the Good Shepherd.
- May 2014: Vegetable plants and seeds planted in the Victory Garden. Weeding and watering schedule to come (each class takes a turn); families and teachers to take the summer. We will mark School Garden Day on May 23.
- Student involvement in recycling of containers/paper: in early stages of implementation.