

# SCHOOL CAFETERIA RECYCLING SETUP HANDBOOK

## BASIC SETUP FOR NON-ORGANICS COLLECTION SCHOOLS



NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
RECYCLING CHAMPIONS PROGRAM

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# INTRODUCTION:

NYC Public Schools are required to recycle by law. School recycling, as mandated by Local Law 19, 41, and Chancellor’s Regulations A-850 require that schools implement recycling programs that encompass all areas of the facility including the cafeteria. Organizing a successful cafeteria recycling program may seem like a daunting task, but by implementing the best practices outlined in this guide and following the organization steps, you will be equipped with all the information you need to effectively establish a cafeteria recycling program.

Cafeteria recycling is an essential part of school recycling – reinforcing classroom recycling practices and building positive, sustainable habits. Benefits of cafeteria recycling can be far reaching – addressing areas of cleanliness, conduct, stewardship and responsibility.

## BENEFITS OF CAFETERIA RECYCLING

- Lessens cleanup for SchoolFood, School Aides, and Custodial Staff by reducing litter.
- Sorting Stations create a more organized cafeteria routine and orderly environment.
- Reinforces classroom recycling practices and contributes to positive, sustainable habits.
- Offers an opportunity for students to take a leadership and/or mentoring role.

**WHAT IS RECYCLABLE IN THE CAFETERIA?** All common cafeteria recyclables are part of **NYC’s BLUE STREAM** recycling, which encompasses **METAL/GLASS/PLASTIC/CARTONS**.

### YES

Milk Cartons  
Juice Boxes  
Aluminum Foil  
Soda Cans  
Hard Plastics (Fruit Cups, Plastic Bottles,  
Plastic Utensils)

### NO

Soft Plastics (Juice Pouches i.e. Capri  
Sun, Food Wrap, Plastic Bags)  
Foam Trays  
Napkins  
Paper Plates

# SECTION I: ORGANIZING A CAFETERIA RECYCLING PROGRAM

*Follow these simple steps to get cafeteria recycling started in your school:*

**I. FIRST THINGS FIRST: Set a Date** - Cafeteria recycling can start at any time of the year, certainly the earlier in the school year the better. Set a goal for a start date for cafeteria recycling. Consider school attendance, vacations, and proximity to when you plan student outreach.

**II. EVERYONE COUNTS: Meet with Key Participants** – Find a time to get a key group of people involved in the initial plans. It’s with this group of people that you will share and outline responsibilities, identify assistance, and garner needed support. Remember, the important thing is just getting the conversation started! Some general questions you may want to ask them are:

<p><b><u>Our Key Participants are:</u></b></p> <p>Principal or Assistant Principal:</p> <hr/>
<p>Sustainability Coordinator:</p> <hr/>
<p>Custodian Engineer:</p> <hr/>
<p>SchoolFood Manager:</p> <hr/>
<p>School Aides:</p> <hr/>

- ◇ What is the biggest challenge/s to getting the recycling program up and running in the cafeteria?
- ◇ What is working about the current process in the cafeteria? What isn’t working?
- ◇ What are some next steps for working around the impediments?
- ◇ Where are the greatest opportunities to increase recycling in the cafeteria?

• **Principal and/or Assistant Principal:** Support from school administration is critical to the success of any school recycling program—this is especially true for cafeteria recycling setups.

✓ Administrators should be included in an initial planning meeting with other key cafeteria participants. Their presence at the meeting is

essential to clearly communicating the strategy for the cafeteria recycling setup and symbolizes the importance of cafeteria recycling to other school staff.

- ✓ Once the recycling setup is launched, school administrators may be needed to make a few announcements in the cafeteria to explain and reinforce the setup with students.

• **Sustainability Coordinator:** Because most sustainability coordinators are teachers, their role in cafeteria recycling tends to be more organizational in nature. Sustainability Coordinators can play a vital role in arranging organizational meetings with other stakeholders (listed in this section) and work with the SchoolFood and/or the Custodian Engineer to secure the necessary resources (*see Section I, Part IV: Materials & Setup*) for the recycling setup. NOTE: If you are unsure of whom your Sustainability Coordinator is you should ask your Principal.

✓ Additionally, the Sustainability Coordinator can organize the Green Team, or recruit additional students, to become *cafeteria recycling monitors* – this has proven to be an effective way to sustain cafeteria recycling (*see Section I, Part V: Get Students Involved*).

• **Custodian Engineer** – Your Custodian Engineer and custodial staff will be an essential part of the conversation and can possibly provide you with materials for the sorting station. You also may need to coordinate with him or her about storage of recyclables once they have been collected from the cafeteria and before they’re put out for pick-up. (*See Section III: Part IV: Storage of Recyclables.*) He or she may also be able to provide you with some useful ideas for how to arrange the bins so lunch will run smoothly.

**NOTE: Campus Buildings** – If there are multiple schools in your building, it’s ideal but not essential to have every school participating in cafeteria recycling. If you are including multiple schools, expand this list to include the Sustainability Coordinators and Principals and/or APs from other schools.

• **SchoolFood Manager** – Your SchoolFood Manager, along with the Custodian Engineer, will be able to offer you invaluable information about the day-to-day oversight of the cafeteria. If you can’t locate all of the supplies you need from your Custodian Engineer, check with your SchoolFood Manager. They typically have extra materials such as a liquids bucket and strainer, extra lids for the 55 gallon bins and they may also have a small rack that can hold the liquids bucket.

• **School Aides**—School Aides’ support and input is critical to the planning and implementation of cafeteria recycling. Some school aides may manage arrival and dismissal, swipe students in for lunch and/or make announcements

School Aides are key actors in ensuring that cafeteria recycling runs as smoothly as possible; include them in the entire planning process. They may offer some advice or ideas about how a recycling program can be streamlined into the existing practices/routines of the cafeteria. Properly implemented recycling stations can create a cleaner cafeteria, limiting waste and cleanup times while maintaining a more orderly environment. This offers an incentive for school aides to take an active role.

**III. KNOW THE LAY OF THE LAND: What is the Cafeteria Culture?**—Observe existing habits (all of this will tell you about the cafeteria culture and help you to take the next steps for implementing cafeteria recycling; you can't make change if you don't know *what* to change):

- Where do students line up for lunch?
- What are the routines of students when they finish their lunch?
- Is there a dismissal process?
- Where are the bins located? Are they clearly marked?
- Does staff clean tables in between lunch?

**IV. DO YOUR HOMEWORK: Materials & Setup**— Find, purchase, or assemble a cafeteria recycling station that best suits your school's needs. Please see the "Cafeteria Recycling Best Practices" section for ideas and images.

- Bins & Lids** – Typically, large bins (usually gray 55 gallon Rubbermaid bins) and a smaller liquids bucket (to collect remaining milk and juice) can be found in the cafeteria kitchen or from your Custodian Engineer. Lids are highly recommended so as to distinguish recycling bins from trash bins, and limit recycling contamination. Square holes can be cut into the center of lids.
- Signage** - Can be downloaded from Recycling Champions<sup>1</sup> or ordered from the NYC Department of Sanitation<sup>2</sup>. Click on the "Download Signs and Posters" section of the Recycling Champions site. Any signs should be protected with lamination. If your school designs its own signs, consider consistency in messaging as important to developing habits, as well as longevity, you won't want to be making new signs all the time.



- Sorting Stations** – Sorting stations that are convenient and noticeable will increase recycling so students input here can be valuable. SchoolFood can provide you with a floor rack to rest the liquid bucket on. Once recycling is launched, stations should be present everyday and bins should always remain together; they are not to be separated. DO NOT place any trash bins in the cafeteria away from the sorting station, as this will encourage disposal without sorting. Consistency will foster recycling habits, as well as allow for student participation to improve.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.grownyc.org/recyclingchampions/toolkit>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/contact/requests\\_decal.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/contact/requests_decal.shtml)

**V. ALL TOGETHER, NOW: Get Students Involved** – NYC schools have taken a variety of approaches to student outreach. Remember that launching cafeteria recycling can also be fun, and involving students can be a great way to bring some positive energy to the lunch room— have a raffle, create a temporary mural, etc. Remember to keep it simple, but feel free to be creative. Here are the basics (*see Section II: Set-Up Best Practice for more ideas and images*):

- **When?** What periods in your school schedule— advisory periods, assembly times, homerooms – exist when students can be introduced to the process? Look for opportunities to do outreach during lunch, or address entire grades during advisory periods. Whatever path your school chooses, remember that it is best to address all students in as concise a time frame as possible leading up to your launch date in the cafeteria.
- **Where?** Could the cafeteria host a town hall during an advisory or homeroom period prior to lunch? Would it be better to host an event or town hall in the auditorium? In either case, it's best to set up a demo sorting station. If you're using the cafeteria, then the sorting station can be in the location where it will be placed permanently.
- **Who?** Involving student leaders in your outreach is a great way to increase participation and integrate into the school's culture. An administrative figure present will help bring structure to the process. If you're planning on having students monitor the recycling to start, this would be a good time to involve them.

**VI. SPREAD THE WORD: Communicate to Staff**– Even if staff is not present in the cafeteria, it's great to generate support and awareness by informing them about cafeteria recycling. A pre-drafted letter is available on our Cafeteria Recycling website . Staff can also be reminded of the cafeteria recycling efforts during the year and updated on any progress relating to your school's recycling goals.

**VII. IT'S SHOWTIME! : Rollout the Cafeteria Launch!** – Now that you have completed the above steps, it's time to present the new and improved cafeteria to the school community! Set a day for the launch, create buzz by hanging up signs and spreading the word, and then have an "unveiling" ceremony. It will be helpful to use this as an opportunity to demonstrate the steps and to point out the new signage. (*See Section II: Cafeteria Best Practices for additional ideas on how to customize your cafeteria roll out.*) Make your progress public – some ideas include involving students in conducting interviews for the school newspaper, math classes measuring results, or science classes conducting a waste audit.

# SECTION II: SET-UP BEST PRACTICES

*While each cafeteria has a unique layout and culture, some best practices have been established that may be easily modified to work in every cafeteria. Below are some proven ideas to implement your launch and some examples of model cafeteria setups.*

## MAKING IT WORK: Organizing Best Practices

### I. Unveiling the New Sorting Stations -

Work to make the roll-out itself as exciting and fun as possible – mark this occasion ceremoniously, so students, staff and faculty will remember the event. Some schools have held town hall style meetings (this is particularly effective for campus buildings with more than one school), in which student leaders helped by explaining and demonstrating the new recycling process. They also asked for volunteers from the audience to show how it’s done.

### II. Student Outreach -

Recruiting student leaders for outreach is key—their voices will be an effective tool for spreading the message about the new cafeteria recycling program. The sustainability coordinator can meet with them to work on their plan for outreach. In the past, it has worked well to have students approach tables in pairs, both on the day of the launch and before and after, explaining the process for recycling, why it’s important, and even demonstrating the steps.

#### ELEMENTARY

#### INTERMEDIATE

<b>MAKE IT FUN!</b> One school used the term “Cafeteria Rangers” for their student recycling monitors	<b>STUDENT LEADERS:</b> Students do table to table outreach and education explaining the new sorting practices.
<b>PAIR STUDENTS:</b> Older students mentor younger students to model and assist with cafeteria protocol.	<b>USE STUDENT TALENTS:</b> Give students a chance to showcase their talents in promotional activities (ex. Student DJ entertained during lunch)
<b>STUDENT RAFFLE:</b> Tickets are distributed to each student who correctly sorts their items.	

### III. Establish a Routine -

Establishing a routine is important – the consistency from day to day will aid in making the program a success. Being clear about each step in the process is key—the signage will support this, as will demonstrating on the day of the roll-out and periodically after that, if necessary. Remember you want to make recycling and sorting part of everyday school life –something that ultimately becomes second nature for the students and staff alike.

## **MANAGING STATIONS (TYPICAL RESPONSIBILITIES):**

### SchoolFood Staff:

- Clear trash and recycling bags after each lunch if full, bring to designated transition area
- Empty and rinse liquids buckets after all lunch periods and return to recycling stations
- Ensure recycling stations are together and in the same place every day

### Custodial Staff:

- Bring waste and recycling from transition areas to storage area or dumpsters
- Wipe down recycling bins and lids when necessary; Return bins to lunchroom.

### Sustainability Coordinator, Administration:

- Annual outreach to new student regarding how to recycle in the cafeteria
- Check on signage periodically throughout the year for new tape, signs, as needed
- Enforce students cleaning up after themselves, not leaving trash behind on tables or the floor

## **IV. Dismissal -**

Be mindful of existing dismissal processes. Are students allowed to empty their trash individually as they choose, or are they called by table? You may want to provide additional time for the new sorting procedures, or modify existing dismissal practices so students have time to properly sort their items.

## **SETTING IT UP: Sorting Station Best Practices**

### **I. Cafeteria Layout -**

Survey the current cafeteria layout and flow: There are a few different ways to set up the sorting stations in your cafeteria. You may decide first the number of stations you'd like, where they'll go, and then find the materials to supply them (coordinate with SchoolFood and Custodial). Or you can find out what materials you have in your school and then establish how many stations can be created. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Sorting stations should be conveniently located. Students are a great resource to about good locations.
- Stations should remain in the same place every day, and bins should never be separated. Wherever there is a trash bin, there should be a recycling bin.
- If bins are not on wheels, they are less likely to be moved around.
- Consistency is important; if you have multiple stations, they should have identical signage and operation.

## II. Cafeteria Setup -

Though actual setups will vary according to cafeteria layout and design (see next section), all cafeteria recycling setups must include the following four steps:



**Why Stack Trays?** The practice of stacking trays reduces the number of trash bags used in the cafeteria. Far more trays can be placed in trash bags if they are stacked as opposed to being randomly tossed into cans as students discard them. Wagner Middle School reduced their trash bag count by half simply by stacking their trays. Additional benefits include: less frequency to empty trash cans, financial savings from using less trash bags, and less idle time from sanitation trucks (reducing CO2 emissions) as there are fewer bags for pickup. *\*\*Note: Stacking Trays is only a recommended practice for schools using foam trays.*

## III. Cafeteria Sorting Station Examples -

Here are some examples of cafeteria set-ups from schools around NYC:

**Wagner Middle School (Grades 6-8), Manhattan:**



*One central station with clearly marked bins and tray-stacking tower proved to be an effective way for students to quickly sort their recyclables.*

- Handyman designed tray towers (find a *Tray Tower Guide* on the Cafeteria Recycling website) to help prevent trays from toppling over, and to reduce the number of garbage bags, make the cafeteria neater and decreasing number of bags sent to landfills.
- Student monitors promoted “flip, tap, stack” to help remind their peers to stack their trays.
- Recruited student monitors to run each station (Pour Liquids, Recycle, Trash, Stack Trays).
- Cafeteria Contest to promote new sorting practices: weighed total trash output before and after implementation of new sorting stations, with the outcome of significantly reduced waste.

***Muscota New School (Grades K-5), Manhattan:***



*Elementary schools have a special consideration for cafeteria recycling – the height and reach of their students.*

- Muscota chose to place a liquids bucket on the ground rather than a table or desk.
- Most elementary students will be able to place their **bottles/cans/cartons** in the 55 gallon bins.
- Their height level makes signage on the bins more important than having a lid, but a lid can never hurt.

***C.S. 211 & I.S. 318 (Grades K-8), Bronx:***



*There are two free-standing stations in this cafeteria, meaning the station isn't resting against a wall. This limits your ability to post signage, but in a large cafeteria, it can bring sorting stations closer to cafeteria tables.*

- A lid, cut to have a square hole, distinguishes the **bottles/cans/cartons** recycling bin from the trash bins.
- In the background of the photo above, against a pillar, is a gray liquids bucket.
- Although this sorting station is not marked as well as it could be, the cafeteria is monitored by Assistant Principals. This helps to limit litter, as students who do litter must sweep the cafeteria, meanwhile the APs can remind students to recycle.

***The School for International Studies &  
Brooklyn School for Global Studies (Grades 8-12), Brooklyn:***



*Two sorting stations are against walls, allowing for plenty of signage directing students' action.*

- The campuses' Custodian Engineer was able to purchase two large blue recycling bins from his budget to be used in the cafeteria. He also provided the old desk for the pouring station.
- SchoolFood provided the red bucket and strainer (to filter any straws, etc).
- The large sign above the sorting station is provided free from the NYC Department of Sanitation, by clicking [here](#).

***M.S. 328- Middle School for Scientific Inquiry (Grades 6-8), Manhattan:***



- The Custodian Engineer provided an old desk to stack the trays. Notice its position against the post to provide more structure for the stacking process.
- This school adopted a variation on the order of the setup process: Trash, Stack, Pour, Recycle.
- Because this setup was in a middle school, they felt that for the older students it was easier to hold a milk carton in one hand and empty waste off the tray in the other hand.

*Here is another version of a setup with tray stacking.*

## SECTION III: FOLLOW-UP & TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

*Once the cafeteria recycling program has started, you will need to monitor and troubleshoot the setup. Below are some solutions on how to tackle challenges you may run into as you work to get the new sorting practices established.*

### FOLLOW-UP:

Once your cafeteria recycling has launched, it often takes a couple of weeks to establish a new routine with students and staff alike. The first weeks offer an important window of opportunity to speak with staff, faculty and students about the new setup – make a few adjustments if something is not working. Seek input from staff; you may need to clarify any logistical issues with SchoolFood or custodians. Just remember, consistency is important so it is ideal to create a functional setup as quickly as possible.

In addition to working out any kinks with the recycling setup, you will need to check in on the students' sorting process. Here are three effective ways to monitor cafeteria recycling:

**Announcements:** Ask any School Aides or Assistant Principals that make announcements during lunch to briefly remind students to separate and recycle. Cafeteria announcements are an easy way to explain the new setup, but if your cafeteria is especially large or rowdy, they may have limited effect. If this is the case, then reinforce with a more formal announcement from the principal.

**Student Monitors:** One way to empower students and increase recycling rates is through the use of student monitors at each recycling station. A club or Green Team can serve as an effective way to remind students to sort and recycle. Students could be rotated throughout the lunch period to monitor and explain the recycling steps to their peers. If a student presence is not sustainable due to scheduling, it can be slowly reduced as student habits and participation increase.

**Check-Up Visits:** After the first couple of weeks, unannounced check-ups and visits are important to make sure all components of the recycling setup are in place from day to day. There are many components involved in a cafeteria recycling setup and it is important to frequently monitor progress. Unannounced visits are the best way to truly capture what is happening in the cafeteria. Please keep in mind these visits should not be imposing like an official inspection, but are a great opportunity to capture a snapshot of student behavior and

the setup of the recycling stations. Student “reporters” investigating the scene can be a great way to make this part of a writing core lesson plan. If improvement is needed, use the opportunity to address them with the respective parties (SchoolFood, School Aides or the Custodial Crew) in a constructive manner.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING:**

### **I. Lack of Support -**

Support and leadership from your school’s administration, Custodian Engineer, Sustainability Coordinator and SchoolFood Manager is important to the success of cafeteria recycling. Custodian Engineers have annual mandatory recycling trainings, which cover cafeteria recycling, hosted by the NYC DOE Sustainability Initiative, the NYC Dept. of Sanitation, and GrowNYC. If support remains an issue then partner with a group of students, or staff, to ask for change—this can be a powerful way to generate support.

### **II. Litter & Cleanliness –**

Part of generating support for cafeteria recycling can come from pointing out the negatives. Litter, lack of cleanliness, and misbehavior in the cafeteria are not reasons why recycling isn’t possible, they are reasons to initiate recycling. SchoolFood employees, custodians, and even school safety may be spending an extraordinary amount of time cleaning up after students in the cafeteria. An orderly cafeteria that recycles will save staff a lot of time and effort to make their job more pleasant. Students must take personal responsibility for their cafeteria waste, and recycling can be the leverage with which bad habits and behavior are improved. Look within your school’s existing lunch structure and schedule to find opportunities to address these issues.

### **III. Student Participation –**

So you’ve held a cafeteria recycling launch, but many students are still not recycling. Basic things can be done, such as asking School Aides or APs present in the cafeteria to make a quick reminder announcement every day as a way to plug recycling. Student monitors can be helpful in reinforcing new habits with recycling. Make sure that monitors never clean up for students—they are only there to guide and remind students. Some schools have found campaigns, competitions amongst grades, or set goals with rewards to be beneficial. Examples include:

- Student Raffle – Students receive a raffle ticket after they have successfully sorted all of their recyclables. Students could win reusable water bottles, t-shirts, homework passes, etc.
- Classroom Competition – Use Green Team students to monitor the recycling area and to award one point to each student’s homeroom that correctly recycles their items. The Green Team students track the points each lunch period for an entire week. At the end of the week, the class with the most points earns a classroom award (ex. Pizza party, lunch out, extra recess, homework pass, etc).

#### IV. Storage of Recyclables -

NYC school kitchens generally do a good job recycling. Find out where the kitchen’s recyclables are stored or placed prior to going out to the curbside – cafeteria recyclables could be placed with them. Recyclables are picked up Tuesday and Thursday by the NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY), but if you think your school would benefit from additional DSNY recycling pickups, then schedule a walk-through with DSNY by clicking, [here](#)<sup>3</sup>. As outlined by DSNY, all blue stream recyclables (metal, glass, rigid plastic, milk and juice cartons) are picked up curbside, there is no dumpster service for blue stream recyclables. Recyclables can be stored outside beside a dumpster or in an easy to access fenced in area adjacent to the school. There may also be a spare or sparsely used closet or storage area near the kitchen. If this is the case, then Custodians and School Food Managers will need to be in agreement about the location.



To avoid curbside contamination of recyclables and garbage, some schools have painted a designated area on their curb for the recyclables. This simple practice easily identifies recyclables for the Custodial crew and Sanitation workers.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/html/recycling/outreach.shtml>

## **V. Sorting Stations –**

Consistency is crucial to developing positive habits. If stations are not out every day, in the same location, then students do not have the opportunity to recycle. SchoolFood employees should not need to bring the sorting stations in and out from the kitchen. If this is happening, speak with your SchoolFood Manager about directing the kitchen staff to keep the stations in their place. If custodians move the stations to clean the floor, please ask the Custodian Engineer to remind his or her staff that the stations should be put back in their place. Also, any School Aides or teachers working with students in the cafeteria should be instructed through a conversation or school memo to please not bring bins closer to their tables, or wheel them around freely. Trash and recycling bins should always be together. Floors could be marked as to where bins go, or wall-posted signage can be the visual markers of where bins are always to be located.

## **VI. Contaminated Recycling –**

Utilizing lids with holes is the best way to limit trash from being placed in a recycling bin. If you have recycling bins with lids and holes, the biggest contaminant will be milk. This is problematic as milk creates odor and vermin issues during storage. As a result, the liquids bucket should be greatly emphasized during the student outreach or recycling launch. Students should also be encouraged to finish their milk before dumping out the remainder. If the milk is frozen, then that carton should be placed in the trash. The NYC Department of Sanitation does allow for a small amount of non-recyclables to be in the recycling stream. In other words, it's not the end of the world if a banana peel and a chips bag ends up in the recycling. But of course, a recycling program should always work to limit contamination, and strive for the cleanest stream of recyclables.

## **VII. Costs –**

Cafeteria recycling can happen without your school incurring any additional costs. Most NYC schools already have the supplies to set up recycling in the cafeteria, including the widely used gray, 55 gallon Rubbermaid bins which are used by Custodian Engineers and School Food. Lids are the only variable, and lids to fit the common 55 gallon bins, can be purchased using the Recycling Champions Bin Guide<sup>4</sup>, or through the custodian's SDI catalog. Look to your principal's budget or your custodian engineer's budget to fund the purchase of lids. Any

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<sup>4</sup> Located as a separate download on the cafeteria section of the RCP website.

signage should also be protected from food and liquid spills, therefore the other small cost may be laminating or protecting signage.

### **VIII. Lack of Consistency –**

Common problems: Bins are not set up in the correct order each day, the recycling station is relocated, or bins and/or signs become damaged or missing. Successful cafeteria recycling is a result of creating new habits—to that extent, consistency is paramount. It is important that bins and signage are in the same place every day. If you find the bins are not returned to the cafeteria after they are emptied or if signage becomes missing or damaged, it is important to replace them immediately. Typically, SchoolFood is responsible for the cafeteria setup each day—speak with one of their employees to address this situation (NOTE: In some schools, custodians fill this role). Usually increased dialogue with one of these two departments can yield a common solution as to why the station is not being setup consistently.

### **IX. Missing Bins and/or Signage –**

If bins become misplaced or damaged, the Custodian Engineer has a budget to order new ones. Alternatively, you may ask SchoolFood if they have an extra gray, 55 gallon bin with a lid. Simply cut a square hole in the lid (large enough for a milk carton) and place a blue label on the bin and lid. Replacement signs can be downloaded from the [Recycling Champions Toolkit](#)<sup>5</sup> or requested from the [DSNY](#)<sup>6</sup>.

### **X. Sustaining the Setup From Year to Year –**

The majority of students will learn to recycle in elementary school and will carry this practice with them through middle and high school. However, if you launch cafeteria recycling to all grades in your school this year, then make sure incoming students are informed about the process during an orientation or their first lunch. This can be organized by the Sustainability Coordinator and executed by students or another member of the staff. A reminder can be sent to your Custodian Engineer and SchoolFood staff at the beginning of the year, with a Recycling Champions pre-drafted letter. Both custodians and SchoolFood managers are aware that cafeteria recycling should be happening, and will do their part to make it a part of every school day.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.grownyc.org/recyclingchampions/toolkit>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/contact/requests\\_decal.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/contact/requests_decal.shtml)