

Cafeteria Recycling Announcements

Cafeterias often have a microphone or a few people with voices that project well over the noise of a full lunch room. Use these tools to make announcements to prompt students to recycle!

Announcements read during lunch will remind students to sort their lunch waste, help them with the process, and minimize contamination in the recycling and food scraps bins.

A quick announcement is a simple way to let all students know that recycling is important and a required part of their lunchtime routine.



Announcement tips

Know what's on the menu for the day? Choose a menu item for the announcement. For example, if there's a wrapped corn muffin, be sure to remind students to open and remove the packaging before getting up from the table.

If you notice students repeating the same mistake, include a reminder about where that item should go.

Student Monitors

In addition to announcements, student monitors at the waste stations are a great way to improve the collection at your school. Speak with your sustainability coordinator about establishing a system for selecting and training cafeteria monitors. Monitors can be selected from:

- Green team, student government or student leadership team members
- A few students from each class
- Monthly class rotation; a different class monitors the stations each month

It's essential that monitors know what goes into each bin. Monitors shouldn't sort for students but rather provide guidance to help students sort their own trays. A quick review of what goes into each bin, and tips on how to guide other students is all that is needed to train monitors; for a monitor guide see our website: www.grownyc.org/rfp.

Give Students the Mic!

Get student's attention by having one of their peers make the announcements. Students will line up for the chance to use the microphone!



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Choose one or two announcements to read each day. Please feel free to make any changes that may better suit your school's needs!

Pre-sorting—helps students to start to think about sorting before they approach the bins.

- Please open all food packaging before coming up to sort.
- Plastic wrappers cannot go in the food scraps bin so remember to remove the food* from the packaging. (* Name a specific item, if applicable: pancakes, muffins, sandwich...)
- Open and separate your fork packet before getting up to sort your tray!
 - Plastic sporks are recycled in the blue bin
 - Paper napkins go in the food scraps bin
 - The plastic wrapper goes in the landfill bin

General Sorting—Make announcements more specific by including items served that day.

- PS/IS _____'s food scraps are made into compost and renewable energy! Remember to sort your trays at the end of lunch.
- Keep plastic bags, wrappers, sporks and metal foil out of the food scraps bin. If it is not a food or paper item, it cannot be composted.
- Milk cartons and plastic sporks go in the blue recycling bin, wrappers go in the trash bin, food scraps and napkins go in the brown bin. Sort out your trays!
- Ketchup packets go in the landfill bin!
- All food scraps and paper napkins go in the brown food scraps bin.
- Remember, Capri Sun pouches go in the landfill bin.
- Chip bags and all other soft plastic wrappers go in the landfill bin.
- Today is Trayless Tuesday! Remember the paper boats can go in the food scraps bin along with leftover food and paper napkins.
- Squeeze icees into the food scraps bin and put the container in the blue recycling bin.
- Aluminum foil can be recycled in the blue recycling bin.

Encouraging—Provide positive reinforcement to students who do the right thing!

- Ms./Mr. _____'s class is doing a great job keeping their table clean!
- Congratulations to the 5th grade monitors for doing a wonderful job this week!
- Announce any incentive you can give the students, i.e.: The cleanest table will receive a blue ticket; go out to recess first; get a point for good behavior; etc.

This handout has two sides. Please print or copy double sided.

For more resources and downloadable Green Team tools,
check out the Recycling Champions webpage:

www.GrowNYC.org/RecyclingChampions