

# Ready. Set. Click!

A simple contest to encourage better waste sorting practices in your cafeteria

Using hand-held tally counters, or “clickers”, student monitors, a green team, or any group in the cafeteria can quickly count the number of students participating in recycling. This is a fun way to help determine which period, grade or class is most actively sorting their waste and which needs help improving.

*Students sort their plates at  
Columbia Secondary in Manhattan*



## Ready...

Plan! Get your group together to determine the date of the event, what criteria will be used to count as a click, and what incentive will be offered to motivate students to participate. Incentives could include a free period for the winning grade or Ice pops for all students in the lunch with the most active participants.

Obtain enough clickers to have at least one for each station of the cafeteria. Hand tally counters may already be in use in your school (check the main office or gym) or can be found easily from online retailers, such as Amazon, for about \$3-\$5 each.

## Set...

Publicize! Make a flyer and post the week before the event, include an announcement in the morning PA address, send a school-wide email, or use any other means you have to announce the upcoming competition. Don't forget to list any incentive being offered

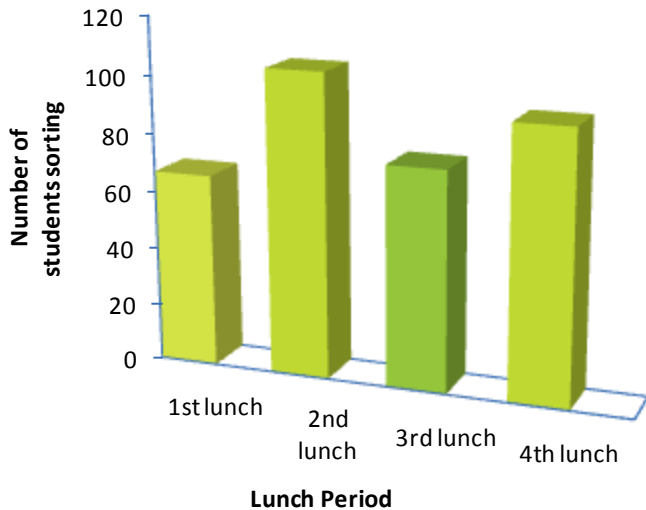
## Click!

- ✓ Assign a monitor to each sorting station in the cafeteria. If you have an abundance of monitors, assign two per station and average the counts.
- ✓ Instruct monitors to click once for each student in their area who correctly sorts their waste.
- ✓ Tally results from all sections of the lunch room at the end of each lunch period.
- ✓ After the final lunch period, determine which period had the highest number of students sorting .
- ✓ Announce the winners



*Sample Clicker*

## Clicker Contest Results



Results from Clicker Contest held at Columbia Secondary School

## Communicate Results

To communicate the results of the contest, the green team or a math class can have fun with the data: create a graph displaying the number of students properly sorting or determine what percentage of each lunch period met the goals set for collection. There are many different comparisons that can be made, especially if you use the clickers on multiple days. Display your analysis on a bulletin board or in a newsletter along with tips to improve waste sorting.

**Activity!** Students that monitor recycling stations could write journal entries or newsletter articles about why they think students recycle or not.

## Variations

Are students leaving plates and trash on tables? Or are they already mostly sorting correctly? Depending on how well students are participating in the recycling program, you can select different criteria for clicking based on the behavior you'd like to encourage:

PURPOSE	CRITERIA
To encourage students to:	Click once for each student completing the following action:
Clear their own tables	Clears table (does not necessarily sort).
Attempt to sort their trays	Takes time to look at signs and makes an attempt to put different items in different bins (does not have to correctly sort all items).
Sort correctly	Puts items mostly in correct bins (correctly sorts the majority of items).
Stack plates	Stacks plate neatly in designated plate stacking area
Zero Waste (organics schools only)	Only has recyclable items to discard (i.e. fork and drink container go in recycling, food scraps, napkin and paper boat or compostable plate go into food scraps bin). Minimal waste is placed in the landfill bin.

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