



Welcome to Project Zero Waste



First, thank you for your interest in the Inside the Outdoors Service Learning project. This is the amazing start to a multi-year waste reduction project that will be student-led with the assistance of your Traveling Scientist Zero Waste Mentor. Our goal is to help students understand the journey of trash and where it will eventually end up.

Encourage students to reduce their waste and to share this zero waste message with the rest of their school, family and community! Students will plan and implement a waste reduction program to reduce the waste which is sent to local landfills.

What is Project Zero Waste?

Project Zero waste is a Service Learning project that educates your students on the value of natural resources and introduces them to the 5 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Rot, Repurpose, Recycle). Students will learn the journey of trash and the importance of landfills in our community. The goal is to start a waste reduction program at your school that is student-driven. Students will be weighing the trash and collecting data to show improvement as they educate their student body and community on the importance of making less trash!

What is Service Learning and why is it important?

Service Learning integrates learning and community service. It helps develop civic engagement, school pride, and experience working with diverse members of the community. Service Learning has five key elements:

- Preparation
- Youth Voice
- Action
- Reflection
- Demonstration

What is your role as the Waste Reduction Coordinator?

As the Waste Reduction Coordinator and teacher, your goal is to manage the students and help to plan the project. During the first Traveling Scientist visit, the class will be using an Engineering Design Process to brainstorm project ideas. You will be given the notes and, with your colleagues, decide the specifics of what will work best at your school (collect lunchtime trash vs. classroom trash), and how this will be accomplished. Collaborate with your team to divide duties and help the students to monitor the program. Be sure to reach out to your Zero Waste Mentor, and the Inside the Outdoors team for any concerns and challenges. When contacting your Zero Waste Mentor, it is always a good idea to cc: insidetheoutdoors@ocde.us to get the quickest response to your email.

Student Role?

This is their project! Incorporating the students is both beneficial to them and to you as the Waste Reduction Coordinator. They should be involved in every step of the project from the decision making, trash weighing to data collection. Students should also be the ones to communicate their objective to the rest of the student body (posters, announcements, skits, songs, videos, flag deck). As a reward for all of their hard work during the project, students will be attending an Inside the Outdoors field trip!

Zero Waste Mentor Role?

Your Zero Waste Mentor, will educate the students during the two Traveling Scientist visits to your school, and is also a great contact to provide resources to you and your students as you go through this project. Due to the nature of the Traveling Scientist programs, your Zero Waste Mentor may not always be available to respond right away. It is always best to cc: insidetheoutdoors@ocde.us on all of your emails and communications with your Zero Waste Mentor to ensure you receive a response as quickly as possible.

Who else should be involved?

Be sure to include everyone in your project! The principal can be a great resource for students when it comes to making school-wide announcements and decisions. The custodial staff should be aware of the project and may be a great value when it comes to weighing and collecting certain types of waste. This project is intended to reduce waste at your school and should therefore reduce the custodial workload. Any of the additional 'custodial' tasks related to this project should be carried out by students as participation in this project.

Where to start?

This project should be done at your own pace and modified so that it fits the needs of your class and school. The best place to start is with weighing your school's trash. No matter what type of waste your class decides to reduce, you will need a base weight to compare your progress to. This will be the "before" number. It allows students to see on average how much waste is created at their school, before they educate their student body, and implement their project.