



**OXNARD SCHOOL DISTRICT
CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES**

WASTE SEPARATION PROGRAM

*A guide to implementing organic waste
and recycling separation in the cafeteria*

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WHAT IS WASTE SEPARATION?

In October 2014 Governor Brown signed [AB 1826 Chesbro \(Chapter 727, Statutes of 2014\)](#), requiring businesses to recycle their organic waste on and after April 1, 2016, depending on the amount of waste they generate per week. This law also requires that on and after January 1, 2016, local jurisdictions across the state implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses, including multifamily residential dwellings that consist of five or more units (please note, however, that multifamily dwellings are not required to have a food waste diversion program). Organic waste (also referred to as organics throughout this resource) means food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste. This law phases in the mandatory recycling of commercial organics over time, while also offering an exemption process for rural counties. In particular, the minimum threshold of organic waste generation by businesses decreases over time, which means an increasingly greater proportion of the commercial sector will be required to comply.

How it works:

As the students exit the cafeteria, they separate recyclables and food scraps from their tray. Instead of everything going in the regular trash and ending up in the landfill, food scraps are composted and used on farms in California, and milk cartons are recycled.

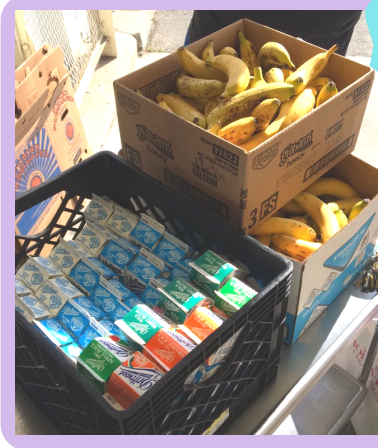
Where do the food scraps go? Harrison trucks collect the food scraps from the participants and transport the scraps to Agromin, which employs a Covered Aerated Static Pile System to mix them with yard waste to create enriched compost. These products save water, help reduce soil erosion and reduce the use of non-organic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides – making our air and water cleaner.

THE SET-UP

Share Table

Leave!
↗

unopened fruit,
milk, or other
packaged items



Stack It



Make sure trays
are stacked
properly!

Students can form 2 lines on either side of the waste bins. This will help move the line along faster, but it will be harder for volunteers to keep up with the students emptying their trays. The custodians and yard duty workers should be consulted to see what they prefer.



Liquid Bin



where milk, water,
or juice gets
poured out



Compost Bin



food scraps, fruit
peels, bones, and
corn husks

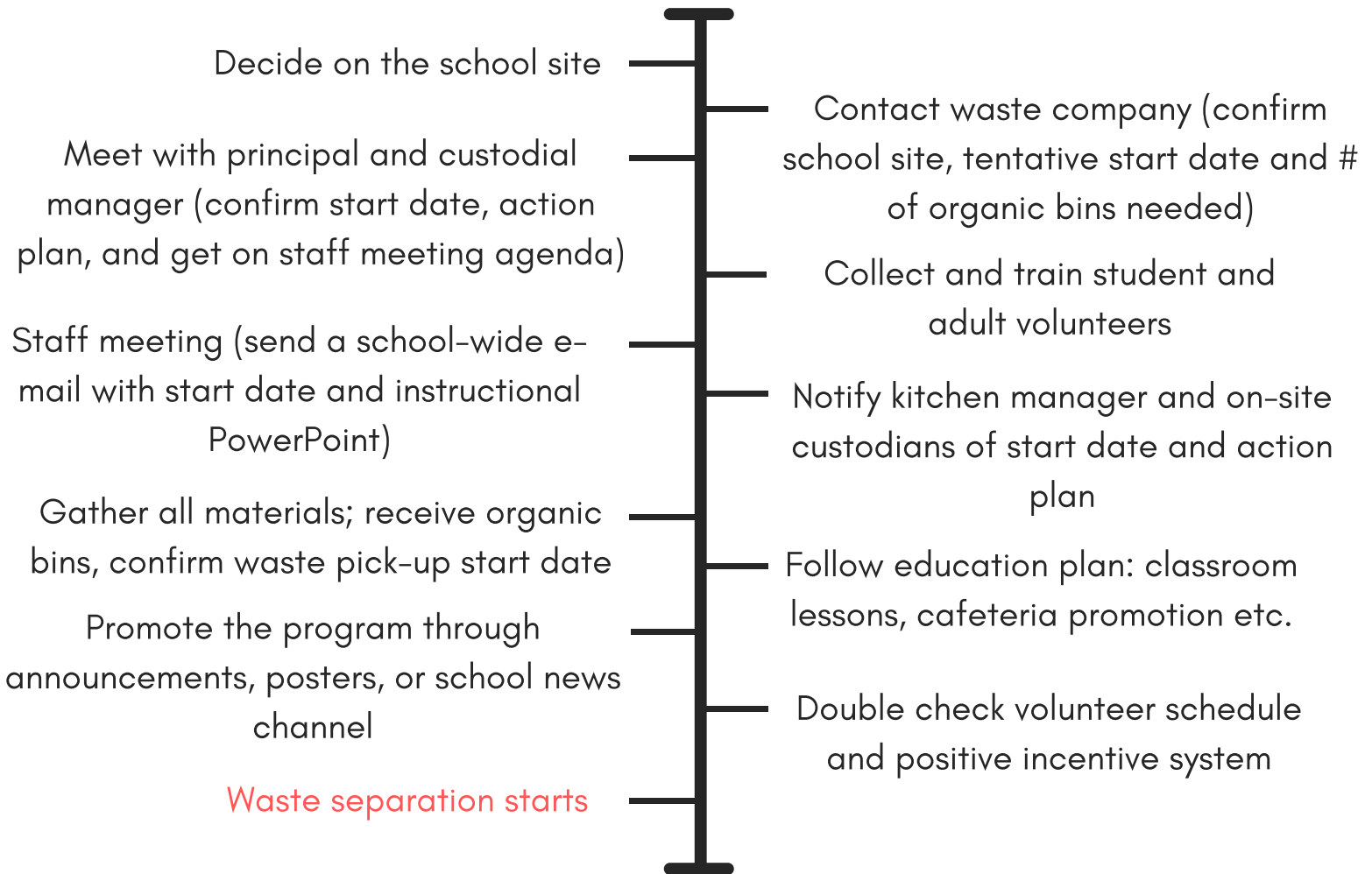
Recycle Bin



milk cartons, water
bottles, and
lunchable trays



IDEAL TIMELINE



Recommended: Dedicate 3 weeks to actively being in the cafeteria during lunch with adult or student volunteers and showing students how to separate their waste. After 3 weeks, the majority of students should remember what to do.

1

IDENTIFYING THE SITE

Get input from key players

Schedule meetings or phone calls with important stakeholders such as: the principal, the waste services representative, and the custodial manager. This will help determine the best site to start the program, and when to start it.

Things to ask the principal:

- What is an ideal time to begin waste separation in the cafeteria?
- What clubs/organizations can I collaborate with to make the transition smoother? (Journalism Club, Green Team, Garden Club, ASB, etc.)
- When can I get on your staff meeting agenda to inform the teachers?
- What is the best way to promote this program to the students? (flyers, posters, assemblies, morning announcements, etc.)
- Are there any major events, holidays, or testing going on within three weeks of the program start date?

Things to ask the waste services representative:

- Which school site best fits within your pick-up schedule?
- How many organic bins do we need for this many students?
- When and how many times a week will the pick-up happen?
- When is the soonest you can provide the bins
- When is the soonest you can begin pick-up?

Things to ask the custodial manager:

- Where are the floor drains for emptying the liquids bucket?
- Where do the bins go to be collected for waste pick-up?
- Who is the lead custodian at the site? Will they be supportive of the program?

2

DEVELOPING A PLAN

Visualizing the timeline

Write out important dates, meetings, and deadlines to get things completed by. An important component is figuring out how you will educate the students beforehand, and who will support you in the cafeteria once the program starts.

There is a full printable check-list of everything needed at the end of this guide

Education:

- This is an extremely important component. It is better to take the time to educate students thoroughly on what waste separation is, why they are doing it, and how to do it once the program starts. Classroom education should begin as early as possible.
- Reach out to the teachers and clubs you already work with to schedule a cafeteria visit so students can visualize what the program will look like.
- When you get on a staff meeting, make sure your presentation includes the how-to's on waste separation, and that you are available to do in-class education on the subject matter. Make sure you follow up after the staff meeting by sending out the presentation to all teachers.

Support in the cafeteria:

- The more people you can get to volunteer in the cafeteria, the better. Speak with the yard duty team, the PTA, student clubs, ASB, and the child nutrition team at your school site. See who will volunteer once the program starts.
- Use the Cafeteria Captains! Have a special training day where you show them how to help the younger students separate their waste and create a schedule of when they will volunteer once the program starts.
- Try to contact these groups as early as possible, and keep them updated on the program start date and other things you need help with.
- Consider starting a "Green Committee" at your school and invite teachers or other staff who show interest in sustainability and reducing food waste.

3

LOGISTICS

How to pull everything together

Oxnard School District uses E.J. Harrison, a private waste removal company. They provide the organic bins, and also collect recycling.



E.J. Harrison Compost & Recycling Rules:

* The custodians should line the green organic bins with a trash bag, but should not tie it off once it is full. This is because E.J. Harrison removes the plastic trash bags once the organic waste reaches the processing plant.

* Paper trays and napkins are unable to be composted. However, corn husks from tamales and chicken bones can be composted.

* Only empty milk cartons without the straws can be recycled.

* Plastic cups that hold food cannot be recycled, because they have to be clean, so they have to get thrown away in the landfill bin

* Styrofoam cannot be recycled or composted.

3

LOGISTICS PT. 2

How to pull everything together

Optional but recommended: Do a cafeteria waste audit before and after the program starts to see how much of each thing gets thrown away, and to also see if there is a reduction in waste once the program starts.

***Check out this link for more info:** <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/guide-conducting-student-food-waste-audits-resource-schools>

Make things fun!

- Use the school's reward system (or your own) to motivate students to participate (stickers, raffle tickets, or other small tokens).
- Make it a competition! Whichever class or grade separates their waste the best at the end of the month will get a smoothie party/special lunch/etc.
- Have a poster contest! Call on student artists to submit a design for a poster promoting the new program. Then print the posters (being sure to give credit to the artist) and hang them up around school.
- Keep track of how many bags of compost and recycling are collected each week. Make sure to include these statistics in morning announcements or school newsletters to show the school's progress.

After 3 weeks:

- Once 3 weeks to a month has passed, return to your regular schedule. Make sure to continue to support custodial and cafeteria staff with separation as much as you can.
- Do an evaluation with your site principal and coordinator to see what areas could be changed or improved upon.
- Also talk about how the school site will take ownership of this program and make sure it is maintained and upheld.

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST

Every step needed to implement the program

Name of the site: _____

Address: _____

Principal: _____ Contact: _____

Kitchen Manager: _____ Contact: _____

Waste Services Rep: _____ Contact: _____

Custodial Manager: _____ Contact: _____

of students at the school: _____ Grades: K-5 K-8 6-8

of organic bins ordered: _____ Arrival date: _____

Start date: _____ Staff meeting date: _____

Lead custodian: _____

Other day custodian: _____

Clubs, organizations, and
classes available for support: _____

Location of floor drains and waste pick-up: _____

Other information: _____

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST

Every step needed to implement the program

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Initial meeting with principal: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gather materials: | |
| Meeting with waste services: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Organic bins | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Meeting with custodial manager: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Recycling bin | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Determine best start date: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Landfill bin | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cancel weekly classes during program start: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Liquid collection bin | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Find a team of student or adult volunteers: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sign posts | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Train volunteers: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Duct tape | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Assign volunteers to stations or duties: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Aprons | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Create volunteer schedule: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gloves | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notify kitchen manager of start date: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Find examples of waste in cafeteria and attach to signs for visual representation: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notify custodial team of start date: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Advertise the program (bulletin, newsletter, announcements): | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Create educational plan: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create evaluation survey for participants: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attend staff meeting to promote the program: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Create positive incentives system: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E-mail instructional slideshow to all teachers: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Show custodian and cafeteria staff the set-up: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Locate floor drain and pick-up area: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Optional - Waste audit: | <input type="checkbox"/> |