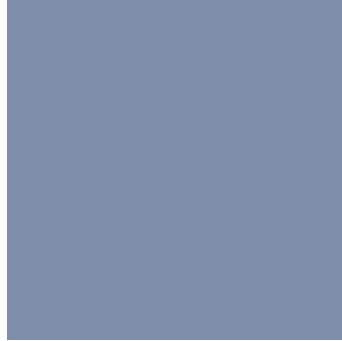
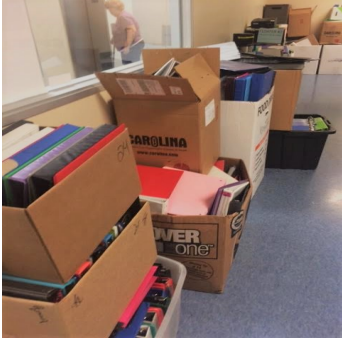
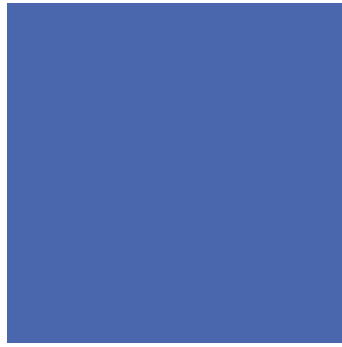


+ Salvage the School Supplies



A project to reuse and recycle
school supplies at the end of
the school year



Core Issue

At the end of the school year, students are very excited to leave for the summer, but do not give any thought to what they should do with their school supplies. As keeping them can seem to be a lot of work, the supplies end up in the trash. These supplies include binders, folders, notebooks, writing utensils, locker shelves, notecards, and even consumable books. By throwing these items away, students are unnecessarily filling up landfill space, and some of these items, such as binders, can release toxic chemicals into the environment as they decompose. Some schools are always in need of supplies in order to provide for their underprivileged students. If students throw away their supplies, they disregard this massive challenge to others' education.

Solution:

To encourage students to reduce their waste, educate them to reuse their supplies as long as they can. Teach students that when an item cannot be reused, they should consider if it could be recycled. Recycling protects ecosystems and saves energy by reducing the amount of new natural resources needed. Finally, if a student no longer needs an item, have them to donate the item to a school in need.



The Process

Establish a Recycling Program

If your school does not already have a recycling program, you can begin one, if you would like to participate in the recycling aspect of this project. Contact your local Waste and Recycling service to find out how to purchase a dumpster and schedule pick-up days. Common services include:

- City of Tempe:
<http://www.tempe.gov/city-hall/public-works/recycling-and-solid-waste/commercial/recycling-sign-up>
- Republic Services (Anthem):
<https://www.republicservices.com/businesses/all-in-one-recycling>
- City of Scottsdale:
<http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/solid-waste/commercial-services#css>
- City of Phoenix:
<https://www.phoenix.gov/public-works/recycling>

Next, it is important to meet with your cleaning crew to discuss their new responsibilities¹. After implementing the needed dumpster and purchasing indoor recycle bins, educate your students about the importance of recycling. You can request a presentation from any of these recycling services. If possible, create two different dates for a middle and high school presentation. This allows your speakers to give age-appropriate and effective presentations. In the two weeks following the implementation, have adult volunteers, such as members of your PO, monitor the lunchroom recycle bins to remind students to sort their waste.

Communicate with Service Clubs

Speak with your high school and middle

school service clubs to suggest the project. Encouraging students to conduct the full program themselves creates a sense of dedication and enthusiasm that is necessary for the project to succeed, for these students will be giving the S.S.S. presentations and overseeing the collection of items. Also, these volunteer groups can also take out the recycling bins themselves, if your school prefers this method to your cleaning crew.

How to Collect Supplies

To participate in the reusing and donation component, you will need to attain small, carryable moving boxes, and establish a collection station at the end of each locker bay. Each station needs a recycling bin and one box for each of the following: notebooks, folders, binders, consumable books, locker supplies, writing utensils, and notecards. For greater organization, you may make two boxes for each item: one for bad and one for good condition.

Collection should be held during the week of final exams, and it is encouraged that locker cleanouts be mandated for both semesters so that students have a chance to reorganize their items, and so that volunteers are not inundated with items at the end of the year.

To facilitate orderliness of the donation process, I recommend that a 45-minute study hall be added to the end of each day of the exam week, in which 8-10 sections are dismissed every 15 minutes to clean out their lockers. These sections are supervised by their teachers and by volunteers at the collection stations. This process allows volunteers to supervise students more directly and attend to one station at a time, especially if there are fewer volunteers than the number of collection stations.

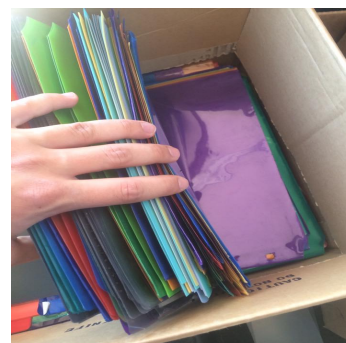
Volunteers are needed to supervise each station to ensure items are placed in the correct bin, to collect the supplies at the end of each day to put in a storage

room, and to sort the items at the end of each day. You can use 2-3 classrooms or any additional space your campus has. It is important to sort the items daily so that the project director will not be required to sort throughout the summer (I sorted items from May 25th until July 10th). If possible, keep your collected supplies in the school storage rooms or somewhere the school permits so that volunteers have access to sort throughout the summer.

Sorting Requirements

Each collected item has different requirements. **For notebooks**, if a majority of the paper within is unused, tear out the used paper and recycle it, donating the rest of the notebook if in good condition. If a majority of the paper is used or the notebook itself is torn or stained, tear out the unused paper and keep it, while recycling the notebook. To recycle the notebook, tear or cut off the cover and remove the spiral. Plastic/ cardboard covers and metal/plastic spirals are recyclable.

1. See "Inspire Volunteers" for other options regarding taking out recycling
2. This figure is an estimate. Actual data depends upon the number of classes at your school



Sorting Requirements, cont.

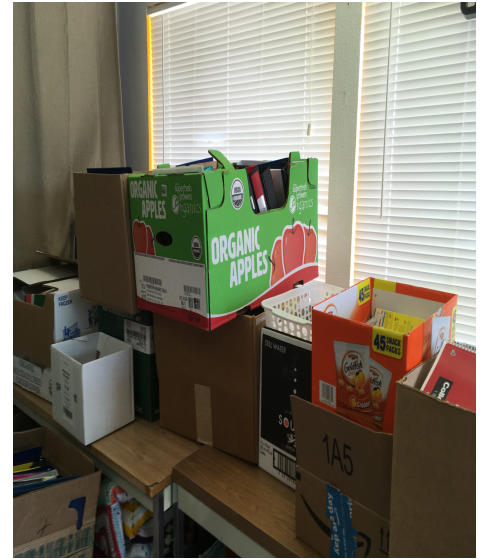
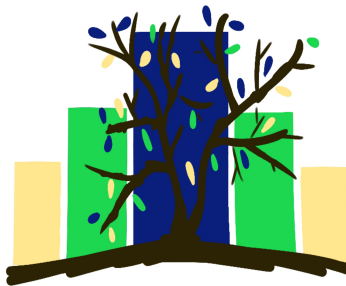
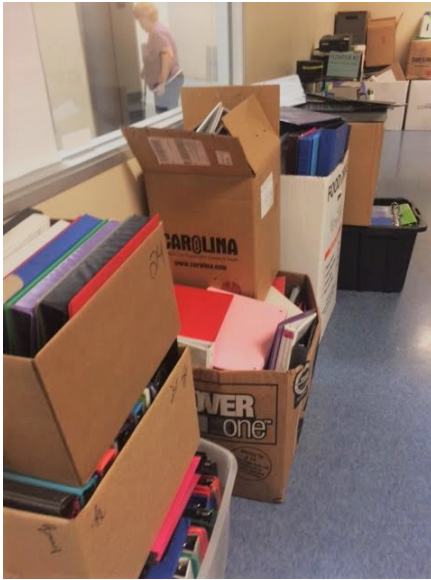
Sort the remaining notebooks between acceptable (writing on cover, shelf wear) and good (clean cover and stiff like new). For **binders**, do not accept those with torn or punctured plastic covers, torn spines, cardboard showing through the vinyl, or permanent stains. Acceptable binders may have some small writing, wavy vinyl, and good binders are like new. Unacceptable binders must be separated to be recycled. The Cardboard is recyclable, the vinyl covering is trash, and the metal rings and sheer plastic covers must be taken to special programs, such as The American Thermoplastic Company, for recycling. However, the most effective way to recycle the cardboard and metal is to take apart the binder and recycle what can be recycled. Vinyl cannot be. For **dividers**, only accept those without tears, bends, or stains and with the metal rings intact. Unacceptable dividers are like the sheer plastic from binders and must be recycled specially as well. For **folders**, do not accept those with permanent markings, large tears, or large folds. Sort those remaining between good (no markings, tears, or folds) and acceptable (very small folds or tears). Unacceptable plastic folders

must be recycled specially with the dividers, but unacceptable paper folders are accepted by commercial recycling. For notecards and loose paper, only accept those without any marking or tears. Separate these items between good (new packages of paper and notecards) and acceptable (loose items). For **writing utensils**, only accept those long enough to be held properly, containing an eraser if it is meant to do so, and flowing with vibrant ink if it is meant to do so. It is best to sort utensils according to type of item. Unacceptable utensils could be taken to libraries for recycling, any type of marker can be collected for the Crayola Color Cycle, or Staples has a mail in box that can be bought to recycle them. For **books**, sort between Acceptable, Good, Very Good, and Like New. A: cover may be ripped or missing, with lots of annotations throughout. G: cover may be written on and bent, with some annotation throughout. VG: Cover has minimal "shelf" wear, with a few annotations. LN: The book has not been used. For books that are very dirty or with pages missing or unreadable text, recycle them through Textbook -Recycle or drop them off at a local Fry's.



The Project in Action

Scottsdale Prep's Impact through S.S.S.



Salvage the School Supplies was created by Alexandra Neumann at Scottsdale Prep as an effort to achieve the Gold Award, the highest leadership award that a Girl Scout can complete. She spent over 100 hours planning and executing the project and has yielded some amazing results. Scottsdale Prep recycled over 485 cubic feet of paper and plastic product during one collection week, and donated consumable books, binders, notebooks, folders, notecard packs, locker shelves as well as dividers, writing utensils, and loose paper. Beneficiaries included Teleos Prep as well as students experiencing homelessness involved in Save the Family and St. Vincent de Paul. Although this program has made a great positive impact at Scottsdale Prep, Alexandra strives to inspire other schools to implement the program in order to make a greater difference with her Gold Award. The issue of waste extends throughout Arizona and the nation. If every school and business reused, recycled to its full capacity, and decreased the consumption of non-recyclable materials, it would reduce the amount of good materials that end up in the landfills and polluting our air and water.

What happened next?

Once Alexandra graduated the Sustainability club took over this end of the year project. A lot of the books were not able to be donated to other schools in our district because they don't read all of the same ones, or the quality was not donatable. However, the books were kept with the club, and before school started, the club would sell the books on amazon, or back to the students in order to pay for any boxes that were rented, or any recycling programs that were used to complete the project. This turns out to be very successful and from last year we were able to get about ten new recycling bins for Scottsdale Prep and really start to enforce

+ Contact Information

+ To get in touch with any questions or concerns about implementing Salvage the School Supplies email Students for Sustainability of SPA at SustainableStudents@gmail.com