



GRACE HOLISTIC CENTER FOR EDUCATION

PATH TO NET ZERO WATER AWARD WINNER



THE PROJECT: WATER SUSTAINABILITY

Grace Holistic Center for Education, a K-12 school in Yorkville, Ill., focused their Illinois Green Schools Project on water conservation and waste reduction. Students across every grade level engaged in diverse water sustainability lessons covering history, infrastructure, pollution, supply and demand, and more. To apply the principles they learned and reduce the school's water and plastic waste, they conducted a school-wide water usage audit and found that the school used 1,894 gallons of water per week. Students then identified and assisted with the repair of a sink leak and the installation of a water bottle filling station, and expanded their work to the broader community by conducting water audits with their families at home.

Project Type: Water
Students Involved: 59
Staff Involved: 3
Location: Yorkville
Grade Levels Involved: K-12th
Number of Students Impacted: 159



Students have learned that conserving water and reducing waste, while checking on infrastructure, will help them continue to have clean drinking water that they need in the future for themselves and future generations.



- Arielle Cunnea

PROCESS

Students across grade levels attended weekly water sustainability classes to engage in interactive learning games and hands on labs. They conducted their water audit by posting daily water usage sheets by the school sinks, fountains, toilets, and dishwasher and asking all students, staff, and faculty in the building to add a tally each time they used an appliance. Looking for ways to reduce their consumption impact, Grace Holistic applied for the Illinois Green Schools Project mini-grant to help fund a new water bottle filling station, which was installed with help from the older students, and also installed low-flow aerators in the school's sinks.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Grace Holistic recognized that sustainability not only requires infrastructure updates like aerators and plumbing upgrades, but also collective cultural change. The school has enacted a No Single-Use Plastic Water Bottles policy, resolved to only run the dishwashers once they're full, and to limit water use while washing hands. Students have taken these measures a step further, pledging to be conscious of their water use at home, check for leaks in their home plumbing, and advocate for responsible water use with their families. To maintain their school's dedication to sustainability and to monitor their progress, Grace Holistic plans to continue auditing their water usage each quarter.

