

ECO STAR

The Eco Star program at South Mountain Elementary, in South Orange, New Jersey, educates K-5 students to become environmental stewards and leaders, via school assemblies and educational material. Moving beyond the very basic “pick up trash” and traditional recycling initiatives, the program teaches kids to think more deeply and creatively about current environmental topics, and act sustainably in as many ways as possible.

The South Mountain Elementary Green Team, a committee of the PTA, conceived and developed the Eco Star program in 2018 following kitchen table conversations, committee meetings, and collaboration among teachers and parent volunteers. The program has been featured in *The Village Green*, *New Jersey Sustainability Reporting Hub* and *Matters Magazine*.

For more information or sample programming, contact us. South Mountain Elementary Green Team greenteamsms@gmail.com



“HI. I’M PACEY. I USED TO USE PLASTIC JUICE BOXES. WHEN I SAW THE ECO STAR ASSEMBLY, I FELT BAD FOR THE PLANET. I STARTED TO USE MY REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE. THANKS PLANET!”
—2ND GRADE STUDENT

“MY TWO CHILDREN HAVE REALLY ENJOYED OUR DISCUSSIONS AROUND THE ECO STAR CHALLENGES. I HAVE BEEN RELIEVED TO SEE NEW, PRACTICAL IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW HOUSEHOLDS IN OUR COMMUNITY CAN DO OUR PART INSTEAD OF RECITING THE SAME OLD LINES ABOUT RECYCLING. WE’RE PROUD THAT OUR SCHOOL IS MAKING THIS A PRIORITY!”
—PARENT AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN ELEMENTARY

“WE FEEL IT’S VERY IMPORTANT TO MODEL ECO-FRIENDLY BEHAVIOR FOR OUR KIDS NOT JUST AT HOME, BUT AT SCHOOL AS WELL. THE ECO STAR ASSEMBLIES FOR OUR CHILDREN ARE A GREAT WAY FOR KIDS TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES THE WAYS THEY CAN HELP OUT.”
—PTA CO-PRESIDENTS

“OUR KINDERGARTENERS ARE WORKING HARD TO BUILD LIFE LONG SUSTAINABILITY HABITS BECAUSE OF OUR ECO STAR PROGRAM, AND CLASSROOM ENTHUSIASM. REUSABLE CONTAINERS, WATER BOTTLES AND SILVERWARE HAVE BECOME A STAPLE IN OUR CLASSROOM.”
—KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

