

Reusable Plastic Cups and Water Coolers at Cherry Tree

- *Approximately 40 cups and a 5 gallon water cooler are placed on a rolling cart at the beginning of lunch.
- *After the students are seated they may signal that they would like a glass of water by holding up their three middle fingers, so it looks like a W (for water)
- *The students are asked to drink all the water they take, so many just fill their glass halfway.
- *Students keep their cup on their tray when they leave so it can be run through the dishwasher and returned to the cart for the next group.
- *The cooler needs to be refilled only one other time during the lunch period.

Benefits of this program

- *Students who want to drink water with lunch can do so without an additional expense for their family. (Currently it costs 60 cents for a small bottle of water) Unless parents check their lunch account, they might not know their child is purchasing this extra item.
- *Younger students don't need help getting the top off their water if it's in a cup.
- *The number of water bottles used is greatly reduced. Since the beginning of this school year, Cherry Tree has reduced the number of bottles they use by more than 2/3! They had been selling 3-4 cases per day, of 24 in each case, and now sell less than one case per day.
- *A reusable plastic cup can be used countless times with minimal extra energy involved. While a plastic water bottle is hopefully recycled, that still takes a lot of energy to make it into another bottle and transport it to and from factories, stores and schools.
- *This program helps convey to students that anyone, no matter how small, can be responsible and help our world be a little more environmentally friendly.

Contacts

Both Lori Storer and Mary Sipes, Cherry Tree's cafeteria manager, are very willing to answer any questions about how this has worked and what it involves. Please feel free to contact me as well if you have any questions. Thank you so much for considering this project.
Marcia Roberts, Cherry Tree parent and Green Club Co-Coordinator
816-9992
mtroberts1@aol.com