

*Dear Parents*

*We are a group of children and teachers who share one common interest: caring for our environment. There are many ways to do this and we decided to start by thinking about our garbage system!*

*Here's the story of how our group came to be:*

*Last year, the Grade Two class did a waste audit and collected a lot of data about how we were managing our waste at school. They determined there was a lot of contamination happening when we mixed our recycling items together. They recommended we separate our waste into four bins – plastic, paper, garbage, and compost. Guess what? The school did! We now have matching bin systems in every classroom and all the students in the school are using this system. A group of children can really make a difference and bring about change!*

*This work motivated several teachers to find a way to provide a space so the children could continue this conversation. These teachers are Judith (Spec Ed), Tara (Art), David (Gr 2), Stephanie (JK), Rosie (Gr 2 intern), Rosa (Natural Curiosity), Silvana (Daycare), Kenisha (Nursery), Richard (principal), and Raadiyah (Gr 1).*

*The group of students are 11 Grade Two and Grade Three children. We might find a way to grow our group at a different time, but for now, this is a good start!*

*Side Note: the teachers have also been working on documents to help our school community think green during events like class breakfasts and other larger social events. We recently drafted some green practices that are now in the Parents' Handbook – did you get a chance to look?*

### ***What Do We Do (or Hope to Do)?***

*We want to understand our garbage and recycling systems, develop ways to reduce our school's use of plastic, and learn from and about local organizations that have a zero or low waste policy. We will bring our learning to our school community by sharing tidbits through the weekly blog, reminders at assemblies, and hosting campaigns throughout the school year.*

### ***Goals for this School Year:***

- *Create an accountability and reminder system for all classrooms to help track contamination and energy usage*
- *Visit local organizations to learn about low waste practices. We visited the Unboxed Market today!*
- *Provide regular reminders to the school community*
- *Host small campaigns to keep our community thinking and engaged in green practices*

### ***Here is your first tidbit –***

*Single use items are dangerous to our environment! You may have heard this already...*

*They do not get recycled properly and most often end up in the landfill. Did you know there is no “away” for plastic? It doesn’t breakdown the way an apple would (decompose), rather it sits in a landfill and breaks into smaller particles called microplastics. These end up in our water systems which animals depend on, oh, and us too!*

***Recommendation:***

- Reusable coffee mug*
- Reusable water bottles*
- Metal forks, spoons, etc. You can make a little kit wrapped in a napkin and keep it in your bag/car*

*Sincerely,  
The JICS Trash Team*

*p.s. The Grade One class did an experiment where they left a single-use cup to soak in water for a few days. The paper part of the cup started to break down, but not that waxy, plastic piece that was in the middle. The cup is on our bulletin board, take a look at it the next time you’re at school!*