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Highland Park students learn to 'go green'

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Students at Bartle Elementary school were the first recipients of the Middlesex County Go Green Save Green challenge which awards an individual or institution that makes efforts in going green and helping the environment.

The challenge is a cooperative effort of PSE&G, Americana Hospitality Group, the Home News Tribune and the Middlesex County Showroom of Environmental Technology.

"I'm excited that the children have been so successful in bringing about 100 percent improvement in our recycling," said Bartle principal Lauren Fraser.

Students have undertaken a program since April to pick up materials that can be recycled from their classrooms and take them to the cafeteria where huge bins are provided.

The school also received a \$1,000 environmental grant from Middlesex County at the end of last year.

Teacher Jane Franchak, who, along with Jessica VanEtten, was instrumental in bringing the program to the school, said "We wanted to make sure the students are in charge of it."

Middlesex County Freeholder James Polos, who presented the award, told the students how they could help the environment by doing small things like turning off the lights and using the right kind of light bulbs.

He encouraged children and their families to log on to the Web site middlesexgogreensavegreen.com.

Visitors are encouraged to list their efforts toward going green. In return they will receive a Go Green Save Green certificate and a decal for their home or business recognizing them as a Go Green Save Green Challenge participant.

Participants also will be provided information about new green technologies, rebates and discounts on green products and green services in the future.

Fourth-grader Ivan Bobkov, who participates in the green initiative, said he is aware that all the paper and plastic that the students are recycling goes into making new cardboard and plastic bottles and they don't need to chop down more trees.

"It helps everybody," he said.

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