

Green Steps School



The Green Steps program encourages individual schools in South Carolina to take annual steps toward becoming more environmentally responsible. Developed by *Keep the Midland Beautiful* (KMB), *Sonoco Recycling* (SR) and DHEC's *Office of Recycling*, Green Steps began in the 2003-2004 school year with seven Midlands school participating. The program now has 32 schools initiating and sustaining Green Steps projects that fall in the areas of conserve, protect, and restore. Oakview is proud to be part of the Green Steps program through school-wide recycling, reusing, composting, our schoolyard habitats, the B2 Program, and rain garden.

Restore: Habitats

Click [here](#) for Green Steps Report

Oakview Elementary School, in Simpsonville, SC, has many schoolyard habitats:

A Butterfly Garden



Nature Trail



Apple orchard – this slide shows teachers who were attending a workshop to learn how to plant an apple orchard.





South Carolina Garden

We plant popcorn in the garden one year and cotton in the garden the next year. After students harvest the popcorn they choose a question about popcorn that their class will investigate. Questions they have investigated include the following: *Which tastes better – Orville's or Oakview's popcorn? Which pops better – a hot air popper or a microwave popper? Does refrigerating out popcorn make it pop better?*



Students pose in the popcorn patch.



Students show off their cotton.

After students pick the cotton, they gin it, card it, and weave it into strands of yarn. Then they use it in a weaving project in art class. These activities reinforce the South Carolina 3rd grade social studies academic standards.

A Blueberry Patch

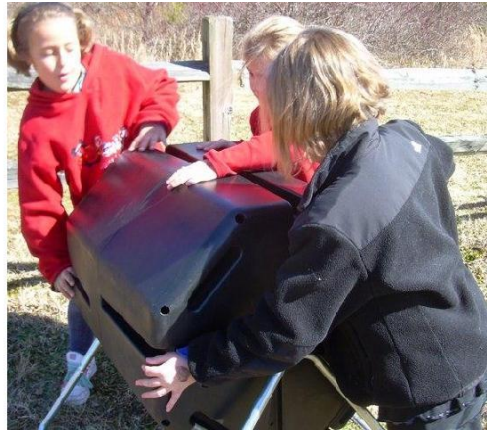
A Pecan Grove



Restore: Soil

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Compost is nature's way of recycling. Oakview's students compost their organic wastes from breakfast and lunch. Fourth and fifth grade students in the After-School program take turns emptying our compost buckets in the compost bins. Students add dried leaves to the bins and spin them daily. We use the rich compost as a natural fertilizer to enrich the soil in our schoolyard habitats.



Conserve: Recycle

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Oakview recycles the following items: classroom paper & cardboard, aluminum cans, cell phones, ink cartridges, toner cartridges, packaging materials, 6-pack rings, glue sticks, juice pouches, crayons, eye glasses & sunglasses, batteries, plastic bottles from the lunchroom, and various electronics: laptops, digital cameras, and game systems.



Students package Cell Phones for Recycling

Conserve: Reuse

Click [here](#) for Green Steps Report

We encourage our students to reuse items whenever possible. In 2012 Oakview installed two “hydration stations” in the lunchroom. Students can now fill glasses with water rather than bring water bottles from home or purchasing water or other drinks in the lunchroom. Cafeteria workers wash the glasses daily in the dishwasher.



Oakview’s Earth Savers Club sponsors an annual “Kick the Bag Habit” project. Students challenge families to estimate the number of plastic bags they bring home in a month and then to count the bags they actually bring home in a week to get an estimate. Families that participate are rewarded with six FREE reusable shopping bags. Local grocery stores support our project by donating these. Families that already use the reusable shopping bags can write a paragraph telling how this helps the environment. These families receive a FREE insulated zipper shopping bag. In 2012 over 200 families saved natural resources, energy, and money by participating in our “Kick the Bag Habit” project. Using reusable shopping bags also reduces pollution & litter and saves the lives of many animals.



Students and Art Teachers Screen Print Insulated Bags

**Protect: Water (Tree Rain Garden)
Report**

Click [here](#) for Green Steps

Oakview students learn the importance of trees when they celebrate Arbor Day. They list things we get from trees & how trees help the environment. Fifth grade students observe the drainage basin out in front of the school and learn how the dirty water in it can impact the environment. They learn why a tree rain garden is perfect for our drainage basin and how it helps the environment. Third and fifth grade students plant trees in the rain garden or in other areas of the campus to celebrate Arbor Day each year.



A View of Oakview's Tree Rain Garden

Protect: Air

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Oakview participates in South Carolina DHEC's B2 Program – Breathe Better Air. This is a no-idling clean air program. We encourage school bus drivers and parents to turn off their engines at arrival and dismissal when they will be idling for longer than 30 seconds.