

Exemplary Environmental Leadership/Sustainability Program or Initiative

School Board__Peel District School Board_____

Contact Person and Email Address__Tracy Appleton, tracy.appleton@peelsb.com_____

Name of Program/Initiative__The Great Gulp_____

Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative

<http://www.peelregion.ca/pw/thegreatgulp/>_____

Description of Program/Initiative

'Take part in a toast to tap water!' The Region of Peel, PDSB, DPCDSB and each Board's EcoSchools Programs partnered to create "The Great Gulp" event in 2014, now an annual event held every March to help create awareness about the importance of Peel drinking water in our lives. During Canada Water Week - March 17-21, 2014, all schools in Peel were invited to register online and organize a whole-school synchronized drink of tap water from a reusable water bottle on any day during that week. Schools were encouraged to share the success of their events by tweeting (hashtag #GreatGulp2014), submitting pictures, videos and short narratives to the Region. Participating schools were entered into a draw to win a water bottle refill station or reusable water bottles for the entire school. 110 schools participated (exceeding the 100 school target) - 62 were PDSB representing approximately 31,360 students; of these 56 were certified EcoSchools who incorporated the initiative into their online application in the 'Environmental Stewardship' section. More information can be found on the Region's website (link above) including the prize draw winners, profiled schools and the Great Gulp 2015 event.

What has been the Impact on Student Learning?

The Great Gulp event focused student learning on creating awareness about the importance of drinking tap water versus bottled water and promoting action to improve water resources. Lessons centred around global warming, resource extraction, pollution, waste, human rights, and negative health effects. Suggested learning activities included sharing facts from peeltapwater.ca over morning announcements. Some schools held tap water taste tests, created whole-school media campaigns (From Glenhaven Sr PS: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/n3zj5jyyk25vz5z/Big%20Gulp.mp4>) and profiled books about water at the school library. Certifying EcoSchools also developed 'Ban the bottle' campaigns to teach students about the environmental impact of single use water bottles and to encourage waste minimization.