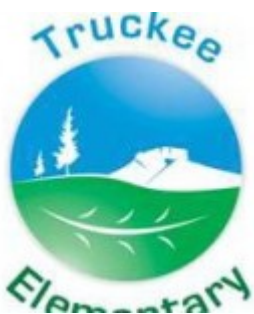


Truckee Elementary taking green to a new level

Truckee Elementary is going green. Designated as the flagship school to lead the greening of the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, the students and staff of Truckee Elementary will be pioneering a path toward an environmentally sustainable future for the entire district.



During the next few years, Truckee Elementary will undergo a green transformation: in the building, in the classrooms, and ultimately, in the minds and hearts of its students. School operations will employ sensible, sustainable practices to reduce carbon footprint and waste. The teaching staff will inject environmental science and responsibility into educational programs.

In 2011, key pieces started falling into place. The PTO and TTUSD began tossing around ideas to improve the school's sustainability and reduce consumption. What was missing was the means. Enter the Shane McConkey Foundation.

In September, the McConkey Foundation granted \$20,000 to the TTUSD for the purpose of putting its schools on a path toward sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Inspired by the McConkey Foundation's mission and grant, the Truckee Elementary PTO stepped up, offering to match the Foundation's grant to the school, dollar for dollar.

The linchpin in bringing green practices and environmental education to the school's students is SWEP, the Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting environmental stewardship in the region's students.

SWEP established the school's Green Team, currently comprised of 27 eager Truckee Elementary fifth-graders, supported and mentored by motivated, environmentally-conscious Truckee High School Envirolution Club student volunteers.

With help from SWEP, the TTUSD and the PTO, Truckee Elementary teachers will be latching on to a wide range of pilot programs designed to integrate environmental awareness and build on the base curriculum. Students will take math and science principles learned in the classroom and apply them in the cafeteria, in the school's gardens and in nearby forests and watersheds. They'll be applying book and chalkboard learning to environmental reality when attending the school's existing Sagehen Creek field-study program (run in conjunction with UC Berkeley).