DATE

Dear Parents and Families,

We are teaching a unique environmental education program at our school, focusing on cafeteria recycling, garbage reduction, and a community wide effort towards achieving zero waste.

To kickstart our garbage reduction journey, we’re using Cafeteria Culture’s free ***SORT2save Kit*** to implement their unique “Cafeteria Ranger” program. Our students will teach peers and teachers how to correctly recycle, compost, and sort their trash at the end of each lunch period. The program has been a great success at many schools throughout New York City. Our students are eager to take on the Ranger responsibilities! You can view Cafeteria Culture’s programs at [www.cafeteriaculture.org](http://www.cafeteriaculture.org).

Currently our cafeteria sends an average of XXX pounds per day -- that’s XX bags per day -- to the landfill. Through the Cafeteria Ranger program, we plan to greatly reduce our school’s garbage footprint and become a model school for our entire school district.

**You can help too!** By reducing the amount of garbage that we throw away at school, home, and everywhere else, we conserve natural resources and help our community and the world.

**When we throw things away, where is "away"?**

NYC spends[[1]](#footnote-1) over $330,000,000 per year of taxpayer dollars to export school and home garbage to landfills and incinerators, often thousands of miles away! Sadly, the carbon intensive transport and disposal of our garbage threatens air quality and health of families and children in communities where Waste Transfer Stations, landfills and incinerators are located, ultimately negatively impacting all of us. The root of the problem is simple: we make too much garbage!

Our garbage, especially methane producing food waste and organic materials, contributes to **climate change**. This in turn causes more extreme weather, like Hurricane Sandy and dangerously hot summer days, thus increasing global food insecurity and compounding many other environmental problems.

**Cafeteria Culture videos**

Check out Cafeteria Culture’s [edu-taining videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwjxgO8LcDjVUXQDnUHbUNA) on YouTube (subscribe to their channel: CafCu Media,

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwjxgO8LcDjVUXQDnUHbUNA>).

And here is our [Vimeo channel](https://vimeo.com/cafcu) (for a school approved link: <https://vimeo.com/cafcu>).

We look forward to working together to create a zero waste school culture.

Sincerely,

(Sustainability Coordinator, PTA Green Team, Teacher, School Administrator)

1. These statistics are specific to NYC. Statistics for other municipalities will vary. If possible, please check your local solid waste management statistics and share! [↑](#footnote-ref-1)