

PRESS RELEASE



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Coronado Unified School District Wellness Committee Focused On Reduction Of Single Use Plastics

Effective January 2, 2023, CUSD will no longer sell single use plastic water bottles in any of its four school cafeterias. The initiative is the first step in a larger waste reduction goal being developed by the district's Wellness Committee.

"We have committee members that are very passionate about waste reduction, so the majority of the members decided to do something centered around this," said Child Nutrition Services Supervisor Amanda Tarantino, who is also the Wellness Committee chair.

"There has been recent legislation regarding mandatory recycling/composting at school districts, and since we ultimately want to roll out these (recycling and composting) initiatives throughout the district, the committee thought that a good first step would be to reduce the amount of single use plastics we use," explained Tarantino.

The Wellness Committee is collaborating with local non-profit Emerald Keepers to spread the word. "As a district surrounded by an ocean and bay, it is imperative we lead by example to reduce the plastic dilemma that is so apparent on our beaches," said Emerald Keepers President Amy Steward. Interns from the organization, who are also Coronado High School students, are working to increase awareness about single use plastics as well as other environmental issues.

"Fortunately, thanks to a generous grant from California American Water through the Coronado Schools Foundation, this past summer we were able to install multiple filtered water filling stations at all four of our schools," said Deputy Superintendent Donnie Salamanca.

Tarantino noted that the new filling stations have trackers that quantify the number of single use bottles saved. "We began tracking in November and will continue through the end of the school year," she said.

The Wellness Committee is made up of teachers, parents, students, and stakeholders who meet four times a year to discuss areas of opportunity pertaining to school wellness. The committee is dedicated to providing a healthy school environment by promoting healthy living, healthy eating, physical activity, and mental wellness. "Any stakeholder is welcome to join our

committee,” said Tarantino who noted that all school districts that participate in the National School Lunch Program are required to have a Local School Wellness Committee.

PHOTO:

Many Coronado High School students are already actively participating in the elimination of single use plastic water bottles and carry their refillable bottles to school daily.