

Kick start for cafeteria composting

BRENDA BRANSWELL. [The Gazette](#). Montreal, Que.: [Jan 17, 2009](#). pg. A.6

Abstract (Summary)

City officials in Cote St. Luc believe the school is the first on the island of Montreal to launch a *composting* program with a municipal pickup.

Full Text

(508 words)

Copyright Southam Publications Inc. Jan 17, 2009

Recycling paper is old hat at many schools.

But now brown bins filled with apple cores, orange peels and other lunch scraps are taking up space in the cafeteria at Bialik High School.

City officials in Cote St. Luc believe the school is the first on the island of Montreal to launch a composting program with a municipal pickup.

The municipality originally planned to extend its curbside organic waste collection program to synagogues, churches and schools some time within the next year.

But the private Jewish school was so keen that the city started the program in the school this month, said Steven Erdelyi, a Cote St. Luc city councillor.

Erdelyi recounted how some Bialik students showed up at a municipal council meeting last fall, asking the city to take stronger action on the environment and saying they were willing to help.

"Based on that, we decided to speed up the process," he said.

The school's composting program began last week. In the cafeteria, there are clusters of bins in different places - one for composting, another for plastic bottles and cans and a third for garbage. Signs list dos and don'ts for what can be tossed in the composting bins.

Yves Rouillard, a geography teacher who is responsible for the green initiative, describes it as a "beautiful" scene to see students separating the waste into different bins after they finish eating.

Five Grade 11 students are spearheading the green project, which includes the introduction of bottle and can recycling and attempts to make students more aware of environmental issues.

"I think kids were really struck by the amount of garbage in landfills that can be recycled and by the amount of garbage bags we produce," said Lara Berliner, 16, one of the Grade 11 students leading the project.

They didn't just launch the initiative to get kids to compost and recycle, Berliner added. "It also deals with education about environmental issues," she said. "And I really think that because we brought that aspect at the same time, kids have been more receptive to it," she said.

One of the student organizers dissected the contents of a garbage bag last fall in the cafeteria. "Kids saw what they actually threw away and how much of it could be composted or recycled," said Elissa Brock, 16.

Every two days the waste in the compost bins is moved to bigger bins outside. The city picks up the organic waste once a week.

Students want to see if they reduce the amount of waste by the end of the school year. According to one estimate, the school had been generating 80 bags of garbage a day.

Bialik also plans to switch to plates and bowls that are made from potato starch and can be composted.

"Our goal is really to minimize the garbage as much as possible," Rouillard said.

bbranswell@ thegazette.canwest.com

Credit: BRENDA BRANSWELL; The Gazette

[Illustration]

Colour Photo: ALLEN MCINNIS THE GAZETTE / Elissa Brock (left) and Lara Berliner are part of the compost team at Bialik High School. ;; Caption:

Indexing (document details)

Subjects: [Recycling](#), [Students](#), *Composting*

Author(s): [BRENDA BRANSWELL](#)

Document types: News

Section: News

Publication [The Gazette](#). Montreal, Que.: [Jan 17, 2009](#). pg. A.6

title:

Edition: Final

Source type: Newspaper

ISSN: 03841294

**ProQuest
document
ID:** 1629370171

**Text Word
Count** 508

**Document
URL:** <http://0-proquest.umi.com.catalogue.eleanorlondonlibrary.org/pqdweb?did=1629370171&sid=6&Fmt=3&clientId=8748&RQT=309&VName=PQD>