



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Jesse G. Sánchez Elementary School Earns State Recycling Award

(Salinas, CA) Jesse G. Sánchez Elementary School, and its staff and students have been named the 2020 recipients of the California Resource Recovery Association's (CRRA) Outstanding School Recycling Program Award. This award is presented to a school, individual or entity partnered with a school that has excelled in implementing and carrying out a recycling and/or diversion program. The award will be presented at the CRRA Annual Conference, which will be held virtually this August. School Principal Roberto Rodríguez-Flores has been invited to accept the award and deliver a brief presentation.

The school was nominated for the award by Salinas Valley Recycles (SVR) to recognize the outstanding work of Jesse G. Sánchez School in Salinas for implementing changes to reduce waste on campus; they were the first school in the Salinas Valley to implement a comprehensive food waste collection program. Through waste assessments, SVR identified the greatest opportunities to eliminate waste through recycling, reuse and edible food recovery, to divert cafeteria waste from the landfill. Sustainable strategies include the Traveling Apple Policy, Sharing Rack, Milk Waste Collection, Milk Carton Recycling, Food Waste Composting, Mixed Recycling, Reusable Trays and Reusable Sporks.

Implementing the plan was a collaboration between the Alisal Union School District Nutrition Services, Salinas Valley Recycles and Jesse G. Sánchez School. Currently 75% of all cafeteria waste is diverted, and just 25% goes to the landfill. The school was able to reduce their weekly waste pickup services from 5 days per week down to 3, cutting weekly garbage disposal by 40%, increasing recycling by 50%, and introducing food waste collection.

Recovering edible food for students to consume at meal time and take home, and diverting food waste from the landfill helps the school meet the state's requirements under AB 1826 and SB 1383, as well as reduce their waste disposal costs. By diverting food scraps from the trash to the composting program, along with the reuse, recycling and waste reduction efforts, the school will save approximately \$660.00 per month, for an estimated annual savings of \$7,920.00.

"Jesse Sanchez School successfully adopted the Traveling Apple Policy by implementing a

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sharing rack to help reduce edible food waste. This program was well received by the students and staff and we plan to implement similar waste reduction strategies in the District's eleven schools in the near future. The long-term cost savings of these programs will help our District and the Salinas Valley become more sustainable and efficient," explains Nutrition Service Director, Irene Vargas.

For more details about these award-winning zero-waste efforts and their impacts, please visit <https://svswa.org/jesse-g-sanchez-elementary-school-earns-state-recycling-award/>

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#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Salinas Valley Recycles** (SVR) has three locations including Sun Street Transfer Station (and HHW facility) at 139 Sun Street in Salinas, Johnson Canyon Landfill at 31400 Johnson Canyon Road in Gonzales, and Jolon Road Transfer Station at 52654 Jolon Road in King City. SVR serves a population of approximately 244,000 along 95 linear miles designated as the Highway 101 corridor, including the communities of Aromas, Bradley, Chualar, Gonzales, Greenfield, Jolon, King City, Lockwood, Prunedale, Royal Oaks, Salinas, San Ardo, San Lucas, Soledad, and Spreckels. Call 831-775-3000 or visit [www.SalinasValleyRecycles.org](http://www.SalinasValleyRecycles.org) for information about waste assessments and waste diversion programs.