

# OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

## A Culture of Sustainability

ECS values walking the talk – we make decisions about our facilities and business practices with the lens of sustainability. From our work with [Community Kitchen Pittsburgh](#) (our food service provider) and our commitment to composting in our schools, to our green cleaning policy and our ongoing decisions to purchase natural and locally-sourced materials and supplies, ECS lives by example, making green and healthy choices that benefit students, faculty, our region, and our bottom line.

ECS has actively worked through the culture and connection of sustainability through its work with the [Green and Healthy Schools Academy](#) (GHSA), a program that brings inspiration and action together to promote vibrant, just, inspiring, engaging, healthy, and high performing schools and communities. This year, ECS enters into its third cohort with GHSA, and a team of administrators, educators, facilities and support staff meet monthly off-site with other teams around the region to tackle complex solutions and to bring an “acupuncture” approach to changing practice in our own schools. For more information about this transformative program, connect with Jenna Cramer. If you want to learn more about ECS’s projects and journey, connect with ECS Facilities and Sustainability Director, Katie Lockley.

## A note about Lead Testing at ECS – November 1, 2016

The Environmental Charter School Building Health & Safety Committee, with the assistance of [The Green Building Alliance](#), recently completed **voluntary school-wide water testing of all drinking fountains and cooking outlets** at both our Upper & Lower School buildings. The purpose of the testing was to screen these outlets for a concentration of lead. The collection of samples and analysis was conducted according to the EPA’s “3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools: Revised Technical Guidance, October 2006.” All samples were collected in 250 mL plastic containers and then delivered to RJ Lee Group, an independent PA certified laboratory. Samples were collected the morning of October 1st, 2016, after the water had been standing in the plumbing system for more than eight hours but less than eighteen hours. According to the 3T’s document, the EPA recommends that “*if any lead is found in any water outlet at levels above 20 parts per billion (ppb), a remediation plan should be put in place.*” **All of the water fountains, kitchen outlets, along with the service connection and water main of each location were tested.** At Environmental Charter School Upper & Lower School buildings, 46 water fixtures were tested for lead. **Of the 23 samples taken, 0 were found to be above 20 ppb.** The view the full report here. While ***all of our outlets tested at levels well below the threshold of 20 ppb***, we will be replacing the faucet fixtures in the Upper School Kitchen due to the fact their first draw results came in between 3.41-4.81 ppb. While this is an incredibly low amount, we are strongly committed to making sure our students have clean and fresh water to drink. Until the fixtures are updated, our food service staff has been instructed to flush the water for 30 seconds before using the faucet. These proactive measures stem from the fact that as the Environmental Charter School, we are committed to providing safe and healthy spaces for all of our students. If you have any questions about the testing, please contact ECS Facilities & Sustainability Director, Katie Lockley.