

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **SUFFOLK STUDENTS RECYCLE NEARLY 130,000 PLASTIC BAGS**

SUFFOLK, Va. (February 9, 2010) – Everyone young and old has caught the buzz about recycling and environmental stewardship. In fact, some of the youngest recyclers can be found locally in the Suffolk Public Schools.

The Suffolk Clean Community Commission and Suffolk Public Schools are collaborating with Trex Company, Inc., the leading manufacturer of alternative decking, railing and fencing, for a plastic bag recycling drive. The drive started on America Recycles Day 2009 (November 15) and ends on Earth Day 2010 (April 22).

Students already have recycled nearly 130,000 plastic trash bags and still have two months left in the collection to save additional bags from landfills, ditches and waterways. “Suffolk Public Schools is thrilled that our students and staff have taken such a strong ownership in this effort to save the planet,” said Bethanne Bradshaw, public information and community relations officer for Suffolk Public Schools. “The plastic bag recycling project has provided our students, staff and school families a real-life, hands-on lesson in improving the environment.”

Participating schools include Creekside Elementary, Florence Bowser Elementary, Mack Benn Jr. Elementary, Mt. Zion Elementary, Robertson Elementary, Southwestern Elementary, Kilby Shores Elementary, Northern Shores Elementary, Booker T. Washington Elementary, John F. Kennedy Middle, Kings Fork Middle, Turlington Woods School, Nansemond River High and Kings Fork High Schools.

“The City of Suffolk is extremely grateful for the tireless efforts put forth by the staff and students at the 14 schools participating in the plastic bag recycling drive,” said Hattie Lester, litter control coordinator for the City of Suffolk, who is spearheading the drive. “This project will help save energy, landfill space, natural resources and ultimately the Earth.”

Each year, Trex utilizes more than 1 billion recycled grocery bags to create its environmentally-friendly outdoor living products. By working with Trex, local schools and students learn the importance of recycling, help keep plastic bags out of landfills and are rewarded for their efforts.

“The Trex Company is pleased to have City of Suffolk Schools return for their second year in our plastic bag drive. With four new participants, we now have 14 schools and their local communities partnered with Trex to help expand and promote plastic bag recycling,” said Amanda Harrington, recycling promotions coordinator for Trex. “Along with Trex, each school has excelled to maintain and execute the goal and importance of early education in the fast growing world of recycling. We thank Suffolk schools for their continued support and dedication to a meaningful program.”

Participating schools have been placed in two groups – “Group One” includes the elementary schools and “Group Two” includes the middle, high, and alternative schools. Trex will award a bench made of Trex materials to the school in each group that collects the most bags, taking into account the student population in each building.

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**Cutline for photo:**

Photo by Amy O’Briant

Mack Benn Jr. Elementary School is one of the four new participating schools in this year’s plastic bag recycling drive. Pictured are some of the counters that help Art Specialist Amy O’Briant tally each week’s bags, (left to right) Dontae Stallings, Noah Rose, and Madison Rhoads.