



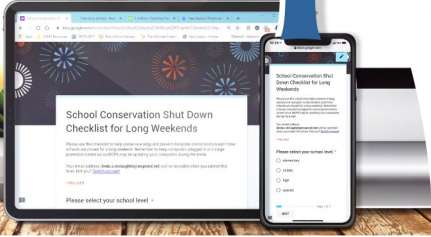
2020

2019

2018

2017

SERT Spotlight



It's the most wonderful time of the year!

Yes, we know that the holidays are over!

It's Time for SERT's Annual *Watts Up?* Poster Contest

EACH YEAR, all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students and staff are invited to participate in SERT's **WATTS UP?** poster contest, an activity that promotes energy conservation and active recycling. This contest engages our entire MCPS community in a creative competition that reinforces the conservation messages taught in our curriculum. It also provides a large platform for our talented artists to showcase their amazing skills. As always, the 2020 contest is focused on the two crucial activities that are the foundation of the SERT program: conserving energy and recycling.

We all know that energy production/use is one of the most important environmental issues of our time. Most environmental concerns are related to energy – air and water quality, global climate change, transportation, and waste management. Eighty percent of all pollution comes from the production, distribution, and consumption of energy, so we should be incentivized to cut energy waste. The **WATTS UP?** contest gives you the chance to show other MCPS students, staff, and community members the importance of making wise energy choices.

JANUARY 2020

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Watts Up?

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Recycling our paper, glass, aluminum, and plastic is an easy and effective way to make a positive impact on the environment. As we each make an effort to live responsibly, those around us will notice our actions and begin to follow our examples. Let's all make a conscientious effort to shop with reusable grocery bags, drink from reusable containers, print or write on both sides of paper, reuse plastic containers, share hand-me-downs, etc. Share your ideas creatively and encourage others to reduce waste and increase recycling to help make MCPS a greener place to learn.

So, what's your artistic view of sustainability? Pull out your crayons, colored pencils, paint brushes, or graphic design tools and show the MCPS community how you think we should care of our environment!

BE A
SERT HERO



CONTEST GUIDELINES

- All MCPS elementary, middle, and high school students and staff are eligible to enter the contest.
- Posters must encourage others to conserve energy and to recycle responsibly.
- Art must be the original work of a student or staff member and must not contain any copyrighted elements. Artwork should be work the artist has created alone.
- For the best results, artwork should be no smaller than 8.5" x 11" and no larger than 18" x 24" in size.
- All entries must be accompanied by the official 2020 [contest entry form](#), which can be found on our website. Student entry forms must be signed by the student's parent or guardian AND the school principal.
- Three entries per grade level per school will be accepted. Schools are asked to hold preliminary competitions and submit the best three entries by staff and from each grade.
- Physical entries may be sent to SERT via Pony or first class mail, or hand-delivered and must be received by the SERT program on or before Monday, April 1, 2020. The SERT program will not be responsible for lost or damaged artwork.
- Digital entries should be emailed to SERT@mcpsmd.org by or before the April 1 deadline.
- Upon submission, entries become property of MCPS and will not be returned. Artwork and artist information may be used in future public awareness campaigns by MCPS.

POSTER JUDGING

The initial round of poster judging is done by SERT staff. For the past three years, we've used the Google platform and invited MCPS students and staff to participate in the final round of judging. The same process will take place this year. Watch this [newsletter](#), our [website](#), and the MCPS staff [bulletin](#) for more details. Contest winners will be announced before the school year ends.

Last year, Mrs. Melissa Clayton, Grade 2 teacher at Judith A. Resnik Elementary School, created the artwork shown and won first place in the staff category. [Click here](#) to see all of the winning entries from 2019.

Let's Work On Our Recycling Resolutions

AS WE BEGIN ANOTHER YEAR, we hope that you remembered to include “recycle responsibly” to your list of New Year’s resolutions! MCPS recycles in accordance with Montgomery County’s [recycling regulation](#) so it’s important to know which items can and cannot be recycled in our county. As you review this list, you may find a few more items that you can include in your recycling bins. Simple general rules to remember are that all of your plain, “flat” paper and cardboard boxes can go into the mixed paper recycling bin while all the aluminum foil, foil serving trays, bottles, cans, and plastic containers should be placed in the commingled recycling bin. Also remember that we do NOT recycle #6 plastics in Montgomery County.

MIXED PAPER

ACCEPTABLE PAPER ITEMS

- ✓ Empty milk and juice containers
- ✓ Lunch trays, paper boat trays, paper plates and cups
- ✓ Newspapers (with inserts)
- ✓ Magazines, catalogs, junk mail, and windowed envelopes
- ✓ Cardboard and paperboard boxes (including all cereal boxes without the liners, frozen food packaging, etc.)
- ✓ Corrugated cardboard (all boxes must be broken down)
- ✓ Spiral notebooks and composition books
- ✓ Colored paper, theme paper, and used copier paper
- ✓ Books (including paperbacks, textbooks, and hardbacks)
- ✓ Shredded paper contained in a sealed or tied clear plastic bag
- ✓ Non-metallic wrapping paper
- ✓ Paper bulletin board decorations
- ✓ Brown paper bags
- ✓ Telephone books
- ✓ Construction paper
- ✓ Files and folders
- ✓ Cardstock



UNACCEPTABLE PAPER ITEMS

- ✗ Paper towels, tissues
- ✗ Any paper contaminated with food waste, including paper plates and cups
- ✗ Metallic wrapping paper
- ✗ Laminated paper
- ✗ Loose, shredded paper, and plastic-coated paper



COMMINGLED ITEMS

ACCEPTABLE PLASTIC, BOTTLES, CANS

- ✓ Black plastic (PET Plastic #1) food containers
- ✓ Empty plastic milk, juice, and water bottles
- ✓ PET #1 Thermoform plastic packaging, such as clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, and caps
- ✓ #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #7 rigid plastic containers, including bottles, jugs, wide-mouth tubs, caps, salad and vegetable containers
- ✓ Aluminum food and beverage containers
- ✓ Bi-metal steel/tin cans, such as soup and vegetable cans
- ✓ Clean aluminum foil and aluminum pie pans
- ✓ Glass containers: brown, clear, and green glass containers jars and bottles
- ✓ Empty non-hazardous aerosol cans
- ✓ Plastic buckets with metal handles (such as floor wax and stripper)
- ✓ Plastic flower pots
- ✓ Plastic drinking cups/glasses (stadium cups)
- ✓ Plastic 5-gallon water bottles

UNACCEPTABLE PLASTIC, BOTTLES, CANS

- ✗ #6 plastic containers
- ✗ Styrofoam (cups, plates, bowls, to-go containers, and foam packing material of any kind)
- ✗ Materials contaminated with food waste or grease
- ✗ Trash/food waste
- ✗ Colored plastic film (such as candy and food wrappers or bags, colored plastic shopping bags)
- ✗ Plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons)
- ✗ Non-container glass (cookware, plate glass, window glass)
- ✗ Motor oil, anti-freeze, and pesticide containers
- ✗ Ceramics
- ✗ Construction and demolition material
- ✗ Vinyl siding
- ✗ Wood



Remember that the deadline for submitting entries for our [SERT VIDEO CONTEST](#) is February 28, 2020. We've heard through the grapevine that many of our students and staff have been working hard to create some exceptional entries and we're excited to begin receiving and viewing them.

As you create your videos, please be mindful of the [entry guidelines and contest rules](#). Make sure that you have carefully reviewed the [contest information](#) found on our website. You may also find the list of [frequently asked questions](#) to be helpful.

All entries must be accompanied by an official [entry form](#). Participation [permission slips](#) must be submitted for each student that's shown in your video.

Contact SERT if you have questions that aren't answered in the documents that are posted online. Good luck!

In our November issue, we introduced our new **ONLINE SHUT DOWN CHECKLISTS** and explained why, after nearly a decade of use, we decided to give our [long weekend](#), [winter](#), [spring](#), and [summer](#) shut down forms a much-needed makeover. Being able to quickly complete the checklist on your phone or tablet without downloading anything has multiple benefits. In addition to helping conserve resources associated with printing the old forms (paper, ink, energy for printing, and costs related to faxing or sending forms via pony), the Google forms save time, which is also a very valuable resource.

We have received a positive response to the new web-based checklist and appreciate hearing your feedback. Check out our new checklists and complete one for the upcoming long Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday [weekend](#). Please remember that you cannot access the form unless you're signed into your @mcpsmd.net Google account.

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SERT SPOTLIGHT is produced by the School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT) program and distributed to school-based SERT leaders and team members, building service personnel, and many others who are interested in conservation and environmental sustainability.

As part of the Montgomery County Public Schools Department of Facilities Management, the SERT program provides opportunities for all schools to participate and receive incentives and recognition for their energy conservation and recycling efforts. The SERT program supports a balanced environment for the integration of all students to work together in a culturally diverse environment. Our goal is to provide the resources, support, and vision of the future for a successful conservation program at each school. SERT's motto, "It's your world. Choose to conserve!" promotes the connection between human behavior and its impact on the environment. It reinforces our culture of conservation and encourages participation in our mission to conserve resources and recycle actively.

