

## CASE STUDY

# Plastic-Free School Toolkit

Helping schools replace single-use plastic utensils.

Many schools want to reduce plastic, but good intentions get stuck in the logistics - what to buy, where to store it, how to wash it, who approves it, and how to pay for it all.

Top College USA built a practical, communications-ready toolkit that translated student advocacy into a plan schools could actually use - bridging passion and operations to turn intention into implementation.



### Implementation Toolkit

Step-by-step guidance for schools to plan and launch.



### Cafeteria Waste Reduction

Replace single-use plastics and cut waste.



### School Operations Support

Address storage, washing, cost, and approvals.



### Student Advocacy to Action

Empower student leaders to drive real change.



### Challenge

Schools were interested in reducing plastic, but many stopped at cost, storage space, washing capacity, procurement rules, and getting approvals from administrators and food service teams.



### Narrative Shift

We reframed the conversation from “ban plastic” to “make reuse workable.” The story focused on practical steps, real examples, and the operational support needed to make change last.



### Communications Assets

We developed a full suite of materials to equip students, staff, and partners to plan, communicate, and implement.

- Student scripts
- Administrator letters
- Implementation steps
- Talking points
- Outreach language
- Checklists
- Presentation slides
- School-facing FAQs



### Outcome

Schools received a credible, usable model they could adapt with confidence - mobilizing students and staff to reduce plastic and build systems that last.

## What We Built



Student Scripts



Admin Letter



Implementation Plan



Talking Points



Checklist



Presentation Slides

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*The story was not only about refusing plastic. It was about giving schools a workable path.*

— Top College USA

### Project Snapshots



Toolkit Spread



Reusable Utensils



School Pilot



Implementation Checklist