

Maryland Application for U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award Nomination

Thank you for your interest in completing the Maryland application for nomination to the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) Award. ED-GRS recognizes schools, districts, and postsecondary institutions for taking a comprehensive approach to sustainability that includes incorporating environmental learning with improving environmental and health impacts. A comprehensive approach incorporates environmental learning with improving environmental and health impacts.

Becoming a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Honoree is a two-step process. The first step is to complete and submit this form to be selected as a nominee by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Once selected as a nominee, the second step of the process requires signatures for the Nominee Presentation Form that will be sent to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) along with your application. You may view the certifications you will be asked to make in the Nomination Presentation Forms [here](#).

ED selects honorees from those presented by eligible nominating authorities nationwide. Selection will be based on documentation of the applicant's high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars:

- Pillar I: Reduce environmental impact and costs.
- Pillar II: Improve the health and wellness of students and staff.
- Pillar III: Provide effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways.

Schools, districts, and postsecondary institutions demonstrating progress in every area will receive the highest scores. It may help to assemble a team with expertise across these areas to complete the application. This team might include a facilities manager, physical education director, food services director, curriculum director, finance department representatives, teachers, and/or students. You may consult the ED-GRS [Green Strides Resources Page](#) and [Webinar Series](#) for standards, programs, and grants related to each Pillar, Element, and question.

The narrative responses requested in this application will help you demonstrate your progress in these Pillars as well as provide space for you to include pertinent documentation. Applications are due by midnight **December 9, 2024**, to MSDE. Please send your completed application by email to Payton Hesse (payton.hesse@maryland.gov).

NOMINEE INFORMATION

School, District (LEA), or Postsecondary Institution Name:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Website:

Social Media:

Top Official (Principal, Superintendent, President) Name:

Top Official Email Address:

Phone Number:

Lead Applicant Name (if different):

Lead Applicant Email:

Phone Number:

Schools (select all that apply):

Early Learning Center

K – 8

High (9 or 10 - 12)

Elementary (PK – 5 or 6)

Middle (6 - 8 or 9)

K – 12

District Name

Total Enrollment

Select All That Apply:

- Public
- Charter
- Two - Year
- Community College
- Private / Independent
- Magnet
- Four - Year
- Career and Technical

How would you describe your school?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households?

*Defined as eligible for FRPL status and/or LEP

- Yes
- No

_____	_____	_____
% receiving FRPL	% limited English proficient	Other measures
_____	_____	
Graduation Rate	Attendance Rate	

NOMINATION MATERIALS (NO LONGER THAN 20 PAGES)

Nomination Packets of previous award winners can be found below:

- [Oakland Terrace Elementary School](#), Silver Spring, MD - 2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award Honoree
- [Wellwood International School](#), Baltimore MD – 2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award Honoree
- [Manchester Valley High School](#), Manchester, MD – 2018 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award Honoree
- [Calvert County Public Schools](#), Prince Frederick, MD – 2019 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon District Sustainability Award Honoree

Narrative for Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Use 1 – 5 pages to describe how your school, district, or postsecondary institution is reducing environmental impact and costs. Be sure to include evidence of the four main elements of Pillar I.

1. Reduced or eliminated greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), using an energy audit and/or emissions inventory and reduction plan, cost-effective energy efficiency improvements, conservation measures, and/or on-site renewable energy and/or purchase of green power;
2. Expanded use of alternative transportation through active promotion of locally available, energy-efficient options and implementation of alternative transportation supportive projects and policies;
3. Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation; and
4. Reduced solid and hazardous waste production through increased recycling, reduced consumption, and improved management, reduction, or elimination of hazardous waste.

Narrative for Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness

Use 1 – 5 pages to describe how your school, district, or postsecondary institution improves the health and wellness of students and staff. Be sure to include evidence of the two main elements of Pillar II.

1. An integrated school, district or postsecondary institutional environmental health program based on an operations and facility-wide environmental management system that considers student, visitor and staff health and safety in all practices related to design, construction, renovation, operations, and maintenance of buildings and grounds; and
2. High standards of coordinated school, district, or postsecondary institutional health, including social and psychological services, nutrition, fitness, and quantity of quality outdoor time for both students and staff.

Narrative for Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Use 1 – 5 pages to describe how your school, district, or postsecondary institution ensures effective environmental and sustainability education throughout the curriculum among grade levels in your school, district, or postsecondary institution. Be sure to include evidence of the three main elements of Pillar III.

1. Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy and human systems;
2. Development of civic engagement knowledge and skills and students' application of such knowledge and skills to address sustainability and environmental issues in their community; and
3. Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content knowledge and thinking skills to prepare graduates for the 21st century technology-driven economy.

Summary Narrative

Use one 200-300-word substantive paragraph to provide an overview narrative describing the efforts of your school, district, or postsecondary institution to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. You can view examples of summary narratives in last year's [Highlights Report](#). The summary that you submit should be what you would like to see appear in a future Highlights Report, if your institution is selected. It may be helpful to pull from your previous three narratives to write the summary.

Photo Submission

Submit up to 5 - 10 photos (with appropriate permissions) to illustrate your work in the three Pillars. Your photos should be submitted as separate files (gif, jpg, jpeg, png), named clearly, and accompanied by a separate document that provides a caption for each photo which describes what is happening in the photos, who is involved, where it took place, when it happened, and why it is significant.

The US Department of Education prefers images that show students' and teachers' actions related to the Pillars, are candid and from the last three years. By sending these photos, you are giving MSDE and the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them in our newsletter, social media, and/or websites.

NOMINATION SCORING RUBRIC

Below is a summary of the scoring rubric and applicants are encouraged to reference the full [Maryland Green Ribbon School Scoring Rubric](#) when composing their applications.

Point values are placeholders; reviewers will use their discretion when awarding points.

ED-GRS PILLARS	POINTS
<p>Pillar I: Reduce environmental impact and costs</p> <p>The narrative should fully describe progress in all main elements and provide quantitative evidence for each main element with time frames. Greater reduction of environmental impact and costs across multiple areas (air, water, energy, waste, etc.) will result in a higher score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved energy conservation/energy-efficient building(s) - 10 pts • Use of alternative transportation to, during, and from school – 10 pts • Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation – 5 pts • Reduced waste production through efforts such as improved recycling and composting programs – 5 pts 	30
<p>Pillar II: Improve the health and wellness of students and staff</p> <p>The narrative should fully describe progress in all main elements and provide quantitative evidence for each main element with time frames. Greater evidence of the improvement of the health and wellness of the school grounds in addition to social, emotional, and physical wellness of students and staff/faculty will result in a higher score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated school or facility environmental health program – 15 pts • High standards of social and psychological services, nutrition, fitness, and outdoor time – 15 pts 	30
<p>Pillar III: Provide effective environmental and sustainability education</p> <p>The narrative should fully describe progress in all main elements and reference Maryland's Environmental Literacy Standards, as applicable. Greater evidence of interdisciplinary learning articulation across grade levels with a clear focus on environmental literacy and sustainability will result in a higher score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems – 15 pts • Development and application of civic engagement knowledge and skills – 15 pts • Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills – 10 pts 	40
Total	100