



COLORADO

Department of Education

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award

*PK-12 Schools Award &
District Sustainability Award*

*Pursuant to: Section 5411(b)(5), of the Elementary and Secondary
Education Act (ESEA)*

September 2016

Introduction

- The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) award program honors America's public and private elementary, middle, and high schools as well as school districts for their efforts toward improving student health and achievement and reducing their environmental impact.
- Applicants should demonstrate progress toward the elements of each of the three **Green Ribbon Schools "Pillars"** at the school or district level:
 - **Pillar I:** Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs
 - **Pillar II:** Improved Health and Wellness
 - **Pillar III:** Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Eligibility

- Any PK-12 school (including private and charter schools) and school districts demonstrating high achievement in the elements of each of the three Green Ribbon Schools Pillars while meeting high college- and career-ready standards are eligible to apply.
- Colorado is permitted as many as **four school nominations** and **one district nomination**.
- The title is accorded for one year only, and is non-renewable.

Green Ribbon Schools Award Pillars



Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

- **Reduced or eliminated greenhouse gas emissions** using an energy audit 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;
- **Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation;**
- **Reduced solid and hazardous waste production** through increased recycling, reduced consumption, and improved management, reduction or elimination, and storage of hazardous waste products (e.g., the purchase of, use of, and disposal of hazardous waste materials); and
- **Expanded use of alternative transportation** to, during, and from school, through active promotion of locally available options and implementation of enabling projects and policies.

Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness

- An integrated school environmental health program based on an **operations and facility-wide environmental management system** that considers student and staff health and safety in all practices related to design, construction, renovation, operations, and maintenance of schools and grounds.
- **High standards of health and wellness, and quantity and quality outdoor time** for both students and staff.

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

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

Application Elements for Schools and Districts

Application Elements

Part I: *Does not count toward page limit*

- Part IA: Applicant Information
- Part IB: Program Assurances

Part II: *15-page limit*

- Application Narrative (including Summary)
 - For schools: answer questions
 - For districts: write narrative

Summary Narrative

- Provide a one-page description of the school/district's efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education.
- Summarizing the school/district's strengths and accomplishments, provide a concise and coherent “snapshot” that describes how the school is representative of your state's highest achieving green school efforts.
- Focus on what makes the school/district worthy of becoming a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School.
- Highlight any awards or recognition the school has received for its work in the three Pillars.
- Be sure to cover all Pillars and Elements thoroughly and equally in this summary narrative.

Application Narrative



Part II: Application Narrative

For schools:

- The template on **pages 8-18** must be used to complete the application.
- **Answer each question** by checking or typing in the information requested.
- **Free responses** are limited to the word limit noted following the question.
- **No written narrative** is required outside of what is requested within this template.

For districts:

- The format outlined on **pages 8-10** must be.
- Respond to the three (3) Green Ribbon Pillars through a **narrative response** adhering to the criteria listed under Application Format on page 5, providing specific data to support the narrative.

Part II: Application Narrative

For both schools and districts :

- If the applicant is not able to meet the criteria for any Element within any of the three Pillars, put “N/A” and explain why it is unable to meet the criteria.
- The total Application Narrative portion of the application, including the Summary Narrative, may not exceed 15 pages.

Schools: Pillar I, Element A

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Element IA: Reduced or Eliminated Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1. Has your school reduced its total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Current Energy Usage (kBTY/student/year): _____ Current Energy Usage (kBTY/sq. ft./year): _____

Percentage Reduction: _____ Over M/YYYY – M/YYYY: _____

How did you document this reduction? _____

2. What percentage of your school's energy is obtained from:

On-site Renewable Energy Generation: _____ Type: _____

Purchased Renewable Energy: _____ Type: _____

Participation in USDA Fuel for Schools, DOE Wind for Schools, or other federal or state school energy program: _____

3. Can your school demonstrate a reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Percentage Reduction: _____ Over M/YYYY – M/YYYY: _____

Initial GHG Emissions Rate (MT eCO₂/Person): _____ Final GHG Emissions Rate (MT eCO₂/Person): _____

Offsets: _____ How did you calculate the reduction? _____

4. Do you track resource use in EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what is your score? _____ If score is above a 75, have you applied for ☐ Yes - Year: _____

and received ENERGY STAR certification? ☐ No

Districts: Pillar I, Element A

Describe how your district is reducing or eliminating greenhouse gas emissions. Explain how your district has:

- reduced its total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline;
- an overall plan in place to manage and reduce energy use, such as an energy master plan;
- schools that track resource use using the EPA Energy STAR Portfolio Manager; and
- schools that have obtained energy from on-site or purchased renewable energy.

Schools: Pillar I, Element B

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Element IB: Improved Water Quality, Efficiency, and Conservation

8. Can school demonstrate a reduction in its total water consumption from an initial baseline?

Average Baseline Water Use (gallons per occupant): _____ Current Water Use (gallons per occupant): _____

Percentage Reduction in Domestic Water Use: _____ Percentage Reduction in Irrigation Water Use: _____

Time Period Measured (MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY): _____

How did you document this reduction? (i.e., ENERGY STAR

Portfolio Manager, utility bills, school district reports) _____

9. Percentage of school's landscaping considered water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate: _____

Types of plants used and location: _____

10. Describe alternate water sources used for irrigation, if possible. (50 word max)

11. Describe any efforts to reduce storm water runoff and/or reduce impermeable surfaces. (50 word max)

Districts: Pillar I, Element B

Describe how your district is improving water quality, efficiency, and conservation. Explain how your district has:

- reduced its total water consumption from an initial baseline;
- demonstrated efforts to reduce storm water runoff and/or reduce impermeable surfaces;
- alternate water sources used for irrigation;
- schools with water-conserving fixtures and/or appliances; and
- landscaping and/or grounds at your schools considered ecologically beneficial, water-efficient, or regionally appropriate.

Schools: Pillar I, Element C

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Element IC: Reduced Waste Production

17. What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfilling or incinerating due to reduction, recycling and/or composting? Complete all the calculations below to receive points.

A: Monthly Garbage Service in Cubic Yards

(Garbage Dumpster Size(s)) x (# of Collections per Month) x (% Full When Collected) = _____

B: Monthly Recycling Volume in Cubic Yards

(Recycling Dumpster Sizes(s)) x (# of Collections per Month) x (% Full When Collected) = _____

C: Monthly Compostable Materials Volume(s) in Cubic Yards

(Food Scrap/Food Soiled Paper Dumpster Size(s)) x (# of Collections per Month) x (% Full When Collected) = _____

Recycling Rate = $((B + C) \div (A + B + C) \times 100)$ = _____

Monthly Waste Generated per Person = $(A \div \# \text{ of Students and Staff})$ = _____

18. What percentage of your school's total office/classroom paper content is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed, and/or chlorine-free? _____

19. List the types and amounts of hazardous waste generated at your school:

Flammable Liquids	Corrosive Liquids	Toxics	Mercury	Other

Districts: Pillar I, Element C

Describe how your district is reducing waste production by having sound methods of disposal for solid and hazardous wastes. Explain how your district:

- diverts waste from landfilling or incinerating;
- promotes reduction, recycling and/or composting efforts in schools or has district-wide efforts;
- purchases office/classroom paper that is made from post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed, and/or chlorine-free;
- safely handles hazardous waste generated at schools; and
- has “green cleaning” custodial standards.

Schools: Pillar I, Element D

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Element ID: Use of Alternative Transportation

21. What percentage of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 + students in the car) to/from school? (Note if your school does not use school buses.) _____

How is this data calculated? (50 word max)

22. Has your school implemented?

- ☐ Designated carpool parking stalls.
- ☐ A well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses).
- ☐ Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.
- ☐ Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School.

Describe activities in your safe routes program: (50 word max)

23. Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact.
(50 word max)

Districts: Pillar I, Element D

Describe your district's use and promotion of alternative transportation.

Explain how your district:

- **has efficient transportation use that has reduced your district's environmental impact;**
- **encourages students and staff to walk, bike, or carpool to school; and**
- **implements "no idling" policies, carpool stalls, safe routes to school programs, or other district-wide policies and practices to promote alternative transportation.**

Schools: Pillar II, Element A

Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness

Element IIA: Integrated School Environmental Health Program

1. Provide details on your school's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program including year of implementation, program responsibility/oversight, pest monitoring process, record keeping, pesticide use strategy, and notification practices (if required). (50 word max)

2. Describe your efforts to reduce reliance on pesticides, and provide data on volume reductions over time, if available. (50 word max)

3. Which of the following practices does your school employ to minimize exposure to hazardous contaminants? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice. Check all that apply. (100 word max each)

☐ Our school prohibits smoking on campus and in public school buses.

Districts: Pillar II, Element A

Describe how your district improves the health and wellness of students and staff by integrating school environmental health programs and promoting sound health and wellness practices. Explain how your district has:

- **an Integrated Pest Management plan;**
- **reduced or eliminated reliance on pesticides;**
- **contaminant controls and chemical management in your schools;**
and
- **quality ventilation, asthma trigger controls, and moisture control in your schools.**

Schools: Pillar II, Element B

Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness

Element IIB: Health and Wellness

8. Which practices does your school employ to promote nutrition, physical activity and overall school health? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. Check all that apply. (100 word max each)

☐ Our school participates in the USDA's HealthierUS School Challenge. Level and Year:

☐ Our school participates in a Farm-to-School program to use local, fresh food.

☐ Our school has an on-site food garden.

☐ Our school garden supplies food for our students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class, or to the community.

Districts: Pillar II, Element B

Describe how your district promotes nutrition, physical activity (including outdoors) and overall school health. Explain how your district has:

- schools with on-site school food gardens;
- schools that participate in farm-to-school programs and/or schools that provide fresh, local, and organic food to students;
- students who spend at least 120 minutes per week in school-supervised physical activity; and
- schools that participate in Sunwise, USDA's HealthierUS School Challenge, or any other nationally recognized programs that promote health and wellness.

Schools: Pillar II, Element C

Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness

Element IIC: Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety

10. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, describe the health-related initiatives or approaches used by the school:

11. Does your school partner with any postsecondary institutions, businesses, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and/or safety?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, describe these partnerships:

12. Does your school have a school nurse and/or a school-based health center?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Districts: Pillar II, Element C

Describe how your district promotes coordinated school health approaches among your schools or any other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues. Explain how your district has:

- health education, health services, nurses and health centers in any of your schools;
- efforts to support student mental health and school climate, such as counseling, psychological and social services in any of your schools; and
- efforts to promote staff health as well as family and community involvement.

Schools: Pillar III, Element A

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element IIIA: Interdisciplinary Learning About the Key Relationships between Dynamic Environmental, Energy, and Human Systems

1. Which policies does your school employ to help ensure effective, place-based, environmental and sustainability education? Check all that apply. Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max each)

☐ A written definition of environmental literacy and/or a definition of environmental learning outcomes including knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, and civic responsibility.

☐ A set of policies to promote environmental education and sustainability.

☐ An environmental or sustainability literacy requirement.

Districts: Pillar III, Element A

Describe how your district provides effective environmental and sustainability education. Explain how your district:

- incorporates interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems into schools;
- incorporates environmental/sustainability literacy requirements into curricula;
- integrates environmental/sustainability concepts into assessments, and whether students are proficient on these assessments; and
- provides professional development to teachers (and staff) related to environmental and sustainability education.

Schols: Pillar III, Element B

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element IIIB: Use of the Environment and Sustainability to Develop STEM Content, Knowledge, and Thinking Skills

4. For schools serving grades 9-12, provide:

Percentage of last year's eligible graduates who completed the AP Environmental Science course during their high school career: _____

Percentage scoring a 3 or higher: _____

5. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning science, technology, engineering, and mathematics thinking skills and content knowledge? (200 word max)

6. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning green technologies and career pathways? (200 word max)

Districts: Pillar III, Element B

Describe how your district uses the environment and sustainability issues to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills. Explain how your district:

- provides AP Environmental Science courses and/or other environmental education electives for students, and whether students are proficient in these courses; and
- promotes learning about green technologies and career pathways in your schools.

Schools: Pillar III, Element C

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element IIIC: Development and Application of Civic Knowledge and Skills

7. Describe students' civic/community engagement projects integrating environment and sustainability topics. (200 word max)

8. Describe students' meaningful outdoor learning experiences at every grade level. (200 word max)

9. Describe how outdoor learning is used to teach an array of subjects in context (place-based education), engage the broader community, and develop civic skills. (200 word max)

10. Describe your partnerships to help your school and other schools achieve in the 3 Pillars. Include both the scope and impact of these partnerships. (200 word max)

Districts: Pillar III, Element C

Describe how your district promotes the development and application of civic knowledge and skills through environmental and sustainability education. Explain how your district:

- provides civic/community engagement projects integrating environment and sustainability topics;
- provides students meaningful outdoor learning experiences at every grade level; and
- uses outdoor learning to develop civic skills and engage the broader community.

Questions?



Scoring Rubric for all applications

Scoring Rubric for all applications

- Total application points: **150 Points**
- Pay attention to the Scoring Rubric for Elements included in each Pillar!
 - Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs **(45 Points)**
 - Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness **(45 Points)**
 - Pillar III: Environmental and Sustainability Education **(45 Points)**
 - Cross-Cutting Questions **(15 Points)**

**Scoring Rubric can be found on pages 19-24 for schools, and pages 11-16 for districts.*

Pillar I Scoring Rubric example

SECTION B: Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs			45 Points
Element IA: Improved energy conservation/energy-efficient building(s)			
5	10	15	
<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some reductions in energy use from baseline. 	<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates substantial reductions in energy use from baseline; • Generates or purchases some of its energy from renewable sources; • Measures and offsets some of its remaining carbon footprint; • Has received green building recognition for new, renovated, and/or existing building; • Has energy master plan or equivalent. 	<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates reductions in energy use from baseline by 30% or more; • Generates or purchases 30% or more of its energy from renewable sources; • Measures and offsets a substantial amount of its remaining carbon footprint; • Has received Energy STAR certification(s) for school(s); • Has received green building recognition for new, renovated, and/or existing building(s); • Has energy master plan or equivalent and demonstrates strong commitment to plan. 	
Reader Comments:			Element IA Points

Pillar II Scoring Rubric example

SECTION C: Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness			45 Points
Element IIA: An integrated school environmental health program			
5	10	15	
<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes reduced use of pesticides; • Complies with all relevant state laws related to smoking, mercury, carbon monoxide, radon, and other hazardous chemicals and materials; • Has carbon monoxide alarms and inventory of appliances; • Keeps relative humidity low and mitigates mold when it is found; • Ensures good ventilation. 	<p>In addition, applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements an Integrated Pest Management plan that eliminates pesticides indoors and outdoors; • Actively manages chemicals to minimize student and staff exposure; • Reduces some environmental asthma triggers; • Implements an Indoor Air Quality Program equivalent to Tools for Schools; • Describes several measures to protect student and staff health and safety. 	<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has addressed everything in this section and describes numerous, comprehensive, and proactive approaches to eliminating environmental health and safety hazards (physical, biological, chemical, natural); including, for example, environmental asthma triggers, pesticides, mold, and mercury. 	
Reader Comments:			Element IIA Points

Pillar III Scoring Rubric example

SECTION D: Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education			45 Points
Element IIIA: Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy and human systems			
5	10	15	
<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has limited policies to promote environmental and sustainability (E/S) education; • Has few or no E/S academic programs; • Has limited E/S co-curricular programs such as student club(s), field trips, service learning projects, or place-based environmental education; • Has limited annual E/S professional development opportunities, if any. 	<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a written definition of environmental literacy and/or environmental learning outcome(s); • Has some policies to promote E/S education; • Has some E/S academic programs across some subjects and/or grade spans; • Has some E/S co-curricular programs focusing on understanding the key relationships between dynamic environmental and human systems; • Has some teachers who participate in one or more E/S professional development opportunities annually; • Has a way to assess student E/S learning and achievement such as classroom and school assessments. 	<p>Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the written definition of environmental literacy and/or learning outcome(s), has an E/S literacy requirement; • Has well-documented policies and practices to promote E/S education; • Has extensive E/S academic programs in most subjects and/or grades; • Has extensive E/S co-curricular programs, including for place-based environmental education, focusing on understanding the key relationships between dynamic environmental and human systems; • Has most teachers who participate in one or more E/S professional development opportunities annually; • Demonstrates high student achievement in E/S learning on assessments. 	
Reader Comments:			Element IIIA Points

Cross-Cutting Questions

Scoring Rubric

SECTION E: Cross-Cutting Questions			15 Points
1	3	5	
Applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in a program that benchmarks progress. 	In addition, applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has received one award recognizing environmental and/or sustainability excellence. 	In addition, applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has received more than one award and/or has achieved an advanced level of progress in at least one recognized program. 	
Reader Comments:			Points
1	3	5	
Applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has at least one innovative or unique practice and/or partnership to help reduce its environmental footprint (could be related to footprint monitoring, access to community expertise, training, in-kind support, student/community engagement, contests, or other practices). 	Applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has at least two innovative or unique practices and/or partnerships to reduce its footprint. 	Applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has at least three or more innovative or unique practices and/or partnerships to reduce its footprint. 	
Reader Comments:			Points
1	3	5	
Photos and/or video of applicant's environment, health, and educational features are included.	Photos and/or video feature students engaged in STEM, civics, and environment/sustainability education activities, along with photo captions.	Photos and/or videos show environment, health and STEM, service learning and environment/sustainability education activities that tell the story of applicant's unique and innovative features are included.	
Reader Comments:			Points
Total Points: Cross-Cutting Questions			/15

Photos & Videos for all applications

You are encouraged to submit up to five (5) photos (with appropriate permissions) or up to 5 minutes of video content. Please provide photos/video in a zipped folder as an attachment along with your completed application in an email to: CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us



Submission & Review Processes



Review Process

Receiving a USDE Green Ribbon Schools Award is a two-step process.

- **First step (CDE):**
 - Schools and districts complete and submit the application.
 - Applications will be reviewed by CDE staff and experts from the field.
 - Applicants recommended for nomination will receive a site visit prior to receiving nomination for the award.
- **Second step (USDE):**
 - Schools (up to four nominees) and district (one nominee) provide signatures for the Nominee Presentation Form that will be sent to the USDE along with the nominee's application.
 - A federal review will select the honorees from the CDE's nominations.
- ***This is a competitive process – there is no guarantee that submitting a proposal will result in a nomination.***

Application & Nomination Timeline

Activity	Deadline
Letters of Intent Due	September 16, 2016
Office Hours at USGBC Summit	November 4, 2016
Applications Due	December 1, 2016, by 11:59 pm
Site Visits by CDE	January 9-13, 2017
CDE Sends Nominations to USDE	February 1, 2017
Applicants Notified of Status by USDE	By April 22, 2017 (Earth Day)

Letter of Intent

Submit online via SurveyMonkey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/greenribbon2016.

Green Ribbon Schools Award - Letter of Intent

Letters of Intent due Friday, September 16, 2016, by 11:59 pm.

Please complete the information requested below to indicate your intention to apply for the **Green Ribbon Schools Award**.

Name of District or IHE:

Applying on behalf of the following school (if applicable):

Name of Authorized Representative:

Name of Contact for the Proposal:

Contact Telephone Number:

Contact E-mail Address:

I affirm that I am the named authorized representative from the School/District/IHE, or that the named authorized representative is aware and has approved of the intent to apply for the grant opportunity.
☐

If interested in receiving help on your application, Green Ribbon Mentors are available to provide assistance. If you are interested in receiving this service, please check the box below.

☐ Yes, I am interested in working with a Green Ribbon Mentor



Submission Process

The applications are available at www.cde.state.co.us/cdeawards/greenribbonschools

- An electronic copy of the application must be submitted to CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us by Thursday, December 1, 2016, by 11:59 pm.
- The electronic version should include all required components of the application as one document.
- Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
- If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application within 24 hours of the deadline, please email CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us.

Questions?



Resources

- You may consult the [Green Strides Resources Page and Webinar Series](#) for more information related to each Pillar and Element.
- For additional resources, please visit the U.S. Department of Education's [Green Ribbon Schools website](#).
- If you would be interested in receiving help on your application, Green Ribbon Mentors, including the USGBC Green TIES Mentorship Program, are available to provide assistance.
 - *If interested, complete the online [Letter of Intent](#) (Attachment A) and mark the last checkbox by Friday, September 16.*



Contact Information

For **STEM program** questions contact:

Joanna Bruno (Bruno_J@cde.state.co.us or 303-919-3907)

For **facilities/green content** questions contact:

Cheryl Honigsberg (Honigsberg_C@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6915)

For **application-specific** questions contact:

Anna Young (Young_A@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6250)