



Instructions for Use of Framework for Evaluation of Schools by Authorities Making Nominations to the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Nominating Authority Evaluation Support Framework Based on Progress Toward Pillars:

In the pilot year, the applications of nominees for the U.S. Department of Education (the “Department” or “ED”) Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) will be reviewed based on schools’ current achievement in the three Pillars and Elements, according to the Nominating Authority Evaluation Support Framework provided by ED.¹ In completing the evaluation of the school and nomination to ED, the authorities should assess how well the nominee demonstrates achievement in all three Pillars and corresponding Elements. Nominees demonstrating exemplary achievement in all three categories according to all Pillars and Elements will be ranked highest.

Pillars: The three Pillars are: 1) environmental impact and energy efficiency; 2) healthy school environments; and 3) environmental and sustainability education. In the framework, the Pillars are listed under Column A.

Elements: Column B then lists the key Elements of each Pillar. These Elements provide more detail and high level objectives for each Pillar.

Categories: Column C organizes the Objectives in Column D into Categories.

Practices: Column D offers nominating authorities a list of possible Objectives that they might use to assess a schools’ progress toward the corresponding Element of each Pillar. While authorities are strongly encouraged use all of these Objectives as the basis for their review of applicants, they may choose to use the Objectives suggested in Column D or adapt this list in any manner as they see fit.

Authorities making nominations to ED should note that schools must comply with all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, tribal and local health, environment and safety statutory and regulatory requirements in order to win an award.²

¹ In future years, evaluators may be required to assess quantified achievement through review of the school community’s comprehensive *green school plan* that incorporates, at a minimum, the plan elements listed under “The Three Pillars and Elements,” and a *baseline assessment* for each of the elements of the plan; however, this is not a requirement in the pilot year.

² See List of Federal, State and Local Civil Rights, Health, Environment and Safety Statutory and Regulatory Requirements. Note that nominating authorities must show documentary or on-site verification of compliance with all applicable requirements to the nominated school.



Demonstrating Progress: Column E then suggests some existing metrics which nominating authorities may suggest that schools provide when completing their applications to authorities for their consideration in nomination to ED in order to demonstrate progress toward the specified goal.

Resources: Column F provides nominating authorities and schools with online measurement and assessment tools as well as online resources for further information. This is not currently an exhaustive list of resources, but a work in progress during the pilot year.

Other Considerations: Note that ED-GRS focuses only on those sustainability, health and education issues that are a result of the human/environment interaction. There are many additional education and health issues with which a school should be concerned but are beyond the scope of ED-GRS and thus not included in the Framework.