



*Note to Nominating Authorities: This sample application is provided to assist you, but is not required. You are encouraged to adapt it to your jurisdiction's needs. The aim is to use a format that shows how your nominees' are high performing in every Pillar within the allowable page limit. How you achieve that is up to you.*

### **ED-GRS Sample Application for Schools**

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

Becoming a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School is a two-step process. The first step is to complete and submit this form to be selected as a nominee by an eligible state nominating authority. Then, the U.S. Department of Education reviews nominees put forth by eligible authorities and confirms a cohort annually.

At both levels, selection is based on documentation of the applicant's progress in all three of the ED-GRS Pillars. Note that it is not sufficient to be high performing in one area alone and you should review the [ED Pillars](#) before completing this application.

It will help you to assemble a team to complete the application. This team might include: a facilities manager, physical education director, food services director, curriculum director, finance department representatives, teachers, and students. You may wish to consult the [Green Strides](#) for benchmarking tools, programs, and grants related to the Pillars.

**State may wish to insert their scoring rubric, if they use one.**

Applications are due by **xyz** to **xyz**. We will select nominees, notify them by **xyz**, and submit them to the U.S. Department of Education by February 1, 20xx.

### **Nominee Presentation Form Certifications**

Note that, if selected for nomination to ED-GRS, the school principal and district superintendent must be prepared to certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true; however, in no case is a private school required to make any certification with regard to the public school district in which it is located. **[Some states have all applicants sign certifications when submitting an application to the state. Others wait until they have selected applicants to request the Nominee Presentation Form be signed.]**

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of early learning to 12.



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2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction as highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. Neither the nominated public school nor its public school district is refusing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is not subject to the jurisdiction of OCR. The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.
4. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the public school district concluding that the nominated public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
5. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
6. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the public school or public school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or public school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
7. The school meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

### **School Contact and Demographic Information**

School Name (in full – please do not omit the word 'school' if that is part of your official name):

Address:            City:            State:            Zip:

Website:            Facebook:            Twitter:

Principal or Head of School Name:            Email:            Phone:

Lead Applicant Name (if different):            Title:            Email:            Phone:



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<p>Level</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK - 5 or 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12)	<p>School Type</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet	<p>How would you describe your school?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<p>District Name</p> <p>Is your school in one of the largest 50 districts in the nation?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households?</p> <p>( ) Yes What percent?          ( ) No</p>	<p>% Minority:          % Limited English Proficient:          Special Education:</p>	<p>Total Enrolled:</p> <p>Graduation rate:          Attendance rate:</p>	

**Overview Summary Narrative for Highlights Report** [You may wish to allow 2 pages limit for this overview essay, bearing in mind that you may need to have them edit for structure and clarity]

Provide a narrative describing your institution’s efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Be sure to cover every ED-GRS [Pillar](#) and underlying element in this overview of your work. See some examples in our past [Highlights Reports](#).

**Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs** [You may wish to allow 3 pages for each of these essays, depending on how much you wish to collect and if you plan to have them synthesize for a final submission to ED]

Describe how your school is reducing environmental impact and costs by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use; improving water quality, efficiency, and conservation; reducing waste production; and encouraging alternative transportation. Describe how your conservation and efficiency work has led to cost



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savings and resource usage reductions of energy, water, and electricity over time. If you have on-site or purchase renewable energy, indicate what percentage of your institution's electricity usage it generates. If you participate in benchmarking, auditing, or behavioral change programs, indicate your participation and any significant benchmarks achieved. Include the year your institution was built, the year of any major renovations or retrofits, and any building certifications achieved. Describe your recycling and composting programs and metrics demonstrating waste reduction. Describe efforts to reduce irrigation and domestic water use, use school grounds for ecologically beneficial purposes, and to encourage alternative transportation.

### **Pillar 2: Improved Health and Wellness of Students, Faculty, and Staff**

Describe how your school improves the health and wellness of students, faculty and staff by integrating a campus-wide environmental health program and promoting sound health and wellness practices. You should discuss pest management, contaminant controls and ventilation, asthma controls, indoor air quality, moisture control, and chemical management. Cover such areas as your handling of mold, mercury, carbon monoxide, pesticides, radon, cleaning products, and drinking water. Address the amount and type of outdoor physical activity time that your students and staff engage in, as well as the types of fresh, local, nutritious food that they eat. You may wish to reference health programs participated in and awards won, school garden programs, and farm to school participation. Other components you may want to include are: health education, health services, counseling, psychological and social services, staff health promotion and family and community involvement.

### **Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education**

Describe how your school provides effective environmental and sustainability education. Include examples of interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems. Demonstrate how your institution uses the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content knowledge and thinking skills. Discuss how your institution develops and applies civic knowledge and skills to environmental and sustainability education. Describe outdoors learning time, any environmental or sustainability literacy requirements, assessments, professional development, and classes or programs that emphasize environmental and sustainability education. You will want to show that environmental and sustainability education is integrated throughout the curriculum and not just covered in one subject or class.

### **Photographs**

Submit up to 5/10 [You may want to have some extras so you can submit best 5 to ED] photographs. Please save your photos using descriptive language. For example, "Students conduct water quality tests in outdoor classroom with science majors from nearby university x" would be more helpful than "Photo 1." Photos should be action shots, not posed. By sending these photos, you are giving the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them.



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### **Resources**

**State** Green Ribbon Schools link: xyz

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools: [www.ed.gov/green-ribbon-schools](http://www.ed.gov/green-ribbon-schools)

SAMPLE FOR NOMINATING AUTHORITIES