

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award

Examples of Data for Applications

This document provides ideas for data that could be provided with your application for the Green Ribbon Schools Award as evidence of your accomplishments. You may choose the items that apply for your situation or provide other data that support the claims you are making in your application. You may copy these items into your application or include them in your narrative.

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and cost

Element 1A: Reduced or eliminated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (preference for schools that have used state of Minnesota B3Benchmarking)

1. Reduction in Greenhouse Gas emission
Percentage reduction: Over (mm/yyyy - mm/yyyy):
Initial GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person):
Final GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person):
Offsets: How did you calculate the reduction?
2. Does your school have an Energy Master Plan? Describe the areas it covers.
3. Do you track resource use in EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager? What score? Have you applied for and received ENERGY STAR certification (which year)?
4. Reduction in total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline
Current energy usage (kBTU/student/year):
Current energy usage (kBTU/sq. ft. /year):
Percentage reduction: Over (mm/yyyy - mm/yyyy):
How did you document this reduction?
5. Sources of school's energy. What is the percentage of each?
On-site renewable energy generation: Type:
Purchased renewable energy: Type:
Participation in U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Fuel for Schools, Department of Education Wind for Schools or other federal or state school energy program.
6. For schools constructed or renovated in the past 10 years
Percentage of the building area that meets green building standards:
Certification level and year: Total constructed or renovated area:
7. Other ways your school has reduced energy consumption and the production of greenhouse gasses.

Element 1B: Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation

1. Reduction in your school's 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):

Explain how you documented this reduction (e.g., ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, utility bills, school district reports):

2. Measures you are taking to reduce water consumption, such as controlling leaks, water-efficient devices, and re-use practices.
3. Percentage of your landscaping that is considered water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate.
Types of plants used and location:
4. Describe alternate water sources used for irrigation.
5. Describe any efforts to reduce storm water runoff and/or reduce impermeable surfaces.
6. Measures to ensure the school drinking water is safe, such as lead testing, well testing, and steps to reduce lead.
7. Percentage of the school grounds are devoted to ecologically beneficial uses such as natural areas, rain gardens, and run-off buffer and provide descriptions.

Element 1C: Reduced waste production

1. What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfilling or incinerating due to reduction, recycling and/or organics diversion (food to people, food to hogs and/or composting)? Note that Minnesota Statutes, section 115A.151, requires that schools must recycle a minimum of three material types.

Monthly garbage service in cubic yards (garbage dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected):

Monthly recycling volume in cubic yards (recycling dumpster sizes(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected):

Monthly organics diversion (food to people, food to hogs and/or composting) volume(s) in cubic yards (leftover food collection bin/food scrap and/or soiled paper dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected):

Recycling and diversion rate:

Monthly waste generated per person:

2. Percentage of your school's total office/classroom paper content by cost that is post-consumer material or fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed by the Forest Stewardship Council? (If a product is only 30 percent recycled content, only 30 percent of the cost should be counted.)
3. Types and amounts of hazardous waste generated at your school. (Note that Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.33, bans mercury in Minnesota schools.)
 - Flammable Liquids:
 - Corrosive liquids:
 - Toxics:
 - Mercury:
 - Other:

How is this measured?

How is hazardous waste disposal tracked?

4. Other measures taken to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste, use recycled materials, and properly dispose of hazardous materials, including electronic devices.

Element 1D: Alternative Transportation

1. Percentage of your students who walk, bike, bus, or carpool (two or more students in the car) to/from school? (Note if your school does not use school buses.) How is this data calculated?
2. Has your school implemented any of the following?
 - 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.
 - pRoutes to school or Safe Routes to School.
3. Describe activities in your safe routes program and other events to encourage students to walk, bike or carpool, including number of participants.
4. Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact.
5. Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of students and staff

Element 2A: Integrated school environmental health program

1. Describe your school's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) efforts, including IPM/green certifications earned, routine inspections, pest identification, monitoring, record-keeping, pesticide reduction notification of staff and parents, etc.
2. Which of the following practices does your school employ to minimize exposure to hazardous contaminants? Explain with specific examples of actions taken.
 - Our school has a comprehensive indoor air quality management program that is consistent with Minnesota Department of Health best practices which are based on Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools.
 - Our school is in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.33, and has identified and properly removed sources of elemental mercury and prohibits its purchase and use in the school. (This does not apply for fluorescent bulbs, mercury thermostats, switches and gauges for HVAC systems.)
 - Our school uses fuel burning equipment (such as boilers, water heaters and ovens) and has taken steps to protect occupants from carbon monoxide (CO).
 - Our school has sampled frequently occupied rooms in the last five years at or below ground level for radon gas and has fixed and retested all rooms with levels that tested at or above 4 pCi/L.
 - Our school has identified and properly manages or has removed, where applicable, asbestos-containing materials, according to U.S. EPA Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) regulations and, where applicable, the Minnesota Department of Health asbestos abatement rules.
 - Our school has identified and properly removed sources of lead according to the U.S. EPA's Renovation, Remodeling and Painting Rule where lead containing paint may be disturbed in areas used by children under the age of six.

- Our school has identified any wood playground or other structures that contain chromate copper arsenate and has taken steps to eliminate exposure.
 - Our school has working local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources.
3. Describe how your school controls and manages chemicals routinely used in the school (including science, shop and maintenance) to minimize student and staff exposure.
 4. Which green cleaning custodial service standard is used (i.e., Green Seal Standard for Commercial and Institutional Cleaning Services (GS-42), the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard – Green Building)? What percentage of all products is third-party certified?
 5. Describe actions your school takes to control moisture from leaks, condensation, and excess humidity and promptly clean up mold or remove moldy materials when it is found.
 6. Describe actions your school takes to ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation standards [Minnesota State Mechanical Code/American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) guideline or 15 cubic feet per minute (cfm) of fresh air per occupant]. Describe your school's practices for inspecting and maintaining the building's ventilation system and all unit ventilators to ensure they are clean and operating properly.
 7. Describe steps your school takes to protect indoor environmental quality, such as access to daylight, lighting quality, views to nature, acoustics, thermal comfort, etc.
 8. Describe any other actions your school takes to manage indoor environmental hazards, such as ice arena contaminants, PCBs, kitchen equipment, and air quality in swimming pools. Including doing periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to identify environmental health and safety issues and take corrective action.

Element 2B: Nutrition and Fitness

1. Which practices does your school employ to promote nutrition, physical activity and overall school health? Explain with specific examples of actions taken.
 - Our school participates in the USDA's Healthier US School Challenge. Level and year:
 - Our school participates in a Farm to School program to use local, fresh food.
 - Our school has a fruit, vegetable and greens salad bar.
 - 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.
 - Food purchased by our school is certified as "environmentally preferable" (USDA certified organic, Fair Trade, Food Alliance or Rainforest Alliance). Percentage: Type:
 - Our students spent at least 120 minutes per week over the past year in school supervised physical education.
 - At least 50 percent of our students' annual physical education takes place outdoors.
 - Health measures are integrated into assessments.
 - Our students have participated in the EPA's Sunwise program (or equivalent UV protection and skin health education program). Percentage of students that participated:
2. Describe the type of outdoor learning activities, exercise and recreation available, including features such as trails, natural playgrounds, gardens, habitat projects and outdoor classrooms and describe the frequency of use.
3. Describe any other efforts to improve nutrition and fitness, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety

1. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues? Describe them.
2. Does your school partner with any postsecondary institutions, businesses, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and/or safety? Describe them.
3. Does your school have a school nurse and/or a school-based health center?
4. Describe your school's efforts to support student mental health and school climate (e.g., anti-bullying programs, peer counseling).

Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element 3A: Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy and human systems

1. Which practices does your school employ to help ensure effective environmental and sustainability education? Explain with specific examples of actions taken, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships.
 - Our school has an environmental or sustainability literacy requirement beyond state academic standards and graduation requirements.
 - Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated throughout the curriculum.
 - Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated into assessments.
 - Professional development in environmental and sustainability education is provided to all teachers.
 - Environmental courses, such as Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science.
 - Before- and after-school programs, summer activities and other enrichment programs teaching environment or sustainability concepts. These could include childcare programs, community education courses, parent education courses, and student green teams, environmental or outdoor clubs.

Element 3B: Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills

1. Describe how your school uses sustainability and the environment as a context for learning science, technology, engineering and mathematics thinking skills and content knowledge? (Don't just describe your science or STEM programs.)

Element 3C: Development and application of civic knowledge and skills

1. Describe students' civic/community engagement projects integrating environment and sustainability topics.
2. Describe how your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning green technologies and career pathways.