

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

The signatures of the school principal and district superintendent (or equivalents) on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. *In no case is a private school required to make any certification with regard to the public school district in which it is located.*

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades early learning to 12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement 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.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Name of Principal: Mrs. Maureen Covington
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name: St. Dominic School
(As it should appear on an award)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space*

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Maureen Covington Date: 1/7/22
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: Dr. Frank O'Linn
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)

District Name: Diocese of Cleveland

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Frank O'Linn Date: 1/7/22
(Superintendent's Signature)



Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is 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. The school meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: Ohio Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: Ms. Charlotte Jones-Ward

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlotte Jones-Ward".

Date: 2/1/2022

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

Expiration Date: December 31, 2023

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

St. Dominic School - Caring For God's Creation

St. Dominic School in Shaker Heights, Ohio is a leader in sustainability and environmental education. Located in an inner ring suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, the school serves students in grades K - 8 and is part of the Diocese of Cleveland. As a Catholic School, they took Pope Francis' message from his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* to care for God's creation and used it to begin a years-long process to increase environmental education at the school while reducing environmental impact.

Beginning in 2016, the school launched an initiative called "Caring for God's Creation." Students learned that the earth and all its inhabitants are gifts from God, and as such, need to be cared for with love. Since that time, they have expanded student knowledge of what it means to care for God's creation and how to put that into practice. At the same time, the building itself has been transformed in order to increase energy efficiency and create efficient systems for reducing, reusing and recycling efforts. In 2021, St. Dominic School received the Branch Class Award from Ohio EPA's Encouraging Environmental Excellence in Education Program. This award recognizes that St. Dominic School has "continuously expanded their school's environmental stewardship while also incorporating environmental and sustainable concepts in the school curriculum." The school is working toward the next level of the Award, the Leaf Class, which requires student-led learning.

What began as a call to increase recycling efforts has developed into an ambitious effort to eliminate food waste and reduce the school's carbon footprint. In 2021, St. Dominic School was awarded a Catholic Diocese of Cleveland grant from *Expanding the Educational Landscape* program which is part of the *Laudato Si'* Initiative. Funds from this grant were used to purchase recycling systems distributed throughout the building and reusable service materials for the cafeteria. Students at every grade level participate in that effort and learn that caring for the Earth is not just an Earth Day activity but a challenge to protect people and the planet as a requirement of our faith.

In the past five years, significant improvements to energy efficiency were implemented in the building. All light fixtures were changed to LED bulbs. Light sensors were added in each bathroom to eliminate unnecessary energy consumption, and hand sensors were installed on bathroom sinks to reduce water waste. After an energy audit was completed in 2020, the school implemented air conditioner use guidelines for classrooms and changes to thermostat settings in order to reduce energy consumption. St. Dominic School is eliminating door and window gaps to improve energy efficiency. They removed and renovated the shower area of the locker rooms and transformed the space into a maker space.

Other important building-wide improvements include low flow toilets and replacing water fountains with bottle filling stations. All students bring reusable water bottles to school each day and there are no plastic bottles used in the building.

Paper waste has been reduced significantly due to our relationship with River Valley Paper Company, who installed a paper collection bin in the school parking lot. Each hallway of the school has a paper collection bin and students bring the paper and cardboard out to the bin each week. Since we began our relationship with River Valley, they have collected on average 1,170 pounds of paper that can be recycled and reused.

The school also participates in several other recycling programs. The art teacher collects and recycles markers, crayons, and pens. The faculty collects and recycles coffee pods using a collection container from TerraCycle. School uniforms are reused through our annual Uniform Exchange, in which parents can take uniform items for free. Parents are encouraged to donate their own children's uniforms to the exchange. Additionally, school uniforms that are unwearable due to tears or stains are taken to The North Face store in Woodmere, Ohio, which collects clothing for recycling.

The biggest effort toward waste reduction has taken place in the school cafeteria. The school contracts with a local composting group called Rust Belt Riders. Students compost uneaten food daily and place it in a 32-gallon compost bin and is picked up by Rust Belt Riders each week. The compost is used to create tilth soil, which is living soil that improves plant lives and root growth. Tilth combats food waste, fights climate change, and supports the radical effort of growing your own food.

Another waste reduction effort in the cafeteria is the use of reusable trays, cups, and silverware. Instead of using disposable items, everything is collected and washed to be reused. Additionally, the school recycles all milk cartons. Plastic straws have been completely eliminated. The school cafeteria manager works with a local company to bring in fresh and local food products each day, so that food procurement is not adding to the school's carbon footprint as much as in years past.

Student and staff health is a major priority for St. Dominic School. As Pope Francis explained in *Laudato Si'*, "*Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology.*" Students at St. Dominic School have outdoor recess each day along with two physical education classes each week. The school has social-emotional learning classes presented by the school counselor. Students have opportunities to learn outside as long as the weather permits. Classes have yoga mats or portable chairs available to move learning to the grassy area outside the middle school wing. Each grade is encouraged to eat snacks outside, weather permitting, and to make use of the garden space (a work in progress) and the grotto across from the church.

The school has a robust health education program, which is aligned with the Ohio State Standards but also includes Catholic teaching about how our bodies are gifts from God. Posters and other reminders throughout the school encourage students to make healthy choices about food and exercise. The school has an active sports program for students in all grades. The primary purpose of the program is developmental. Students learn athletic skills in a variety of

sports and good sportsmanship and fair play are the rule. The entire school participates in a Field Day near the end of the school year that celebrates play and fun.

Each classroom in the school has a new air purifier in place and regular ventilation of the rooms occurs each day. Use of harsh chemical cleaners has been eliminated and replaced with environmentally friendly cleaning products. The school contracts with a pest control company that only visits the school after dismissal, so that there are at least 8 hours between treatment and students in the classroom. These efforts are intended to provide a safer, healthier environment for our staff and students.

Environmental and sustainability literacy is a priority at each grade level. In 2015, St. Dominic School was re-accredited with a goal of increasing STREAM education. In addition to completing the required coursework for each grade, the students complete one or more project-based STREAM activities each year. Some examples include the Cardboard Challenge, in which students in grades 5 - 8 took used cardboard and created usable furniture out of it. The seventh graders created biopolymers to be used in place of plastic. The first grade designed reusable grocery bags and worked with local grocery stores to encourage the use of reusable bags for customers. This year, each grade level is focusing on trying to solve problems related to infrastructure in the area. Our oldest students are looking for ways to improve the highway system to make it less damaging to both the environment and people in low-income neighborhoods.

At all levels, the religion curriculum includes a call for an understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, which has "Caring for God's Creation" as one of its main tenets. In science classes, students learn how to interact with living things and the environment in ways that promote respect for the earth and all its inhabitants. Each grade level has an earth science and life science component. For example, 5th grade students learn about biomes and ecosystems. This year, during their study of that topic, they focused on monarch migration. They observed monarch eggs on milkweed plants transform into chrysalises and, eventually, butterflies. As they learned about the impact of chemicals on monarch habitats, they created a blog and filmed short commercials encouraging people to stop using chemical pesticides.

Students at St. Dominic School participate in service learning at each grade level. One group with particular relevance to sustainability is our Earth Ambassadors Club. Those students serve the school community by overseeing the recycling and composting programs as well as planning and coordinating Earth Day programming. During the 2020-2021 school year, the group created signs for each classroom that remind people to turn off the lights when leaving the room.

St. Dominic School students and staff are committed to reducing the environmental impact of the school, improving student and staff members' health, and providing effective environmental and sustainability education. They believe, as Pope Francis wrote, "All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."

Green Ribbon School Application

School Information

School: St. Dominic School

District: _____



Applying as Building



Applying as District

District

Number: _____

Address: 3455 Norwood Rd., Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122

County: Cuyahoga

Contact person(s): Maureen Covington

Email: mcovington@stdominicschool.net

Phone: 216-561-4400

Top Official's Name: Maureen Covington

School Type (Select all that apply):

- Pre-K
- Elementary (K-5 or 6)
- Middle or Jr. High
- High School
- Post-Secondary
- Applying as K-12 District

How would you describe your school?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

School Type:

- Public
- Private/Independent
- Charter
- Other:

Facebook: @stdominicschool

Twitter: @stdomshaker

Instagram: @stdomshaker

YouTube: _____

Other: www.stdominicschool.net

School Demographics

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

- Yes
 No

What is your total enrollment? _____

Approximately what percentage of your school's students qualify for:

- Free Lunch
 Reduced Lunch*

*All students on Summer Seamless Option.
Last year 9% free and 4% reduced. Total
13% free/reduced.

Graduation Rate (if appropriate):	NA
Attendance Rate:	NA
Special Education %:	8%
Minority %:	30%
Pell%:	NA

SUMMARY NARRATIVE

Summary

St. Dominic School in Shaker Heights, Ohio is a leader in sustainability and environmental education, as well as reducing environmental impact. Located in an inner ring suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, the school serves students in grades K - 8 and is part of the Diocese of Cleveland. As a Catholic School, they took Pope Francis' message from his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* to care for God's creation and used it to begin a years-long process to increase environmental education at the school while reducing environmental impact.

Beginning in 2016, the school launched an initiative called "Caring for God's Creation." Students learned that the earth and all its inhabitants are gifts from God, and as such, need to be cared for with love. Since that time, they have expanded student knowledge of what it means to care for God's creation and how to put that into practice. At the same time, the building itself has been transformed in order to increase energy efficiency and create efficient systems for reducing, reusing and recycling efforts. In 2021, St. Dominic School received the Branch Class Award from Ohio EPA's Encouraging Environmental Excellence in Education Program (E4). This award recognizes that St. Dominic School has "continuously expanded their school's environmental stewardship while also incorporating environmental and sustainable concepts in the school curriculum." The school is working toward the next level of the E4 Award, the Leaf Class, which requires student-led learning.

What began as a call to increase recycling efforts has developed into an ambitious effort to eliminate food waste and reduce the school's carbon footprint. In February 2021, St. Dominic School was awarded a Catholic Diocese of Cleveland grant from *Expanding the Educational Landscape* program which is part of the *Laudato Si'* Initiative. Funds from this grant were used to purchase recycling systems distributed throughout the building and reusable service materials for the cafeteria. Students at every grade level participate in that effort and learn that caring for the Earth is not just an Earth Day activity but a challenge to protect people and the planet as a requirement of our faith.

In the past five years, significant energy efficiency improvements were implemented in the building. All light fixtures were changed to LED bulbs. Light sensors were added in each bathroom to eliminate unnecessary energy consumption, and hand sensors were installed on bathroom sinks to reduce water waste. After an energy audit was completed in 2020, the school implemented air conditioner use guidelines for classrooms and changes to thermostat settings in order to reduce energy consumption. St. Dominic School also eliminated door and window gaps to improve energy efficiency. They removed and renovated the shower area of the locker rooms and transformed the space into a maker space.

Other important building-wide improvements include low flow toilets and replacing water fountains with bottle filling stations. All students bring reusable water bottles to school each day and there are no plastic bottles provided in the building.

Paper waste has been reduced significantly due to our relationship with River Valley Paper Company, who installed a paper collection bin in the school parking lot. Each hallway of the school has a paper collection bin and students bring the paper and cardboard out to the bin each

week. Since we began our relationship with River Valley, they have collected on average 1,170 pounds of paper that can be recycled and reused.

The school also participates in several other recycling programs. The art teacher collects and recycles markers, crayons, and pens. The faculty collects and recycles coffee pods using a collection container from TerraCycle. School uniforms are reused through our annual Uniform Exchange, in which parents can take uniform items for free. Parents are encouraged to donate their own children's uniforms to the exchange. Additionally, school uniforms that are unwearable due to tears or stains are taken to The North Face store in Woodmere, Ohio, which collects clothing for recycling.

The biggest effort toward waste reduction has taken place in the school cafeteria. The school contracts with a local composting group called Rust Belt Riders. During lunch each day, students compost uneaten food which is placed in a 32-gallon compost bin and is picked up by Rust Belt Riders each week. The compost is used to create tith soil, which is living soil that improves plant lives and root growth. Tith combats food waste, fights climate change, and supports the radical effort of growing your own food.

Another waste reduction effort in the cafeteria is the use of reusable trays, cups, and silverware. Instead of throwing away paper or styrofoam trays and cups each day, everything is collected and washed to be reused the next day. Additionally, the school rinses out and recycles all milk cartons. Plastic straws have been completely eliminated. The school cafeteria manager works with local company Northern Haserot to bring in as many fresh and local food products as possible each day, so that food procurement is not adding to the school's carbon footprint as much as in years past.

Student and staff health is a major priority for St. Dominic School. As Pope Francis explained in *Laudato Si'*, "Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology." Students at St. Dominic School have outdoor recess each day along with two 45 minutes physical education classes each week. The school has a robust health curriculum that includes social-emotional learning classes presented by the school counselor.

Each classroom in the school has a new air purifier in place and regular ventilation of the rooms occurs each day. Use of harsh chemical cleaners has been eliminated and replaced with environmentally friendly cleaning products. The school contracts with a pest control company that only visits the school after dismissal, so that there are at least 8 hours between treatment and students in the classroom. These efforts are intended to provide a safer, healthier environment for our staff and students.

Environmental learning is a priority at each grade level. In 2015, St. Dominic School was re-accredited with a goal of increasing STREAM education. STREAM stands for science, technology, religion, engineering, art, and math. In addition to completing the required coursework for each grade as outlined in the Diocesan standards (based on Ohio's standards), the students complete one or more project-based STREAM activities each year. Some examples include the Cardboard Challenge, in which students in grades 5 - 8 took used cardboard and created usable furniture out of it. The seventh graders created biopolymers to be used in place of plastic. The first grade designed reusable grocery bags and worked with local grocery stores to encourage the use of reusable bags for customers. This year, each grade level is focusing on

trying to solve problems related to infrastructure in the area. Our oldest students are looking for ways to improve the highway system to make it less damaging to both the environment and people in low-income neighborhoods.

At all levels, the religion curriculum includes a call for an understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, which has “Caring for God’s Creation” as one of its main tenets. In science classes, students learn how to interact with living things and the environment in ways that promote respect for the earth and all its inhabitants. Each grade level has an earth science and life science component. For example, 5th grade students learn about biomes and ecosystems. This year, during their study of that topic, they focused on monarch migration. They observed monarch eggs on milkweed plants transform into chrysalises and, eventually, butterflies. As they learned about the impact of chemicals on monarch habitats, they created a blog and filmed short commercials encouraging people to stop using chemical pesticides.

Students at St. Dominic School participates in service learning at each grade level. One group with particular relevance to sustainability is our Earth Ambassadors Club. Those students serve the school community by overseeing the recycling and composting programs as well as planning and coordinating Earth Day programming. During the 20-21 school year, the group created signs for each classroom that remind people to turn off the lights when leaving the room.

St. Dominic School students and staff are committed to reducing the environmental impact of the school, improving student and staff members’ health, and providing effective environmental and sustainability education. They believe, as Pope Francis wrote, “All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.

PILLAR ONE: NET ZERO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Element 1A: Zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

Pillar I: NET ZERO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In April, 2021, St. Dominic School contracted with Independent Energy Consultants to have an energy audit of the school building. The results of that audit led to implementation of several energy reducing measures in the building. Five years earlier, the building had switched to LED light fixtures, but the audit showed that more efforts were needed to encourage students and staff to turn off lights and devices so that energy use would be reduced. Our Earth Ambassadors created signs for each classroom with reminders to “Save the Earth, Turn off the Lights” and staff were given instructions to turn off devices left overnight in the school.

Independent Energy Consultants also suggested the school implement a steam trap maintenance program and outdoor temperature reset control for the hydronic boilers. Both of these measures have been implemented by the custodial staff along with efforts to air seal all exterior doors.

In addition to those recommendations, the school has also implemented air conditioning usage guidelines for individual classrooms. The units are not in use if the outdoor temperature is below 72 degrees F. A system is in place to ensure that units are turned off at the end of the day. The

school thermostat will be set back to 62 degrees at night and no higher than 70 degrees while school is in session. Students are encouraged to wear uniform sweaters and sweatshirts.

The bathrooms have light sensors to reduce energy consumption when empty. Water bottle refill stations have replaced water fountains in order to have more water efficient products in place. Hand sensors on bathroom sinks reduce water waste.

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

The facility uses low flow toilets and sinks in all bathrooms. Water bottle filling stations have replaced water fountains to reduce water waste. Students are required to bring reusable water bottles to school each day and refill them at those stations. Taps, faucets, and bottle filling stations are cleaned each day and the filters are replaced as needed to provide the highest quality drinking water for students. Staff have access to filtered water in the staff lounge.

Element 1C: Reduced waste production.

Waste reduction has been a main priority at St. Dominic School. Waste has been diverted from landfill through composting and recycling. The school contracts with Rust Belt Riders to collect compost weekly. Students, staff, and faculty compost uneaten food at lunch. The school also contracts with River Valley Paper Company to collect their recyclable paper and cardboard. Students rinse out their milk cartons, which are taken to the local recycling center each week, along with the plastics and aluminum collected from containers placed throughout the school. Every floor and wing of the school have clearly labeled recycling containers to make the collection process easy for all ages of students.

The school collects and sends in the following materials for recycling: coffee pods, markers, crayons, pens. Used uniforms that are no longer wearable are sent to a fabric recycling center. Families are encouraged to take used uniforms during the school's Uniform Exchange, rather than purchasing new items.

When school supplies and classroom materials are purchased, many are certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. The Forest Stewardship Council, FSC, requires protection of old growth areas, including the restoration of old growth when it is not prevalent. Items that are SFI certified include expanding folders, 2-pocket folders, and graph paper.

Hazardous waste is limited by 90% or more of our purchased technological devices being EPEAT certified. This includes all teacher laptops, the newer school printers, a student set of Dell laptops, school iPads, and student Chromebooks. When electronics/computers are no longer usable, they are returned to the school district from which they were purchased, and they either dispose of them through a computer roundup or repurpose them.

The school is making progress toward using cleaning products that are labeled as "green". During COVID, they had to focus on other ways of sanitizing surfaces, but this is a priority moving forward, and the custodial staff is on board with making the change to environmentally friendly cleaning products.

Element 1D: Use of alternative transportation to, during and from school.

At St. Dominic School, families are encouraged to choose busing or walking as means of transportation for students. While the school does not have a no idling policy, the dismissal procedure requires parents to park their cars in the lot and walk over to the main doors to pick up children. During arrival, parents have a drop off line, but it rarely takes more than a minute for children to exit their cars and enter the building. Idling is limited to no more than 3 minutes at peak times.

When possible, students take public transportation for field trips. The school is located on a Rapid Transit train stop, so there is an option to travel by train to locations along the route. The 5th grade takes the Rapid to Shaker Heights City Hall. The 8th grade uses it to travel downtown for a field trip each spring.

PILLAR TWO: NET POSITIVE IMPACT ON STUDENT AND STAFF HEALTH

Element 2A: An integrated school/district 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.

Student and staff health at St. Dominic School is considered in the facility's operation and management. Most notably, the school has regular inspections for asbestos and has an asbestos control plan in place. In addition, ventilation has been improved through the addition of air purifiers in each room and regular air exchanges through open windows and the use of fans.

The school is asthma-friendly, according to the guidelines presented by the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program. According to their checklist, St. Dominic School serves students with asthma by keeping the campus tobacco smoke free, providing quick and easy access to asthma medications, having a health aide in the building each day, and helping students with asthma fully participate in all physical activities. In addition, asthma action plans are on file for each student and asthma education is incorporated into health classes.

Element 2B: High standards of nutrition, fitness and quantity of quality outdoor time for both students and staff.

Nutrition, fitness, and outdoor time are priorities for St. Dominic School. Students in grades K - 8 have at least 20 minutes of outdoor recess time each day. Even in the winter, students go outside for their recess time and are able to play in snow. In addition, they receive 45 minutes of Physical Education instruction twice a week. Students have opportunities to learn outside as long

as the weather permits. Classes have yoga mats or portable chairs available to move learning to the grassy area outside the middle school wing. Each grade is encouraged to eat snacks outside, weather permitting, and to make use of the garden space (a work in progress) and the grotto across from the church.

The school lunches are now incorporating more locally grown and produced foods. Working with Northern Haserot, our cafeteria manager plans monthly menus based on the availability of seasonal fruits and vegetables, as well as products that are made within 200 miles of the school. That percentage fluctuates each month, but the goal is to get to at least 25%. In October 2021, the number was closer to 30%.

The school has a robust health education program, which is aligned with the Ohio State Standards but also includes Catholic teaching about how our bodies are gifts from God. Students see posters and other reminders throughout the school that encourage them to make healthy choices about food and exercise. The school has an active sports program for students in all grades, K - 8. The primary purpose of the program is developmental. Students learn athletic skills in a variety of sports and good sportsmanship and fair play are the rule. The entire school participates in a Field Day near the end of the school year that celebrates play and fun.

PILLAR THREE: 100 PERCENT OF THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT'S GRADUATES ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY AND SUSTAINABILITY LITERATE

Learning and Environmental Literacy

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

Interdisciplinary learning about the environment, energy, and human systems takes place at each grade level at St. Dominic School. The school's science curriculum follows the Diocese of Cleveland's standards, which are based on the Ohio standards. Earth science and life science are taught at each grade level.

Students in K - 8 complete project-based STREAM lessons each year, many of which focus on sustainability or environmental impact. The school participates in the Diocese's STREAM challenge, which always includes the Catholic Social Teaching of Caring for God's Creation as one of the requirements of the project. This year's challenge is about the impact of infrastructure on neighborhoods and the environment.

Each grade level completes at least one learning activity focused on environmental literacy. Kindergarten students have an incubator in the classroom, and, in the spring, they watch chicks hatch from eggs. Through this experience, they learn about animal life cycles and the role humans play in caring for animals.

First grade students make bat houses out of recycled materials after learning about the role bats play in the ecosystem. Lessons on biodiversity help the students realize the importance of each living thing.

The 2nd grade students study animal extinction and make the connection to human caused climate change.

Third graders have a unit on limited resources and figure out ways to reduce consumption of classroom materials.

In 4th grade, the students explore the impact of fertilizer runoff from agriculture and how it adversely impacts algae growth in Lake Erie. They also learn about pollution in rivers and brainstorm ways to prevent and/or call attention to future pollution.

The 5th and 6th grade students have conducted water quality testing at the Cleveland Aquarium and gained understanding of the importance of caring for our water resources such as Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River.

Students in 7th grade studied plastic pollution and then created their own biopolymers to replace synthetic products. They also conducted a lab on acidity as part of a unit on climate change and the bleaching of coral reefs.

The 8th grade students study threats to flora and fauna in mathematical terms due to the increase in intensity and number of forest fires, hurricanes, flooding, etc. around the globe. They research the increase in man-made carbon emissions and its impact on habitat loss.

Element 3B: Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content knowledge and thinking skills to prepare graduates for the 21st century technology-driven economy.

St. Dominic School's 5-year accreditation goal was to implement STREAM education at the school. That goal has been met through the creation of a STREAM lab and through the inclusion of STREAM projects at each grade level, K - 8. During time in the STREAM lab, students are exposed to a variety of STEM careers and have opportunities to practice STEM skills such as coding, 3-D design and printing, and robotics.

In addition, the school participates in the STREAM Challenge, hosted by the Diocese of Cleveland's Office of Catholic Education each year. For the 2021-2022 school year, schools in the Diocese are encouraged to participate in the #STEMBuildsOhio Design and Entrepreneurship Challenge, which is an inquiry-based opportunity for students to one of the following problems:

- How can you repurpose an existing physical structure in your home, school or county to ensure equitable access, or improve the overall efficiency of that space?
- What changes can you make to an existing system to improve equity, efficiency or access for people in your school or county?
- What changes can you make to an existing product so that it is more equitable, accessible or eco-friendly?

Element 3C: Development of civic engagement knowledge and skills, and students' application of these to address sustainability and environmental issues in their community.

Insert Narrative Here:

Civic engagement is a priority for the students at St. Dominic School. All students participate in service learning each year. Students in grades 5- 8 have required service hours to complete each quarter. Service opportunities are self-selected at those grade levels. Schoolwide service programs are in place at multiple times throughout the school year.

One important partner in the school's environmental efforts is Rust Belt Riders. They provide the necessary equipment for composting in the cafeteria. When the program started, representatives from Rust Belt Riders spoke to the students about the importance of composting and its impact on the environment.

One initiative that expanded into the community was offering composting during the parish Fish Fry last year. The Fish Fry used 100% compostable take-out packaging that patrons were encouraged to return to the school's composting bin the following week. This initiative will take place again this spring, with students creating posters to encourage composting of Fish Fry meals, which will hopefully be held in the cafeteria this year.



(Left) An SDS student helps set up the school's uniform exchange.

(Below) Students reading outside.





(Above) Kindergarten students observe chicks that were born in the classroom incubator.



(Below) 7th grade students create biopolymers to replace synthetic plastics and reduce waste.



Letter from Ohio EPA



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor
Laurie A. Stevenson, Director

May 18, 2021

RE: E4 Recognition Program

Maureen Covington, Principal
St. Dominic School
3455 Norwood Road
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122

Dear Ms. Covington:

It's my sincere honor to award St. Dominic School with the Branch Class recognition for successfully participating in Ohio EPA's Encouraging Environmental Excellence in Education Program (E4) for 2021. The Branch Class recognizes schools that demonstrate school activities in at least two of the 3Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

St. Dominic School has continuously expanded their school's environmental efforts since beginning in 2016 to include recycling, composting and many other ways to reduce their carbon footprint. All students are given the opportunity to participate in these stewardship activities in addition to learning about the environment and other science topics in the classroom.

We greatly appreciate St. Dominic School's efforts to foster the student's environmental stewardship creativity while also incorporating environmental and sustainable concepts into school curriculum. St. Dominic School serves as an environmental steward in the community and as an environmental leader in education.

As a precautionary response to COVID-19, Ohio EPA staff are busy working from home and therefore have limited access to the E4 recognition certificates and decals. When staff can safely return to work in the next month or so, we will provide you with your recognition materials. In the meantime, we will be highlighting your E4 activities in our upcoming external newsletter and we will be listing your school on our website as an E4 Branch Class awardee. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

Once again, I'd like to extend a sincere thank you to your school, teachers, students, and all those who are helping to promote environmental stewardship. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our E4 contact, Kelsey Heyob at (614) 705-1013 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie A. Stevenson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Laurie A. Stevenson, Director
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency