



District Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

CERTIFICATIONS

District's Certifications

The signatures of the district superintendent on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the district's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the superintendent's knowledge.

1. The district has been evaluated and selected from among districts 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.
2. The district is providing 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.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school district 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.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the school district has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
5. 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 school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
6. The district 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.
7. The district has in place and is willing to provide a link to or copy of a non-discrimination policy, upon request. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a nomination and/or rescind an award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools District Sustainability Award 2019-2021

Name of Superintendent:

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

District Name:

(As it should appear on an award)

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

(Superintendent's Signature)

Date:



Nominating Authority's Certifications

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

1. The district 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 education.
2. The district 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:

Name of Nominating Authority:

(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.

_____Date:

(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.

School District of University City - University City, MO



School District Name: The School District of University City	Street Address: 7700 Olive Blvd.	
Location: University City	State: MO	Zip: 63130
Website: www.ucityschools.org	Facebook: @ucityschools	
Superintendent: Dr. Sharonica Hardin-Bartley	District: The School District of University City	
Superintendent Email: shardin@ucityschools.org	Superintendent Phone: 314-290-4002	
Lead Applicant and Position (if different): Nancy Cambria, director of communications		
Lead Applicant Email: ncambria@ucityschools.org	Lead Applicant Phone: 314-608-3958	

School District Characteristics

Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK - 5 or 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12)	School Type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet	How would you describe your school district? <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural	Total Enrolled: 2,542 Graduation rate: 80.54% Attendance rate: 82.3%
Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households? (x) Yes () No			
% receiving FRPL: 100%	% limited English proficient: 2.37%	% total disadvantaged students – without double counting, provide the total percentage of students that are receiving FRPL and/or have limited English proficiency, and/or have learning disabilities: 100%	

Summary Statement

The School District of University City (SDUC) is a recognized national leader in the implementation of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model, and is particularly unique in its unflinching belief that student, staff, community, and environmental wellness cannot be achieved without intentional work to recognize and dismantle systems of racial inequity and exclusion. SDUC stands as a leader in demonstrating that beginning with racial equity at the heart of a vision leads to many important outcomes, including kids that have a joy-filled childhood full of inspirational and illuminating moments with the natural world. Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley was recently named one of “Five Superintendents to Watch” by the national digital publication EdDive for her leadership in creating healthy and trauma-informed schools along with superintendents leading the New York City, Atlanta, Houston and Chicago public school systems. Hardin-Bartley is further a fierce local and national advocate for well-being and racial equity in schools, serving on a subcommittee of the Ferguson Commission, and writing powerful opinion pieces in The St. Louis Post-Dispatch and The Saint Louis American (a Black-owned newspaper founded in 1928). In 2020, she was invited to meet with Capitol Hill leaders to advocate for trauma informed schools and racial equity. The school district continues to be highlighted in national education publications for its highly intentional and embedded work on humanizing the learning experience for students.

SDUC was one of a handful of school district’s around the country to be named an Acceleration Site by America’s Promise Alliance for its continued work to be a fully trauma- informed school system that further addresses the trauma of racism and wholeheartedly nurtures student voice and service. The Acceleration Site designation was part of a national Robert Wood Johnson Foundation multi-million dollar grant program to successfully embed WSCC in schools throughout the nation. In 2019, the school district hosted school leaders, mental health practitioners and national education leaders in a community Ubuntu Circle to showcase its healthy school methods. An Ubuntu Circle is a space to explore issues, solve issues, and co-create change. The school district strives to be an incubator for best practices to be replicated elsewhere.

Every aspect of WSCC is embedded in the SDUC vision of Learning Reimagined, which focuses on Rigorous, Modern and Relevant Instruction; Joy and Well-Being; Excellent Staff; All Hands (local, national and international partnerships); and the Wise Use of Resources, with equity as a key indicator in how resources are utilized district-wide. The district understands that academic and life success always sparks from both the head and the heart, so there is a true emphasis on courage, intellect, and authentic relationships within schools and with the community.

In March 2019, The University City Board of Education passed a unique resolution after months of study and reflection to “Humanize School Climate Through Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning,” one of the first of its kind in Missouri. The school district applies its Social Emotional and Equitable Academic Learning (SEEAL) model by embedding hundreds of programs, services, course experiences and learning opportunities into everyday student, staff and parental/caregiver experiences to support the heavy weight of creating a robust school and community culture of academic success fueled by joy and well being.

Two powerful data sets indicate the district is succeeding in creating an authentic culture of joy and well being:

School Culture and Climate: In 2018, the school district began utilizing **Panorama**, a research-based tool for measuring social and emotional well-being of students and staff in schools. In the 2021-22 school year, Panorama data indicated significant gains in SEEAL:

- In grades 3-5, self management, grit, self-efficacy, school safety, and teacher-student relationships all significantly increased by 3% or more.
- In grades 6-12, teacher-student relationships, school safety, engagement and rigorous expectations all significantly increased by 3% or more.
- Teachers' perceptions of school climate improved significantly by 9%

Student Discipline: From 2018 through 2020 (pre-pandemic):

- Disciplinary events decreased by a third.
- During the peak referral month of October, daily referrals decreased from 17.8 to 10.8.
- The amount of disciplinary hearings decreased by 54% from 39 to 18.

SDUC is also a leader in project-based environmental and sustainability education that gets students outdoors and active. All seven of the district's school buildings (PreK-12) have "Outdoor STEAM Labs," which are green garden spaces integrated into all aspects of the school building's coursework and enrichment experiences. Each STEAM Lab has a stipend-paid Garden Facilitator to ensure integration of the Outdoor STEAM Labs into day-to-day student learning. In addition to the outdoor work of attending to food gardens at every school, students at Brittany Woods Middle School raise and care for chickens in their outdoor courtyard and tend to bees in the school's new apiary. The gardens not only are working laboratories to learn about ecosystems, environmental sustainability and growing food, they are also integrated into study of the arts, student service projects, and other outdoor activities that demonstrate the district's commitment to social emotional learning. The District has a comprehensive tiered indoor/outdoor "green curriculum" that intentionally progresses from grades Pre-K-12. This curriculum is project-based and implemented in partnership with multiple medical, tech, construction, science, business and arts organizations to give every child real-world, problem-based, modern experiences in career pathways, conservation and sustainability.

As part of its environmental sustainability education, students at all grade levels have connected to the greater community in both service projects and community-building. High school students formulated, designed and executed a community-wide vegetable gardening initiative in the spring and summer of 2021 designed to promote both sustainability and community during ongoing COVID-19 stay at home recommendations. Students have grown food for University City refugee families and district families. Elementary school students have held peaceful protest marches for clean water and recycling and conducted sustainability fairs and demonstrations for the public. High school art students participate in the yearly University City Loop Mannequin Challenge, in which they construct public art mannequins out of recycled and repurposed materials to promote sustainability. Once a year in November students, staff, families, caregivers and community partners come together for the district's STEAM Expo where students and partners exhibit what they've learned in a STEAM curriculum. The event is one of the most popular and best-attended events of the year. The majority of exhibits are "green" and encourage sustainability and conservation.

SDUC strives to continually improve the district's air, light, ventilation, green spaces, and general classroom environments and in the past 10 years installed necessary dampers, dehumidifiers, ventilation upgrades, began monitoring air quality, upgraded and added gardens and outdoor classroom areas; brightened dim spaces with daylighting; and further enhanced spaces with brighter environmentally-friendly paint, and relevant and uplifting murals with inclusive depictions of students.

SDUC continues to grow and improve upon its conservation and sustainability efforts. In 2010 and 2011, the district constructed two LEED Certified elementary schools. In 2013, it installed 25 solar panels that resulted in an electricity offset of 3-4%. Each school building has a rain garden for water conservation totaling over 49,000 square-feet. Each of the district's seven schools has their own recycling program and recycling awareness campaigns, with a dedicated staff member in charge of leading the effort. Lighting in all buildings has been replaced with energy efficient LED lighting. The district has installed hands-free sinks and flush valves and water bottle fillers in all of its schools to conserve water. The district uses irrigation sparingly and plants drought resistant and native plants and trees in its green areas. Reuse and recycling of school materials, furniture and other materials is an established practice. The district plans to integrate benchmarking and tracking of energy use, water conservation, waste reduction into its efforts within the next two years, and expects to involve students in its implementation. The changes made by facilities to achieve efficiencies and cost-savings have set a wonderful stage for students to begin exploring and expanding upon.

Engagement, Benchmarking and Recognition

Members of the team that helped prepare documentation and their role in the school

- Mark Basi, director of technology solutions
- Nancy Cambria, director of communications
- CarolAnn Cole, communications associate
- Anne Cummings, Brittany Woods Middle School sustainability teacher
- Dr. Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Superintendent
- Dr. Grace Lee, principal, Brittany Woods Middle School
- Joseph Miller, executive director of organizational health and effectiveness
- Karl Scheidt, director of operations
- Gary Spiller, director of student services and innovation
- Beverly Velloff, Prek-12 Math, K-5 Science, and STEM Coordinator

List any recognition or awards you have received in the last five years related to your efforts in any of the pillars:

- Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley: 2020 Stellar Performer in Education award, The St. Louis American Education Foundation
- Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley: New Superintendent Award for the St. Louis District, the Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- Superintendent Sharonica-Hardin Bartley: named one of "5 Superintendents to Watch," by "EdDive"
- Flynn Park Elementary School: 2019 Bayer School of Excellence, the Bayer Foundation

- \$500,000 grant (over 3 years) from the Missouri Foundation for Health to support wrap around services/Joy and well-being initiatives in partnership with 35 service providers
- \$2.4 million over 4 years from Angel Funder for wrap around Services/Joy and Well-initiatives in partnership with 35 service providers
- District grant Award: \$95,000 grant from St. Louis County Children's Fund for additional student/parent/caregiver mental health services
- District Recognition: Acceleration Site for trauma-informed schools, America's Promise Alliance funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for a national program to accelerate integration of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model.
- \$10,000 annual renewable gift to support the district's seven outdoor/STEAM gardens with supplies and stipend pay for individual garden site coordinators.
- \$1,200 gift to buy heritage trees for the Pershing Elementary School outdoor classroom
- Recipient of \$35,000 Believe Project Literacy Lab for Pershing Elementary School stocked with hundreds of books featuring characters and authors of color.
- National panel presentations
 - Upcoming (2/18/22): American Association of School Superintendents, "Well-being and Joy: Educational Strategy and Lifelong Success
 - Summer 2021: American Heart Association, "Creating a Tobacco Free School" national panelist
 - <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=cm#search/Jeff.Willett%40heart.org/FMfcgzGkXwDNzPXJcbcsVTwkVCjlkFTI?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>
 - Spring 2021: Women's Voices Raised for Social Justice. The 1619 Project and high school history
 - Fall 2021: North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Panelist, "Thriving Schools Using Environment and Outdoor Learning

Pillar I: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

SDUC actively works to reduce environmental impact and costs through a variety of programs and initiatives. The district plans to integrate benchmarking and tracking of energy use, water conservation, and waste reduction into its efforts within the next two years, and expects to involve students in its implementation.

Energy and Greenhouse Gases:

- In November 2013, with SDUC Board of Education approval, installed 25 kW solar panel systems at six of eight district buildings by Brightergy (now Generate Capital). This project had a total capacity of 200KW. The electrical offset has averaged 3-4%.
- Constructed two schools that achieved LEED Certification, Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School in 2011 and Pershing Elementary School in 2012
- Continued participation in utility incentive rebate programs (Ameren Missouri and Spire) to fund the installation of occupancy sensors, LED lighting, building controls, HVAC Retro-commissioning and efficient HVAC equipment to reduce energy use. Through this program, the district has upgraded these systems while reducing installation costs and reducing utility consumption and utility costs
- Converted all buildings to LED lighting in 2017. The newly purchased administration building was retrofitted with LED lighting in 2021.

- Board of Education approved policy for Energy Management Conservation guidelines that address heating and cooling set points, turning off lighting and office equipment
- Continual monitoring of school buildings for HVAC optimization. HVAC systems are controlled by a centralized system that enables setback schedules and advanced sequence of operations strategies to save energy. Over the past four years, a retro-commissioning service provider reviewed these platforms to assist in identifying and implementing solutions to achieve greater energy efficiency. The systems are designed to bring in outside air for free cooling and properly ventilate spaces based on CO₂ levels while maintaining optimal temperature and humidity set points.
- Reducing gas consumption and auto emissions by converting many community meetings, school board meetings and parent-teacher conferences to a virtual format. Parent-teacher conferences, many staff meetings and some community meetings will continue to remain virtual after the pandemic.

Water & Grounds:

- Intentional limit of irrigation systems to just two: high school athletic fields and one elementary school to support its vegetable garden. The irrigation systems are used only in the early morning.
- Retrofitting of drinking fountains in all schools to include bottle fillers or glass fillers to promote reusable water bottle use as an alternative to consumption of plastic water bottles. Through use of the bottle fillers, SDUC has prevented the consumption of approximately 137,606 plastic bottles. Each school maintains a supply of reusable water bottles for this purpose which are given to students.
- Installation of automatic hands-free flush valves on toilets and urinals district-wide to reduce water consumption
- Installation of automatic hands-free faucets in restrooms district-wide to reduce water consumption
- Landscaping at all buildings consists of drought tolerant, native species of plants, shrubs, and trees which do not require watering
- Installation of eight Rain Garden/BMP water retention facilities specifically designed to collect rainwater runoff from hard surface areas, covering 49,101 square-feet. These water retention facilities are planted with drought tolerant plants which aid in consumption and filtration of the runoff water.
- Devoted grounds at all schools for ecologically beneficial uses, including food and flower gardens, native prairies, native plant and animal habitats, and outdoor classrooms.

Waste:

- Participation in single stream recycling of plastics, glass, metal, and paper products in all schools. A designated staff person at each school leads the recycling effort to promote proper waste sorting through education of students and staff and providing signage, bins, and other materials.
- Eliminated the use of plastic straws and continually seeks to eliminate other single use plastics. Utilizes certified waste haulers for the disposal of hazardous and universal wastes such as batteries, tires, PCB ballasts, lead based paints, asbestos, and other materials. Refrigerant is managed by certified technicians and disposed of by companies certified in refrigerant recovery.

- Initiated multiple steps process to ensure that district assets are reused, repurposed, repaired, or recycled to avoid landfill disposal. All unwanted materials and furniture are collected from schools. The Department of Operations reallocates these goods for reuse across the district. Items that cannot be reused are typically donated to partner organizations or community organizations to encourage re-use.
- Collects all spent lamps, including fluorescent lamps and scrap metal, for recycling from across the district.
- Repair and reuse of devices for parts by Technology Support Services before designating non-functioning devices as e-scrap. Retired devices are cleared of all data and turned over to an organization that repurposes them and makes them available for purchase in the greater community for a nominal fee. Devices not able to be repurposed are recycled in an environmentally friendly manner
- Reduced the number of printers district-wide by 25% to reduce consumption of toner and paper, utilize virtual programs for submitting homework and assignments, and decrease the consumption of paper.
- Starting in the 2016-17 school year, went paperless on school and district flyers by joining PeachJar, an electronic dissemination system for school districts and parents.
- 2016-2021 District Wide Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose Closet (Project Based Learning Closet) Open for staff to take, return, borrow and use with district surplus materials

Pillar 2: Efforts to Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

The WSCC Model and “Learning Reimagined”:

In 2017-18 the school district was a part of national partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, America’s Promise Alliance, and Alive and Well Communities **promoting healthy schools via the Whole School Whole Community Whole Child**; in this partnership the district was named a national acceleration site for healthy, trauma-informed schools.

In 2017, the district agreed upon a community-wide **vision of Learning Reimagined** that was created after more than a year of intensive community input and national and international study of school districts. Part of that vision includes three components geared toward health, well-being and the physical, emotional and educational benefits of racial equity. The school district highly encourages staff voice and advocacy on civil rights and educational issues and aims to get the word out about healthy schools and elements of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model, particularly from a racial equity perspective. The school district puts a premium on integrating social and emotional health into everyday learning and school experiences and relationships. The district calls this **SEEAL: Social, Emotional, Equitable and Academic Learning**. The school district and the superintendent have gained national attention for its work, and the district aims to be a learning incubator for other school districts in the future.

Learning Reimagined: Joy and Well-Being, because students learn better and teachers teach better when they and their families are well. U City Schools stands out by far as a leader in demonstrating that beginning with racial equity at the heart of a vision leads to many important outcomes, including kids that have a joy-filled childhood full of inspirational and illuminating moments with the natural world:

- Starting in 2017, the University City Board of Education undertook a 7-month nationwide study of school districts regarding board policies/resolutions committing to equity, social justice and restorative practices as essential and needed components for the health, well-being, and educational success of students. In February, 2019 the SDUC board [unanimously passed its own resolution](#) to “Humanize School Climate Through Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning,” one of the first of its kind in Missouri. Restorative justice is used in all disciplinary hearings, so staff, parents, caregivers and students have an ability to voice impact and ways to restore relationships.
- Restorative circles are used in all aspects of school building communities. These check-ins and learning opportunities give all students, athletes, staff, coaches and others a chance to voice current issues, center and share emotions and build authentic, healthy relationships. The creation of regular parent/caregiver and community Ubuntu Circles encourage community voice and shared visions despite differing opinions and mindsets. The student services office has conducted 20 community Ubuntu Circles, both virtually and in person, in the past three years. Since the implementation of intentional restorative justice and restorative practices districtwide, in- and out-of-school suspensions have decreased. From 2018 through 2020 (pre-pandemic):
 - Disciplinary events decreased by a third.
 - During the peak referral month of October, daily referrals decreased from 17.8 to 10.8.
 - The number of disciplinary hearings decreased by 54% from 39 to 18.

The school district has been recognized nationally by the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) and highlighted in its yearly national publication.

- In 2018, the school district began utilizing Panorama, one of the nation’s top tools for measuring social and emotional well-being of students and staff in schools. The tool, created by the Harvard University School of Education and validated nationwide, provides specific and targeted data on how the district is doing in comparison to other districts nationwide in dozens of social emotional measures. The data also provides granular information on SEEAL opportunities and interventions to implement by building, classroom and even student for improved outcomes. In the 2021-22 school year, Panorama data indicated significant gains in SEEAL:
 - In grades 3-5, self-management, grit, self-efficacy, school safety, and teacher-student relationships all significantly increased by 3% or more.
 - In grades 6-12, teacher-student relationships, school safety, engagement and rigorous expectations all significantly increased by 3% or more.
 - Teachers' perceptions of school climate improved significantly by 9%.
- Sampling of District Supports for Joy and Well-Being:
 - Back to School events for students and staff which include food, music, performances, haircuts, games, COVID-19 vaccines, school tables, knapsack supplies, and in-person connections to dozens of area service providers for families and training in the art of building authentic relationships and other SEEAL issues for every staff member
 - Heavy investment in front-line and physical and mental health services partnerships for equitable the care of students and families. Individual social workers and individual school nurses in all seven district school buildings (plus four contact tracers). Four trauma specialists serving all schools.

- University City High School's year-long Restorative Practices Class for students in grades 9-12, the only course of its kind in Missouri.
- Safe, outdoor community events to foster a healthy and connected community during the pandemic.
 - The Growing Together public art project to showcase the resilience and growth of the entire district community during a global pandemic. The Growing Tree remains an important visual reminder of U City School District's strength and unity despite hard times.
 - Staff Opening Day, which included food, music, and 20 different wellness activities, including cooking, succulent planters, kickball, line dancing, and even walking with Llamas around the high school campus.
 - Creation of a wellness lounge in the high school with bean bag chairs, yoga, healthy treats and plants to assist students working virtually at the high school during the 2020-21 school year.
 - Weekly delivery of supplemental food to 33 families.
 - 50 new bikes for students as incentives for positive school participation.
- Utilizing social workers at each building to conduct various wellness activities for students, staff and families and to provide the basics for families in need.
- Providing nearly one million meals to students and families via a curbside meal pick-up called Grab and Go from March 25, 2020 to August 20, 2021. This social emotional support for District families also provided a great way to share books, supplies, coping tips, restaurant gift cards, ice cream, donuts, and information about other district services.
- Operating a gently used clothing boutique at University City High School. In 2022, the dedicated room is slated to be decorated like a posh boutique to give students and parents a positive experience while also supplying them with basic needs.
- Embracing underutilized outdoor spaces at Brittany Woods Middle School as potential resources for social emotional health for students and staff. This student-led project snowballed and now includes:
 - a Giving Garden in the school's enclosed courtyard (24,288 square feet), used not only to grow food but can have lunch, tend to the garden and get some exercise, or take an emotional break. "Time-ins" in the garden enable students to re-enter classroom settings, rather than being sent home for behavioral incidents.
 - caring for chickens that live in the courtyard.
 - an outdoor pavilion providing seating and shade, appreciated by teachers and students needing mask breaks and a change of scenery.
 - an apiary, maintained by students.
 - utilizing land managed by The Green Center, adjacent to the school and includes a native plant garden and other spaces used for classroom instruction.
 - utilizing the outdoor track as a walking space for students and staff. The student Sister Circle group frequently walked laps around the track while listening to inspirational Black speakers and Black history with headsets.
- District-wide encouragement of active student voice on issues that are relevant to their own and the greater world's well-being. The district strongly believes in the power of student action regarding civil rights and racial inequity and aims to guide students in productive and successful demonstration and action that leads

to healthy public engagement and change. Action and voice have deep roots in well-being.

- University City is one of a handful of schools in Missouri that has a student representative that sits on its full school board.
- When vandalism occurred on the Delmar Loop after a Grand Jury recommended to not charge a police officer in the shooting death of Ferguson teen Michael Brown, students formulated a positive response. They mobilized to assist business owners and University City in the clean-up. Students have also staged protests in response to a variety of current issues, including gun violence, police funding priorities, and unsafe drinking water.
- In the 2020-21 school year, about 20 students participated in an AP English and Composition course focusing on differing narratives of U.S. history. The students studied the 1619 Project as part of the class and created final projects and documentaries on modern and relevant topics involving race, inequity, colorism and privilege. In February 2022, the district will partner with the University City Public Library to host a month-long book club reading the new book, The 1619 Project.
- In June 2020, the co-principals of Pershing Elementary School began a new tradition – a Juneteenth celebration with activities for students and adults.

Wise use of Resources, with equity at the center so students have equitable learning experiences and resources:

- In 2020, PTO leaders of the district's four elementary schools created an additional elementary PTO called One U City. One U City promotes equity among all four of the schools and strives to ensure all students have access to the same parent resources and fundraising regardless of the elementary school. One U City specifically addresses the Olive Divide, in which our elementary schools north and south of Olive Boulevard have disparate resources.

All Hands, a commitment to partnering with local, regional and national organizations to provide funding and support for equitable experiences and programs that include mental health services, trauma-informed practices, culturally responsive teaching and authentic relationship-building:

- The school district remains an active partner with Alive and Well Communities, which offers trauma-informed resources, professional feedback, training and programs for students, staff, parents and caregivers with an equity mindset. Alive and Well recognizes that individual trauma is linked to community trauma caused by racial inequity and systemic racism.
- The School District partners with the non-profit, Wyman Center, to provide wrap around services for students, staff, and families. Wyman has embedded five full-time staff within the School District of University City to improve relationships between school, staff and students and increase social-emotional learning skills for students

- The district is a part of WeSchools, an international organization promoting service projects created by and empowering youth. WeSchools has had a tremendous impact on district students who have conducted peaceful protests and hands-on projects to promote sustainability, conservation, racial equity and the environment. The Giving Garden at Brittany Woods Middle School was envisioned by a WeSchools-inspired student who proposed growing produce for new immigrant families in University City. This project catalyzed the development of the District's new Community Food Network.
- In 2020, the school district conducted a Summer Meal Appeal in partnership with the University City Education Foundation that raised more than \$90,000 to help families in need in the district with necessities, meal gift cards, cold dessert treats, and items such as board games to bring happiness to families during difficult times.
- SDUC provides free mental health and substance abuse therapy for students and families through the following partners: Khaos Kids (Keep Healing and Overcoming Struggles), Lutheran Family Services, Presbyterian Services and Preferred Family Health.
- Two schools, Brittany Woods Middle and Flynn Park Elementary, are part of the Seed St. Louis garden network, accessing PD opportunities, facilitated garden activities, and no-cost seeds and seedlings.
- The school district partnered with The Believe Project in the fall of 2021 to create a Literacy Lab at Pershing Elementary School with hundreds of children's books featuring Black characters and authors. The room was decorated with cozy couches, an aspirational mural featuring Black children, and open bookshelves that encourage students to explore books with accomplished and creative characters that look just like themselves.
- In addition to embracing the All Hands approach to WSCC and welcoming partners into their work, U City Schools are also readily available to lend their hands to motivate and inspire other districts to embrace Whole School, Whole Child, Whole Community with a focus on racial equity. Heralding this effort is Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, a nationally-recognized advocate for healthy schools that focus on the healthy outcomes of racial equity, social justice, trauma-informed schools, authentic relationships and programs encouraging Well-Being and Joy. Her op-eds and editorials have been printed in The St. Louis Post-Dispatch and The St. Louis-American, a historically Black newspaper. Articles on the District's model of health and well-being have been published in myriad education journals, and she has been invited to participate in many local, regional, and national conversations on education and schooling.

Integrated School Environment Health Program:

- Integrated Pest Management practices have reduced the use of all pesticides to minimal amounts. Our service provider utilizes IPM methods to prevent the introduction of pests into buildings and to naturally deter pests before utilizing sprays or pesticides.

- In the past 13 years, the school district has acted to properly dispose of hazardous chemicals. Chemicals from chemistry labs were classified, inventoried and disposed of using a certified hazardous waste hauler. Labs use reagents that are safe to go down the drain and perform experiments using droppers and well plates to minimize waste. Spill control protocols are in place, including spill containment kits to keep building occupants safe and spills out of sanitary or storm drains.
- The school district seeks to create optimal learning and working environments for all students and staff that are healthy, conducive to creativity and reduce consumption. Light levels are kept at appropriate levels throughout all building areas and day lighting is suggested as much as possible for both occupant well-being and energy savings. Occupancy sensors are utilized in hallway areas to reduce consumption. Major renovations and new construction projects focus on increasing daylighting opportunities when possible.
- The Department of Operations maintains an asbestos control program. Staff are trained annually to report possible asbestos material without making contact. All abatement is done by licensed asbestos abatement contractors. All construction and major renovation projects include work to verify the presence of lead-based paint and asbestos.
- The school district and its contracted service providers utilize cleaning products that are Green Seal certified with the exception of heavy degreaser and disinfectant, which is used sparingly. District guidelines incorporate products that are less toxic, have low VOC content, biodegradable, derived from renewable resources, free of fragrance and dyes, and designed for use in cold water to conserve energy.
- The school district addresses indoor air quality concerns promptly utilizing the services of an environmental services company to take air quality samples. Complaints are followed immediately by on-site inspections and data collection with results being shared and corrective actions implemented.
- Maintenance staff and contracted HVAC service providers identify potential issues proactively when performing preventive maintenance on HVAC equipment, which includes changing filters and verifying operation of dampers, sensors, and economizer modes for optimal efficiency and operation.
- CO2 is currently monitored in large spaces and some classroom areas throughout the district. Sensors tied into the HVAC control system to introduce fresh air as needed to keep CO2 at appropriate levels. Outside air dampers without CO2 control are kept open at a minimum of 20% for fresh air ventilation. Relative humidity sensors are used in various areas throughout the district to control building moisture levels during occupied schedules. New HVAC equipment is designed and installed to control for both CO2 and relative humidity.
- The school district follows the local St. Louis County ordinance that limits idling of heavy-duty diesel vehicles to no more than three minutes in any 60-minute period. Some schools also have no-idling signs posted in car pick-up areas.
- In 2019, the school district replaced its aging maintenance vehicle fleet with compact, fuel-efficient vans to reduce fuel consumption and emissions.
- The school district obtained a passenger van to be utilized by staff to transport small numbers of students for off-site events and activities instead of utilizing school buses for these transports.

Pillar III: Provide Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Outdoor Learning:

- All building sites (PreK-12) have “Outdoor STEAM Labs”- Green Garden Spaces with a stipend paid Garden Facilitator
- Our outdoor STEAM labs integrate more than just growing vegetables. For example:
 - The Arts: For example, kindergarteners work with the art teacher, homeroom teacher and garden facilitator to help them think about what is growing above ground, as well as the ecosystems below the ground- our rain gardens. 5th grade students harvest zinnias, dry the seeds, and redistribute the harvested seeds during the annual UCity In Bloom community plant sale.
 - Sensory learning: touch, smell, feel focused plants
 - Brittany Woods Middle Schools keeps chickens and beehives
 - Composting in school gardens

Curriculum & Assessment:

- Vertical Garden Facilitator groups meet monthly throughout the school year to troubleshoot, brainstorm, and vertical align opportunities for Outdoor STEAM Labs.
- Identified indoor/outdoor “green” curriculum integrations for all PreK-12th grade students.
 - **PreK:** Reggio Inspired Model with Studio Thinking and Problem Solving (Nature & Identity) How do we connect with nature? Collaborative project work includes the following: A tree study that includes adopting trees and noticing seasonal changes; Painting from nature; Colors of the seasons; Making animal habitats; drawing and painting snowflakes; winter collages, etc..
 - **Kdg Q2:** Sun & Shade Unit (Weather Patterns, Sun Temperature and Shadows
 - **1st:** Seeds, Sprouts, and Sunshine (Plants and How They Grow)
 - **2nd:** Helping Seeds Travel (Parts of Plants, Pollination and Interdependent Relationships) that includes coordination with The Green Center, a local environmental education nonprofit; collaboration with the Center for Conservation in Forest Park (an extension of the St. Louis Zoo)
 - **3rd:** Change Over Time (Life Cycles, Inheritance and Variation of Traits); Community Collaboration w/Center for Conservation in Forest Park (an extension of St. Louis Zoo)
 - **4th:** Structure, function and Survival (Body Systems and Information; Processing in the Natural World); Collaboration with The Green Center
 - **5th:** From Sun to Food (Photosynthesis, Respiration, and Ecosystems); Collaboration w/Center for Conservation in Forest Park (an extension of the St. Louis Zoo)
 - **6th:** Ecosystems (How can we, as resource managers protect and improve biodiversity and ecosystem services.); Collaboration w/The Green Center
 - **7th:** Matter and Its Properties (How can we as food scientists create foods with unique flavors?)
 - **8th:** Reproduction and Genetics; Human Impacts on the Environment

- **6-8th Sustainability Courses**
 - **6th Grade:**
 - Unit 1: The Three Pillars of Sustainability
 - Unit 2: Chickens, Bees, Food, and Weeds
 - Unit 3: Problem Based Learning
 - **7th/8th Grade - Sustainability 1 & 2:**
 - Expanded Bee Responsibilities including beehive health and problems/solutions
 - Monitoring chicken eggs- health, protecting, wellbeing
 - Outdoor learning space maintenance and food (harvesting, kitchen safety, use, food)
 - Entrepreneur Unit- how to turn sustainability program into revenue-careers and business
 - Role of a Beekeeper
 - Education presentation from the Pollinator 3000 (the recycled district van)
 - Maintenance, inventory and supplies: Giving Garden Shed, Growing Together Shed, Eco-Lounge, Prairie Shed
 - Collaborate w/Entrepreneurship & Computer Science classes for Website/media; Tangible supplies; Lean business plans to market what is “in-stock”
- 9-12 Black Academy - Black Academy affords students opportunities to activate their learning while moving between instructional and extension activities by participating in project and problem-based learning units at the high school level. Students most recently collaborated through a PBL unit connected to repurposing an underutilized part of the high school to better meet the social emotional needs of students throughout the school days during a pandemic. Furniture and planters were constructed with repurposed materials, including tires and wood pallets.
- 9-12 Environmental Club - The club's primary focus is school-wide recycling, reducing waste, raising awareness of environmental issues and developing initiatives to build a more sustainable community.
- U. City AFJROTC - The use of drones to monitor/observe building's across the district and their “green spaces”
- University City High School Arts Programs
 - Every year, UCHS students participate in U. City in Bloom's Plein Air Competition by painting and drawing local gardens while outside in nature.
 - UCHS visual art students work with local public artists to create public art that fits in with the environment. In 2020-21, students created inspirational block art messages with a local poet on area sidewalks that appeared only in the rain.
 - UCHS art students participate annually in the Mannequin Challenge public art contest on The Loop. Students build mannequins out of recycled and repurposed materials to encourage conservation and sustainability.
 - In the spring of 2021, UCHS students produced the musical Ranked completely online during the global pandemic. Ranked dealt with high school pressure to make the grade and perform academically at the cost of mental health and well-being. Ranked is slated to be featured in an HBO documentary on how students around the world coped with the pandemic.

Community and Civic Engagement:

- St. Louis Urban Ecology and Evolution (St.LUEE) partnership at each outdoor classroom
STEAM lab (St.LUEE) is a working group of scientists and graduate students from Fontbonne, Harris-Stowe, Missouri Botanical Garden, SIUE, and Washington University. They are partnering with the SDUC community in urban ecology and evolution projects that focus on temperature, plant pests and pathogens and soil contamination.
- **2020-21 COVID-19 Science Pillar Learning Experience (6-8th grade)**
 - Collaboration with Washington University (Brett Maricque and the St. Louis Health Department) on the research and active work to create a COVID-19 vaccine. All 6-8th grade students virtually participated to understand the COVID-19 testing process and importance and the science of: vaccines, antibody testing, blood and immune system basics, viral genetics and history of vaccines
- **Project-based environmental/sensory learning with our youngest learners - sound and place**
 - From 2019 to 2021 Pre-K students at Julia Goldstein Early Childhood center undertook an intensive study of sound. The project included partnerships with COCA, Sheldon Concert Hall and Galleries and others.
 - Students envisioned sound through painting, drawing and exercise, and learned musical notes through drawing and painting.
 - Students used repurposed materials to envision, plan and build their own unique musical instruments, later displayed at The Sheldon Art Gallery.
 - Students brainstormed, drew plans and investigated the sounds of everyday objects to create an outdoor Sound Wall in their school playground.
 - Students helped construct and paint the interactive Sound Wall that nurtures active and healthy exploration of sound in their playground. Students repurposed used pots, pans, utensils, plastic buckets and other everyday objects to create sound for the wall.
 - In 2019-2021, Pre-K students were given Polaroid cameras to go on classroom walks in their surrounding neighborhood to give them a better understanding of direction, community, outdoor spatial design and their place in it. Students shot photos of the different outdoor areas for future discussion and completed a large-scale, 3-D model of the nearby Loop business district.
- **Growing Together: The Food Garden Network of the U City School District**

In recent years, the garden and sustainability programs in the district have flourished due to school gardens. These spaces are used to foster a love of gardening and respect for the Earth and are also tied to our curricular content. We use the gardens for social-emotional learning and building community (see Pillar II), but also to grow food and promote sustainability in the local community.

 - High school student leaders designed and implemented a Food Garden Network that envisioned and implemented an equitable community food growing project in the spring and summer of 2021 among University City households, regardless of dwelling and financial status
 - School-based Site-Managers to provide feedback/guidance with planning and nurture student leaders' plans to implement sustainability projects from their school site with their school community.

- Free community seedlings were distributed and planted in home gardens, patio and window planters and community gardens throughout University City.
- A lively, student-organized outdoor community event in April 2021 in which participants planted their seedlings in planters and further pick-up gardening supplies (such as planters, watering cans, garden gloves and trowels),
- **Annual District Wide STEAM Expo**
 - Highlights and showcases the amazing STEAM initiatives happening districtwide, including ones that are “green”.
 - Novel Engineering Clubs at all K-5 buildings, inspired by students and grounded in research, Novel Engineering integrates engineering and literacy in elementary and middle school. Students use existing classroom literature – stories, novels, and expository texts – as the basis for engineering design challenges that nurture design thinking and solutions while reinforcing literacy skills. (All with recycled materials.)
 - Site Based Outdoor Learning STEAM Labs
 - Partnership with 16 “Green” community Partners, including Ameren (2018 & 2019 all families in attendance received a reduce, reuse, recycle at home kit); Stormwater STL (modeled for students how our storm water system works); St. Louis Science Center; St. Louis Aquarium Foundation (nonprofit partner serving the region’s recognized voice for water stewardship and supports us with access and education programs for our students) and more.
- **Camp U**, a free, authentic outdoor summer camp experience based in facilitating reading, writing and math competencies for all 1st through 6th graders that included partnerships and outdoor environmental lessons and activities with the St. Louis Zoo, the Green Center, St. Louis Science Center, Forest Park, COCA and others.

Professional Development

- **Industry Visits** (teachers and students attending site based local Green Community partners locations Gateway Greening, Metropolitan Sewer District, Meridian Waste, UCity In Bloom, Seed to Table and more)
- **STEAM Teacher Quality** Teachers learn about papermaking, recycling technology, reusing materials and hands on learning with the Missouri Department of Conservation-stream erosion at Castlewood State Park

Appendix: Articles and media coverage

Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley

- EdDive:
[5 Superintendents to Watch in 2022](#)
- St. Louis American (op-ed):
[Repairing our trust in medicine amid COVID-19](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch (op-ed):
[A season of hope for equitable education](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch (op-ed):
[The children are not well](#)

- Civitas-STL
[Meeting Dr. Sharonica Hardin-Bartley](#)
- UMSL Daily
[Sharonica Hardin-Bartley works to close opportunity gaps at University City schools](#)
- St. Louis American
[Disrupter in chief Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley is 2020 Stellar Performer in Education](#)
- The Journal (op-ed):
[Data Supports Social-Emotional and Equity Curricula for 'Whole Child' K– 12 Education](#)
- Issues in Education:
[Leadership Tips #1- Dr. Sharonica Hardin-Bartley \(Video\)](#)
- St. Louis American:
[Sharonica Hardin-Bartley receives New Superintendent Award](#)

Media Feature

- MOHealthySchools:
[University City on the Move](#)
- Fox2 News
[Believe Project Promotes Literacy, Positive Self-Image for Young Readers](#)
- Fox2 News:
[New literacy lab features Black authors and characters to improve student literacy](#)
- St. Louis Magazine:
[At the Lieberman Learning Center, inspiration is everywhere](#)
- EdSurge:
[How an Experimental Redesign in School Leadership Saved the School and My Community](#)
- WUSTL The Ampersand:
[Partnering for restorative justice in University City schools](#)
- KMOV News Channel 4:
[Local kindergartners receive new shoes thanks to non-profit](#)
- St. Louis Public Radio:
[St. Louis Teachers Say 'Soul Of Education' At Stake In Debate Over How To Teach History](#)
- St. Louis Public Radio:
[Wash U Brings Climate Change Education To University City High School](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch:
[Summer school programs across St. Louis area offer academic boost after a year of disruption](#)
- St. Louis Public Radio:
[New Wash U initiative aims to decrease outbreaks, promote vaccine literacy in underserved school districts](#)
- KMOV News Channel 4:
[New Wash. U initiative aims to decrease outbreaks, promote vaccine literacy in underserved school districts](#)
- KMOV News Channel 4:
[50 U. City children get new bikes thanks to local church](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch:
[St. Louis-area parents line up early, eager to get young teens vaccinated](#)

- St. Louis Post-Dispatch (student op-ed):
[Ian Feld: University City students were captivated, not indoctrinated, by 1619 Project](#)
- KMOV News Channel 4:
[Local restaurants dishing up meals to feed families](#)
- WUSTL Institute for School Partnership:
[Building Pathways: The School District of University City Embraces Distributed Leadership](#)
- Fox2 News:
[University City School District has a socially distant Halloween celebration](#)
- KMOV News Channel 4:
[Grab N Go Drive Thrus Continue to Serve Families](#)
- KSDK News Channel 5:
[University City schools to provide meals to families this summer](#)
- KMOV News Channel 4:
[University City High School Uses New Tool to Resolve Conflicts](#)
- The Hechinger Report: TEACHER VOICE (op ed):
[Helping a community near Ferguson, Missouri, heal after Michael Brown's death](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch:
[U. City Schools Meals Program Photos](#)
- Washington University:
[Institute for School Partnership: An Introduction \(video\)](#)
- Restorative Works, the journal of the International Institute for Restorative Practices:
[Coaching Through Relationships](#)
- St. Louis Post Dispatch:
[Rolling out the red carpet at University City High](#)
- St. Louis Public Radio:
[10,000 St. Louis Students Will Take Social-Emotional Health Survey Next School Year](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch:
[Beyond locks and buzzers, students are looking for emotional safety at school](#)
- America's Promise Alliance:
[Lessons from School District Leaders - Transforming School Climate Through Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Strategies](#)
- Fox 2 News:
[Tim's Travels: University City School District launches student-led newscast](#)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch:
[At University City High School, remembering Parkland massacre](#)
- KMOV Channel 4: One year later:
[University City students remember the 17 lives lost in Parkland mass shooting](#)
- Fox 2 News:
[University City High School students honor Parkland shooting victims](#)
- Washington University, Health Equity Works:
<https://healthequityworks.wustl.edu/st-louis-a-hub-for-building-healthier-schools-for-learning/>
- St. Louis Public Radio:
[America's Promise Alliance: Embracing a different approach](#)