



## School Nominee Presentation Form

### 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.
8. The school or its district has in place and is willing to provide a link to or a 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

Name of Principal:

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

Official School Name:

(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.

**Carol Patton** Digitally signed by Carol Patton  
Date: 2022.02.28 16:33:55 -08'00'

(Principal's Signature)

Date:

Name of Superintendent:

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



District Name: *La Center School District*

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

*Peter Rosenkranz* Digitally signed by Peter Rosenkranz  
Date: 2022.02.28 16:36:29 -08'00'

Date:

(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: *Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction*

Name of Nominating Authority: *Mrs. Elizabeth A. Schmitz*

(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.

*Elizabeth A. Schmitz* Digitally signed by Elizabeth A. Schmitz  
Date: 2022.02.28 17:04:15 -08'00'

Date: *2/28/2022*

(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](mailto: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.

## 2021-2022 ED Green Ribbon Schools: School Application

### Summary Narrative: La Center High School

Students and staff at La Center High School are actively involved in their education and the betterment of their school, community, and our natural environment. Leading efforts in environmental sustainability at LCHS are the Environmental Studies Class (ESC) and Associated Student Body Club - the Environmental Action Team (EAT). Since the inception of the Environmental Studies program at La Center High School in the fall of 2008, environmental sustainability, waste reduction, and the teaching of responsible stewardship have been at its center. Student-led projects, facilitated by staff and undertaken in partnership with both public and private sector partners, have been and continue to be a cornerstone of the program. It is these hands-on projects that provide a framework for educating both students and the surrounding community about the effect of human actions on the environment (and vice-versa), as well as what can be done to mitigate negative impacts with the goal of restoring and safeguarding the health of the whole system.

Many past ESC projects created by students of the past continue to be projects and have spring-boarded into programs adapted and undertaken by current ESC students and others. For example, we built a school garden in 2009 and completed drip irrigation installation in 2011. Each year's class takes care of maintenance, planting, cultivation, and harvesting. It is a sustained, on-site source of fresh produce for the school's lunches and local food banks. The ESC also maintains a four-barrel rainwater collection system and the attached native plant rain garden. In addition, the entire school participates in recycling efforts; we provide bins for classroom and office use, and ESC students collect the material weekly, consolidating it for pickup by Waste Connections and Clark County Solid Waste, our community partners.

Projects concerning salmon habitat restoration and watershed stewardship are focused upon tributaries of the lower East Fork of the Lewis River, approximately 20 miles from Clark County's largest city, Vancouver, Washington. As Coho and Chum Salmon are listed as threatened species, salmon habitat restoration projects in and along the E. Fork, Brezee Creek, Mason Creek, Manley Creek, and Mill Creek are endeavors of the class. As Brezee Creek is the tributary nearest our school and we can walk to it, projects have been done there since 2009 and continue to be a cornerstone of the Environmental Studies Class. ESC students have worked with the Water Research Education Center in Vancouver to study macroinvertebrates in this local watershed. Students are also engaged in ongoing water quality monitoring, partnering with Friends of the East Fork (FEF), a local non-profit dedicated to the improvement of river habitat and good land stewardship.

Breezee Creek, a tributary to the East Fork of the Lewis River, is the release site for fingerling salmon raised and studied by the ESC class. When the Remote Site Incubator we had been using since 2009 needed to be removed, the class worked with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the city of La Center, and Fish First. This organization restores wild and native fish runs. We partner with Columbia Springs Environmental Center, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Clark PUD in the Salmon in the Classroom program. In addition, we will continue working with FEF and the WDFW in the future to engage students in raising, studying, and releasing salmon.

The ESC has accomplished a lot over the last decade, gaining recognition in 2019 as a Triple Platinum Green School through Washington Green Schools (now known as EarthGen). Building on past successes, the Environmental Studies classes from the past three years have collaborated with MacKay Sposito, a civil engineering firm working in Energy, Public Works, and Land Development markets across the USA. ESC has completed a 'flipped internship' with MacKay Sposito, which determined the site of the GreenShed planned for the La Center Garden, the 4-acre garden, and outdoor learning space constructed in 2016. During the internship, students learned from surveyors, civil engineers, and other professionals, as well as having the opportunity to see their expertise demonstrated when they worked with students at the school campus. Another contributor to the GreenShed program was Clark Public Utilities. They worked with Sunbridge Solar to secure the donation of the needed solar panels, the necessary connectors, and a Tesla battery wall. The Bonneville Environmental Education Foundation has provided funding and information for this project.

The current goal of the GreenShed project is to have a community-accessible facility built by the end of this year. This includes the solar panel system for interior and exterior lighting and the gutter system that will route rainfall into an attached rain garden of native plants. The GreenShed will be a place where students, community members, and visitors to La Center can learn about sustainable land use, watersheds and water conservation, waste reduction, composting, and clean energy (solar). It will also display information about waste audits we've conducted and media encouraging people to reduce, reuse, recycle, reclaim, repurpose and rot (compost).

We are working to expand the scope of the La Center Garden and Outdoor Learning Space and its GreenShed addition, including a pollination station, an orchard, blueberry bushes, greenhouses, terraced beds, biofuel, and compost stations, and an outdoor learning facility. All of this is geared toward creating and maintaining a positive learning environment where everyone in La Center and the surrounding areas can learn how to incorporate sustainable practices into their own lives.

While the ESC program is highly visible, other students and staff also welcome opportunities to contribute to making the La Center High School campus and community a more environmentally aware and sustainable place. Currently, a team of 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers is developing across-age environmental sustainability curriculum with a grant from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation's Clean Energy program. The high school's science department offers Ecology and Careers in Science classes that explore environmental sustainability and participate in water monitoring.

Other clubs and groups at LCHS focus on service and developing community. Within the school, there is a weekly advisory class that incorporates activities for social-emotional learning, positive peer interaction, and navigating high school and beyond. In addition, there is a student advisory body, Wildcats Achieving Connections, which meets regularly with school administration to communicate concerns and participates in seeking solutions. There is a climbing and ropes course on campus that classes and clubs can utilize for building self-confidence and teamwork. The Leos Club puts on a yearly Easter Egg Hunt, stocks the LCHS Care Closet, and participates in the Lions Club glasses redistribution drive. The National Honor Society volunteers at a local animal shelter and creates care packages for US troops, sick children, and adults in elder care. Several LCHS organizations participate in food drives throughout the year.

La Center High School is committed to taking care of its community and equipping its students to make positive contributions to their future communities. Reducing our environmental footprint, tending to the well-being of staff and students, and showing students the full range of possibilities for their futures are all integral parts of that. All members of the school community contribute to fulfilling these goals and maintaining our focus.

### School Profile

School Name: **La Center High School**

Address: **725 NE Highland Ave, La Center, WA 98629 (physical)**

**P.O. Box 1780 La Center, WA 98629 (mailing)**

Website: <https://www.lacenterschools.org>

Principal First Name: **Carol**

Last name: **Patton**

Prefix: **Ms.**

Email: **carol.patton@lacenterschools.org**

Phone: **360-263-1700 x 510**

Total Student Enrollment (Fall 2021): **477**

Select a metric that best represents your school's disadvantaged population, using data from Fall of 2021: **Free & Reduced Lunch rates**

If you selected Free and Reduced Lunch Rates, please list the percentage of your student body that qualifies: **24%**

Is your school

Public

Private (independent)

Name of School District (If a public school): **La Center School District**

What grade levels does your school serve? **9-12**

School or District Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/lacenterschooldistrict/>

Instagram:

- lchs\_asb
- e.a.t\_lchs

**Application Team Information** - who prepared the application? Please note, the Lead applicant will be OSPI's main point of contact upon receipt of your application.)

<b>Lead Applicant First Name</b> Rebecca	<b>Lead Applicant Last Name</b> Morris
<b>Lead Applicant Title</b> Environmental Studies (Natural Resources CTE) Teacher; Environmental Action Team at La Center High School (EAT @ LCHS)- ASB Club, Advisor	<b>Lead Applicant Email</b> rebecca.morris@lacenterschools.org
<b>Lead Applicant Phone Number</b> 360-263-1700 x 5154	<b>Alternate Phone Number</b> 360-601-3159 [cell]

**Application Team Members (Others who helped prepare this application)**

<b>Name (First &amp; Last)</b>	<b>Title/Department</b>
Sabrina Joner *LCHS Green Ribbon App co-author	Student, Env. Studies Class Vice President- Environmental Action Team
Isabella Parke *LCHS Green Ribbon App co-author	Student President, Environmental Action Team
Sierra Gramm *LCHS Green Ribbon App co-author	Secretary/Treasurer, Environmental Action Team Student, Env. Studies Class
Connor Monks *LCHS Green Ribbon App co-author	Student Env. Studies Class
Coral Yee *LCHS Green Ribbon App co-author	LCHS Library - Media Tech
Paula Leach	Biology, Ecology, Marine, Biology - teacher
Denelle Eiseland	Physical Education, Health - teacher
Brian Zylstra	Literature of Survival - teacher Ropes Course- coordinator
Jill Cole	Freshman Physics, Careers in Science - teacher

Crosscutting Questions: Awards and Programs

**Programs: Does your school participate in a local, state, or national green school program?**

Yes

If yes, which programs are you participating in, what levels are in progress/achieved?

Program	Level in Progress	Level and Date Achieved
Clark County Green Schools	Double Platinum Certification level	2018
EarthGen/ Washington Green Schools	Fully certified in <b>all six</b> categories of waste reduction, water, energy, school grounds, healthy school buildings, and transportation Re-certified in <b>all six</b> categories 3rd recertification in <b>all six</b> categories	2016 2018 2021
EarthGen/ Washington Green Schools	Piloting Earth Gen’s new Habitat Certification	2021- present

**Awards: In the past five years, has your school, staff, students, or student groups received any awards relevant to the ED Green Ribbon School recognition? Yes**

If yes, provide award details below.

Award	Awarded To	Awarded by	Year Received
Clark PUD- Solar energy system	La Center HS- Rebecca Morris	Matt Babbitts, Clark County PUS	2020
Clark County Green Apple	Green Apple Educator- Rebecca Morris	Clark County Green Schools- Clark County, WA	2019
“Real Hero” Learn Here Award	Rebecca Morris	Identity Project of Clark County (non-profit organization)	2019
Rave Award	La Center High School	WA Green Schools EarthGen/Seattle Sounders	2018
Green Medalist	Rebecca Morris.	WA Green Schools EarthGen	2018

## Communication Strategies

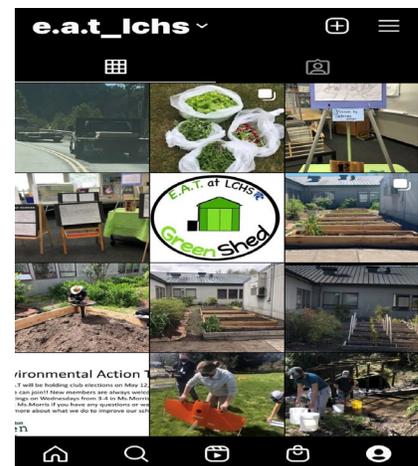
***How do you communicate your Pillar I required policies and best practice recommendations related to school principals, faculty, staff, parents, and other stakeholders in your school, district, and community?***

At La Center High School, students take the lead in communicating their efforts to reduce the school's environmental impact and costs to the principal, staff, parents, and school board throughout the school year. This practice fosters students' independence, empowerment, and leadership. One of the first things visitors see upon entering LCHS is the student-created "Green Wall," showcasing the sustainability activities of our Environmental Action Team (EAT). This wall contains everything from progress in our ongoing garden projects to an interactive kiosk displaying the school's energy consumption. Students create posts for the high school and district web pages, as well as the EAT social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram). In addition, it is students who maintain communication with school staff regarding scheduled recycling rounds and other pertinent information. All staff and students receive weekly meeting logistics via morning messages.

Each year, students focus on one or more projects in Rebecca Morris' Environmental Studies and Natural Resources Career Technical Education (CTE) classrooms. They brainstorm strategies, evaluate the feasibility, make measurements and drawings, and then implement their ideas. All the information is shared with the entire school community. They reach out to community partners, sharing their thinking and garnering support. To encourage independent learning, the students lead these projects, and Ms. Morris supports them. Their own questions guide the research they do to support each project.

Students cultivate communication and leadership skills while learning to work collaboratively both within their team and with teams developing other aspects of the project. They prepare reports, create PowerPoints, and develop speaking and argumentation skills as well, tools they then use to share the knowledge and skills acquired from each project.

Students have recently been working on a flipped internship with Mackay Sposito, Educational Service District (ESD) 112, and the City of La Center, where La Center students at all levels share what they've learned. Past students have both presented projects they completed, as well as advocated for the support of future projects. Over the years, students have used a wide variety of media when communicating about their various projects (school gardens, water conservation, energy conservation, composting, and recycling) during Washington State's Imagine Tomorrow competition, and they've won. Most recently, students advocated for support from the La Center School Board for the solar shed they are building on school grounds this year. They succeeded, gaining much-needed funding for the project.



## Equity

***Describe how all students at your school, and more broadly how community members, are being included in, honored for, and engaged in this work?***

Our school has several classes and clubs that offer engagement for all students. Some are more service-oriented, while others are support-based. Still, others are committed to providing social interaction for students with common interests.

All students and staff in La Center High School are invited to join clubs and their activities. The Environmental Action Team leads our school to take environmentally sustainable actions on our campus and beyond. Examples include a donation to the North Clark County Food Bank donation from the Environmental Studies Class Garden. The EAT, in partnership with the Leos Club, provided invasive species vegetation removal from the La Center Post Office's bioswale. The Environmental Action Team also completed the requirements necessary for numerous Green Schools certifications and developed lasting change projects.

There are many community service-based projects on campus. The Leos Club holds the Annual La Center Easter Egg Hunt, a Drive and Drop food donation drive, a LCHS Care Closet, and a Litter patrol on LCHS Campus organizes participation in the Lions Club glasses redistribution drive. It makes fire starters for Clark County Search and Rescue. The Leadership Class organized a Stuff the Bus fall food drive and the Winter Giving Tree. The National Honor Society also organized a food drive, animal shelter volunteering, and created care packages and delivered them to sick children, US troops, and adults in elder care. The Gay-Straight Alliance presented to the LCHS and LCMS Staff regarding gender identity and sexual orientation.

Many classes regularly host guest speakers to broaden the knowledge and understanding of the students upon a myriad of topics: Civics, Global Studies, Women's Studies, Industrial Arts, Business and Marketing, Environmental Studies, Special Education, AP Physics, Careers in Science, Marine Biology, and Ecology. The Women's Studies classes have an annual sex trafficking awareness night, have organized YWCA donation drives, and participate in senior care facility visits and activities.

The Environmental Studies Class works with several entities to broaden their learning as well as to make positive impacts in our community and natural environment. Friends of the East Fork, a local non-profit organization, is committed to salmon restoration in the East Fork of the Lewis River and works with our classes. Another local organization, the Water Monitoring Network through the Water Resource Education Center, conducts monthly water quality tests along tributaries near our school and that flow into the East Fork of the Lewis River. The Environmental Studies Class mentors La Center Elementary 4th grade classes to conduct water quality tests, learn about our local watersheds, sustainable land use, and clean energy. The class collaborates with the school's Residential Construction Class to design and construct a demonstration GreenShed with an informational kiosk to educate visitors to a new, in-progress La Center Garden and GreenShed. In addition, students participated in a flipped Internship and learned about engineering and surveying with the company Mackay Sposito and the City of La Center.

## Pillar 1: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

### Element 1A: Energy conservation strategies

**Describe how your school programs, policies, and actions have reduced the amount of energy used in your building(s).**

Conservation is important to our district because it leads to fiscal savings and compliance with local, state, and national facilities requirements. It's essential to our classes and school because we are working to educate students to be stewards of our planet and take environmentally sustainable actions, including -but not limited to energy conservation. Because our district is a smaller one, we do not have a person appointed to write policies related to energy conservation in our schools; instead, we take direct action.

La Center High School is not afraid to take on large projects to help reduce our impact. In 2006, when the new wing addition was added to our high school's building, 1.02 kW solar panels were installed on the roof at the entrance of the building. Daylighting is also part of our renewable energy solution. The clean energy produced by the school's solar panel system feeds into the *Clark County PUD Green Lights Program*.

In 2018, students in the Environmental Studies Class and LCHS Environmental Action Team worked with the Clark PUD and Bonneville Environmental Foundation's Clean Energy Program to update our school's solar energy production data feed system. They installed an iPad kiosk that displays solar energy production and information relevant to our school's solar system. A solar energy-informational kiosk is stationed within the Green Wall display in the entryway of LCHS. The kiosk information about energy production produced by the solar panels on the school's roof, i.e., daily/weekly/monthly/annually, and overall energy production, what that energy could fuel, and the positive impact it has had upon our carbon footprint

LCHS's industrial arts classes have learned about and practiced refining biodiesel from local restaurant's used cooking oil. This is used as an exhibit within the Annual LCHS Earth Day Extravaganza to demonstrate renewable energy use for transportation - fueling a go-cart and small pickup truck.

District and building are committed to a complete transition to LED lighting. Any additional lights that are installed, as well as replacements for those not properly functioning, are replaced with energy-saving LED lights. In 2018, all outdoor and parking lights were replaced with energy-saving LED lighting. We have automatic light shut-off sensors that shut lights off in classrooms.

Our natural gas-powered heating system has been fitted with Clean Energy Emission and Clean Air compliant filters and emission systems. All filters are inspected on a bimonthly schedule to ensure their effective filtration as well as their efficient energy use. The high school is equipped with double-pane windows to improve energy efficiency.

This year the Environmental Studies Class and Residential Construction Classes are working with the LCHS Environmental Action Team to add a demonstration facility, known as the GreenShed, to the La Center Garden and Outdoor Classroom. The GreenShed will be equipped with an educational kiosk, solar

panels, and a Tesla battery wall donated by Clark PUD. We are finalizing our application to be filed with the City of La Center toward obtaining building permits for the 12'x24' sustainable learning station. This ongoing project will be a piece of our Annual Earth Day Extravaganza at which students in the industrial arts classes demonstrate refining used cooking oil into fuel. Students' actions are reducing energy use and increasing awareness.

### **Element 1B: Water quality, efficiency, and conservation**

*Describe how your school implemented and maintains your water conservation program.*

Water conservation is approached in many ways at La Center High School. We employ many commonly used mitigation techniques, including low-flow automatic faucets in the restrooms, native plantings, minimal landscape irrigation, drip irrigation use, and water bottle filling stations, one in the gymnasium (installed 2019) and one in the lunchroom commons (installed 2020). We have also undertaken more involved mitigation projects in the school's ESC Garden for the last decade.

Students in the 2008/2009, Environmental Studies Class (formerly Project Study) designed the garden to take advantage of underutilized outdoor space near their classroom. Then they successfully sought outside funding and the necessary approvals from building administration, district maintenance, and the superintendent's office. The ESC Garden began as a 1,050 sq ft mixed-used garden, and the pollination garden, native garden, and rain garden added since brought it to more than 4,000 sq. ft in 2015. With the help of the Clark County Conservation District, students constructed a rain barrel station, collecting rainfall from the roof of the nearby two-class portable building. This system is used to water the non-edible portions of the garden and mitigate flooding around the portable. An overflow system was added later that year, routing water from rain barrel overflow to the rain garden, filled with flood and drought-tolerant native plants. In 2020, the rain barrel station was expanded with two more barrels for a total of four in the system. Water from these barrels is also used to rinse rubber boots and garden tools after students work outdoors.

Our watershed program is a less traditional aspect of our water conservation efforts. The program includes monthly water quality testing in our local tributaries. The data we collect (nitrate, phosphate, dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, and turbidity) from the creek that runs through our town, as well as that from the East Fork of the Lewis River (our salmon restoration focus), is recorded using Google Sheets and shared with our city's wastewater treatment facility and others. This learning opportunity is extended to elementary school classes through student mentoring (this year, it's all the 4th-grade classes) to teach them, hand-on, the importance of our local watershed, its water quality, and the aquatic habitat. The more people who gain a better understanding of conservation and watershed stewardship, the more potable water will be conserved and aquatic habitats preserved.

### **Element 1C: Waste Management and Product Procurement**

*Describe your solid waste management plan and practices.*

We tackle waste reduction head-on with students taking the lead in the weekly pickup, sorting, and disposition of waste from classrooms, hallways, offices, and central-use areas of La Center High School and the District Offices housed on the LCHS campus. Students create educational media explaining and

encouraging best practices for using classroom bins, and for disposing of recyclable, mixed-use, and non-recyclable waste, which is then delivered through televisions, bulletin boards, morning announcements, the Environmental Action Team's Instagram, and emails to all staff. Another method for getting the word out about the importance of reducing landfill waste is the annual LCHS Earth Day Extravaganza, which includes exhibits and interactive demonstrations related to waste reduction as a key element.

The school collects all recyclable materials that are collected by our city/county, including paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, steel cans, glass, milk cartons and juice boxes, lumber and wood scraps, and compost. The school reduces paper use by double-sided copying and printing, printing only what is needed, providing a school website where assignments can be posted and turned in. Markerboards and online learning materials, and assignment production further reduce paper use. The school reduces waste in the cafeteria by using durable, reusable trays and other serving ware. Water filling stations in the gym lessen the use of single-use plastic water bottles. The school saves and reuses durable supplies. Prior to purchasing new furniture, staff are encouraged to check reused furniture storage spaces and check with coworkers for shared/reused furnishings.

Composting is a consistent component of the school garden, reducing landfill waste and providing more natural soil amendments for the edible garden, which contributes produce to school lunches. Garden debris is all composted using lasagna composting, compost bins, and a static compost pile. Additionally, coffee grounds from the school's coffee cart (operated by the Life Skills Class), the staff room, and several classrooms and offices are collected and used in our compost stations or worm boxes. Compost use helps maintain soil health, and the more food we grow on-site, the more we can reduce costs, conserving fuel and other natural resources. Produce in excess of school needs is donated to the local food bank and community.

To reduce food waste, the school offers longer seated lunch periods. At school, food share tables are available for students to share unopened, packaged items and whole fruits with inedible peels. Staff routinely review and revise the cafeteria menu, revising (within federal nutrition guidelines) after assessing what students are selecting and eating. The school provides nutrition education.

Hazardous materials are used conservatively by our maintenance and grounds department and disposed of safely. Materials are clearly labeled and safely stored away from student-accessible areas. Our science teachers work together with teachers in other departments to dispose of learning materials, such as sharps, liquids, and broken items, safely and professionally in accordance with federal and state regulations.

Since 2020, LCHS has reduced paper use through the increased use of Google Classroom and other digital learning platforms. Teachers often reuse paper as scratch paper and use recycled paper for printed work. Double-sided printing and copying is encouraged, as is being mindful to make the actual number needed to reduce waste. Many teachers also use laminated copies of teaching aids, enabling extended reuse.

Lastly, through exhibits and materials often focused upon waste reduction and posted at the entrance of our school, known as the *Green Wall*, environmental sustainability is presented as a focus for all who enter our school.

## **Element 1D: Alternative transportation**

*Describe alternative transportation options to driving in a single occupancy vehicle to and from school.*

The school is served by school buses that were built after 1994, when the first emission standards were adopted. Has a vehicle loading/unloading area(s) that is at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows. Most students use methods of transportation other than single-occupancy vehicles to get to and from school each day. Many ride a school bus operated through our local school bus cooperative, KWRL. (<https://www.kwrl.org/>). KWRL is used by the Kalama, Woodland, Ridgefield, and La Center School Districts. La Center schools transport our students on K-12 buses on routes designed to minimize fuel consumption and wear and tear on the vehicles. Through being part of a cooperative with our neighboring rural school districts, we can more cost-efficiently maintain and utilize buses for school and extracurricular activities. Approximately 280 (58.7% of LCHS) students regularly ride a KWRL school bus to and from school.

Some students who live closer to school opt to walk, ride a bicycle, or skateboard. Skateboards can be checked into the office for the school day for students who use them to get to and from school—bike racks for students/staff to store bicycles.

Many who live further from school carpool with friends or neighboring families driving into town to LCHS. Most La Center High School staff live within 15 miles of the school, with some teachers and teacher families carpooling to and from school. The school has designated carpool parking stalls, and other staff that live close to our school walk from home.

In the lower parking lot of LCHS, there is a bus stop for students and staff using CTran, Clark County's public transportation system. Alternative methods of transportation, such as these, reduce fuel consumption, wear and tear on roads and cars, greatly decrease the amount of traffic in La Center, as well as ultimately lower our collective carbon footprint.

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

## **Element 2A: An integrated school environmental health program**

*Describe how your school implements and measures the success of your integrated environmental health programs and practices to ensure the health and safety of the school community.*

Green cleaning and pest management products are the standard in our school. Our Maintenance Department works with students and staff in our school to ensure that environmental health is a major focus in our buildings. So maintenance staff can more efficiently use their time to clean, students and staff leave their workspace in an orderly manner and alert maintenance staff ahead of time if there is more than usual needing to be done via our dedicated maintenance email line.

Chemicals are labeled, locked, and limited to what is required to clean an area. Green/safe products in double sealed, spill-proof containers are purchased as cleaning chemicals.

When it becomes necessary to manage pests, a professional company is contracted that follows public health regulations. Signs are posted to alert those on campus when any potentially hazardous chemicals

are used. Hazardous chemicals are not used in student/staff use areas within an unsafe time period of occupancy.

Our air quality management plan includes bi-monthly inspections of heating/cooling filters, with all being replaced every spring break. All MERV air filters are inspected and replaced every month- if needed in high-use areas like the gym, library, and commons/lunchroom, every other month in less populated/used areas. All filters are replaced every spring break. Commercial vacuums with HEPA filters are used just once a week to limit particulate matter from being stirred up more regularly. (When necessary, due to an accidental spill or mess, vacuuming is done more the day of the incident.) All water taps and faucets are cleaned daily. Since COVID hit our locale, all drinking fountains have been shut down, and an additional water bottle filling station was installed in our Commons/Lunchroom. Now, faucets and filling stations are cleaned and disinfected throughout the school day.

## **2B. High standards of nutrition, fitness, and quality outdoor time for both students and staff**

*Describe how your school implements high standards of nutrition, fitness, and quality outdoor time for both students and staff.*

La Center High School implements high standards of nutrition, fitness, and quality outdoor time for students and staff. Recently our district's K-12 schools began collaborating to create a comprehensive Health curriculum. This change in the curriculum allows for the promotion of healthier goals for both overall health but also physical education. Nutritional meal planning is a component of health classes. There is also a Food Science class that investigates ingredients, chemical components, nutritional values, and consumerism.

Our school meals are both tasty and nutritious, using locally sourced produce, as well as on-site grown herbs and vegetables from our Environmental Studies Class Garden. Using information based on last year's efforts and the food interests of their peers, students research, select, plan, plant, maintain, and harvest school-grown produce used in school breakfasts and lunches. They also create media about the produce and herbs they grow to educate and inform the school community about the environmental benefits of locally grown food. This is shared on the school's Green Wall (an environmental sustainability-focused site within the entrance of the high school) and on television screens around the campus.

On average, students spend 300 minutes per week in PE classes, and between 180-210 of those minutes (60-70%) are outdoors. About 66% of students in our school participate in after-school sports programs. In addition to PE and Health classes, the Ecology, Careers in Science, Environmental Studies, Survival of Literature classes regularly learn and work together outdoors. Environmental Studies Class learns/works outdoors 1-4 days a week year-round. This includes several off-campus sites where the class walks to and from to do their activities.

La Center High School proudly offers a challenge course available to all students through clubs/classes taught during the day. In 2019, the climbing wall was added to the high and low ropes courses to offer a variety of individual and group challenges. This type of outdoor education allows for traditional boundaries of learning to be stretched beyond the basics. Using ropes and harnesses, students can face their fears and build trust with their peers. Each year nearly two hundred students can use the course,

both during school and after school, in clubs. It's also a great way to promote self-reflection among the students. Students experiencing the ropes course state: "It helped me realize what I am capable of doing. I learned if I push myself and really try. I can succeed at anything life hands me" (Lynda B.), "The challenge course is extreme because it gets you out of your comfort zone" (Blane B.), and "You have to be creative. There is no way you can accomplish the task without a creative mind" (Alex F.).

**Does your school have a school nurse and/or school-based health center? Yes**

***Describe your school's efforts to support student mental health and school climate (e.g., anti-bullying programs, peer counseling, etc.)***

As a smaller suburban-rural high school, La Center High School students and staff have a variety of forums to develop sincere relationships. Teachers and students frequently encounter each other at local sporting, recreational and municipal events. Many LCHS teachers' children attend our school. Teachers are available before and after classes to offer curricular and scholastic assistance. This availability and increased authentic encounters foster an atmosphere of being more than a school, but rather a community.

In addition to informal approaches to supporting students' mental health and school climate, La Center HS offers several resources. A weekly Advisory Class focuses on social/emotional learning opportunities, games, and assistance in navigating high school and beyond. A student congress called Wildcats Achieving Connection meets with the LCHS Principal to address student concerns within the school and construct solutions. They proactively work together for a positive and supportive school climate. In addition, there is a Climbing Tower & Ropes Course that helps students build self-esteem and teamwork skills.

There are also two on-site, full-time counselors to provide academic, vocational, social/emotional/mental health support and refer students to agencies when further help is needed. We coordinate with local agencies, such as: Clark County Crisis and Southeast Washington Catholic Community Services, for mental health counseling, suicide prevention, housing, and wrap-around services. QPR Resources provides professional development training and reference materials for staff to use. *Question Persuade Refer - Ask a Question, Save a Life* is a suicide prevention resource offered to students and staff. Staff members also receive Equality and Equity Training to increase knowledge and approaches to working with students, families, and each other with equality and equity at the forefront. They implement Restorative Practices to help problem-solve student issues and develop better relationships after a conflict. A hot button link called *See Something Say Something* is on the LCHS Homepage to encourage positive feedback and areas of concern to be reported to the administration. It is accessible to students, parents, and staff.

As a smaller suburban-rural high school, La Center High School students and staff have a variety of forums to develop sincere relationships. Teachers and students frequently encounter each other at local sporting, recreational, and municipal events. Many LCHS teachers' children attend our school. Teachers are available before and after classes to offer curricular and scholastic assistance. This availability and increased authentic encounters foster an atmosphere of being more than a school, but rather a community.

Pillar 3: Provide effective environmental and sustainability education which incorporates STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways

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

***Describe how your school integrates and measures students' environmental and sustainability literacy at each grade level, including curriculum and outdoor learning.***

Students at La Center High School are challenged to support claims in environmental sustainability within 9th-11th grade science and Environmental Studies Classes. The latter is curricular-integrated social studies, ELA, and CTE-Natural Resources Class open to 9-12th graders. Through shared activities and rubrics, science and ELA teachers collaborate to create projects with content, conceptual understandings, and skills. Freshman Physics classes design and build cars using recycled materials. Our biology class's unit focused on biological cycles in our environment meets the three-dimensional learning of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Our Marine Biology class has two lessons focusing on engineering design to address environmental impacts. One looks at how climate change and human impact affect coral reefs. Students then research their choice of an environmental stressor, its impact, and present a potential solution. These lessons range from addressing river pollution on the Columbia River to capturing energy from local rivers. Our Marine Biology's whaling unit investigates environmental impacts, sustainable whaling, population sizes, cultural importance, along with past and current legal proceedings. The focus of our new Ecology class is human impacts on local and global environments.

There are many opportunities for elementary, middle school, and high school students to learn about environmental sustainability. LCHS's Environmental Studies Class has mentored 4th and 5th graders since 2012, testing water quality in Brezee Creek, near our schools. The 9-12th graders teach about macroinvertebrates, what can affect water quality, and how poor water quality affects aquatic and human life. When students reach middle school, science classes water monitor along the same creek. They use their data to do projects and work with hypotheses related to our local watershed. With a major wetland less than a mile from campus, all students can have outdoor observations and experiences in our local watershed. When students reach high school, science classes such as: Physics, Ecology, and Careers in Science go to the creek and continue studies about the health of our watershed, local river, and tributaries to it. Students monitor water quality at multiple locations within our local watersheds in the Environmental Studies Class. They do salmon habitat restoration projects with experts in the field, investigate wildlife and plants in the ecosystem, and work to improve salmon habitat and population. La Center Students can take experiences from water monitoring in elementary and middle school and take it to the next level in high school.

All classes use both demonstrations and experiments to build student familiarity and use of the Science and Engineering Practices of the NGSS. This kind of formative assessment builds teacher understanding of students' conceptual understanding and ability to implement knowledge and skills. In addition to regular formative assessment, we participate in annual state testing of all state standards. The concepts described above are part of standards and thus of testing.

**Describe professional development opportunities available to your teachers in environmental and sustainability concepts, and the number and percentage of teachers who participated in these opportunities during the past two years.**

Teachers at La Center High School are encouraged to participate in training, workshops, and other forms of professional development to enhance their teaching knowledge and approach. As teachers in Washington state, all must complete 10 STEM clock hours to renew their teaching certificates. Our local ESD 112 regularly offers science kit training and professional development enhancement opportunities. The science kits allow students to work in a hands-on manner with their classmates to problem solve, construct, and delve into inquiry-based prompts. The science kits include supplies and materials for students to learn about water quality, aquatic habitat, weather systems, wind power, ecosystems, insects and pollinators, and climate change. The Science and Environmental Studies Class teachers who have used the kits have attended training and shared ideas for extensions with each other.

Water quality has been a thread through the science and environmental studies programs. Collaboration and shared resources have been a key to enhancing our approach to expanding students' understandings, ideas, and possible solutions to matters that relate to environmental sustainability. Classes and workshops that have been attended include: ESD 112 STEM and Careers through Flipped Internships, The Pacific Education Institute, Clark County/Vancouver Water Resource Education Center, Washington Green Schools/Earth Gen, Clark County Water Monitoring Network, and Project-based Learning, and Washington State LASER (Leadership & Assistance for Science Education Reform).

Because La Center High School is a smaller school, we can learn from each other and collaborate to motivate students' conceptual understanding that learning has importance, relativity, and multiple applications to the world around us. Two of the three science teachers were joined by two math teachers, Environmental Studies Class teacher, and two English language arts teachers to attend summer trainings and workshops to develop integrated project-based learning lessons, many of which were focused upon science and the environment, including: salmon habitat restoration, approaches to decreasing landfill waste- waste reduction, biomes and biodiversity, Critter Project- Homeostasis, Clean Energy Sources- wind, water, and sun.

In October 2019, all the staff at La Center High School attended a professional development workshop, "Environmental Sustainability; An Approach to PBL (Project Based Learning)".

**Element 3B: Use of environmental and sustainability concepts to develop STEM content knowledge and thinking skills to prepare graduates for the 21st century.**

***Describe how environmental and sustainability education in your school supports the teaching of science and engineering practices and supports robust general science education that includes a deep understanding of life, physical, and Earth & space sciences.***

The Environmental Studies Class bases most of its studies on life sciences and ecology, although the three credits earned for this class are in social studies, ELA, and natural resources. As a 3-hour block (social studies, ELA, and CTE [natural resources]), the class quickly conceptualizes the reality of integrated learning and daily uses STEM in their project-based learning experience.

This is demonstrated through water monitoring at multiple locations, studying macroinvertebrates, and learning about the habitat of salmon, as well as gardening and sustainable land use. Students audit stressors to the environment and, with the help of experts in the field, propose and actualize mitigation projects.

Biology has a unit focused on biological cycles in our environment during spring that meets the three-dimensional learning of NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards). Our biology class focuses on the human body, and all lessons focus on human impact.

Marine Biology dives deep into whaling, specifically focusing on the Olympic Peninsula-Makah Tribe. Our whaling unit investigates environmental impacts, sustainable whaling, population sizes, cultural importance, along with past and current legal proceedings.

Careers in Science students made wildlife observations, identifying species seen on Brezee Creek, and noted the impacts of the community through these observations. A wildlife biologist guest speaker described her job managing the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, including species populations, causes of fluctuations in numbers, and impacts and management of invasive species. An Ecological Land Services biologist described details of his jobs working with water quality and water flow, took pond samples, and identified protozoa. Students also simulated environmental impacts of the ecosystem, such as acid rain, extreme cold, and darkness. Students also investigated and learned about the career of an ecologist. Now, students are exploring aeronautical sciences and building rockets. They also read *Hidden Figures* and learned about career paths in aeronautical sciences as well as the evolution of women of color in the science field.

***Describe how your school's curriculum connects classroom content to career options that focus on environmental and sustainability field studies and/or careers.***

The Environmental Studies Class is a Natural Resources-CTE class focused upon environmental sustainability on our campus and in our community. ESC works with experts in public and private industry: salmon biologists, engineers, a geomorphologist, surveyors, city and building planners, clean energy, sustainable land use and gardening, and community outreach. Students learn about the experts' career fields, their work experiences and training, and their applicability to authentic projects the class has underway.

Students in the class: research, seek expert input, plan and problem solve project implementation, and implement lasting changes at LCHS, in our town, and within the East Fork of the Lewis Watershed. They evaluate each other's ideas to select the best option for their project/site. Working in teams and as a whole class, students assess and overcome obstacles to transform ideas into realities, whether it is: installing a rain garden, rain barrels, birdhouses and enhanced raised beds, solar panels, a green roof, recycling, and waste reduction endeavors, water monitoring and salmon restoration in their local watersheds, and mentoring elementary students to be watershed stewards. Career and skill inventories, as well as resume writing, are also components of this unique class.

The 2020/2021 ESC completed a flipped internship with McKay Sposito, a civil engineering firm in the local area. Students learned from engineers, architects, and surveyors to overcome hurdles in the design and site selection of the GreenShed being built in the La Center Garden. Presentations to the

administration, public and non-profit organization boards of directors are pivotal pieces to the puzzle that students in the class at La Center High School put together. The experiences gained through the Environmental Studies Class help students explore a variety of career possibilities and expand their vision of what they may do in life after high school.

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

***Describe students' civic and/or community engagement experiences integrating environmental and sustainability concepts, field studies, and community service at every grade level.***

The Environmental Studies Class has engaged in sustainable concepts and field studies since 2009. Within the past three years, 9-12th grade ESC Students have participated in salmon restoration projects in local tributaries and vegetation removal on campus, in our community, as well as along and within local creeks and the East Fork of the Lewis River. Students in ESC mentor 4th and 5th graders to monitor stream health, remove vegetation, plant native trees and shrubs, and take a positive role in their local watershed. These young students learn the basics of water quality testing, macroinvertebrates, and salmon habitat and restoration. Students also can engage with the ESC Garden, where they demonstrate sustainable practices, such as: rain barrels, pollination garden, native gardens, and growing edible food donated to the local food bank and our school's food service department for school meals. The Environmental Action Team frequently works with the Environmental Studies Class to promote environmental sustainability not only in our school but also in our community.

In 2021, the Leo's Club, joined by members of the EAT, held a clean-up event at the La Center Post Office for the last three years as our Post Office lacks the labor force to complete more than the basic needs. This clean-up has included pruning trees and shrubs, manually removing invasive plants, and cleaning up garbage that is on the property. The Leo Club and Leadership class at the high school have on multiple occasions spent time removing trash from the high school campus, with a focus on areas where waste has a greater chance of impacting local wildlife.

Please refer to the "Equity" Section of our application for a listing of ways others in our school have played an active role in the betterment of our community.

Principal name, date, and signature below.

Name: Carol Patton Signature:



Date: January 10, 2022

END OF APPLICATION