



School Nominee Presentation Form
U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Public Charter Title I Magnet Private Independent Rural

Name of Principal: **Dr. Renee Bryant-Evans**
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name: **Robert W. Gadsden Elementary School**
(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: **919 May Street, Savannah, GA 31415**
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

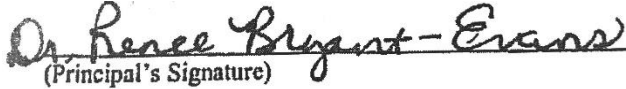
County: **Chatham** State: **Georgia** School Code Number *: **1056**

Telephone: **912-395-5940** Fax: **912-201-5943**

Web site/URL: **www.sccpss.com** E-mail: **renee.bryant-evans@sccpss.com**

**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.


(Principal's Signature)

Date: **2/13/19**

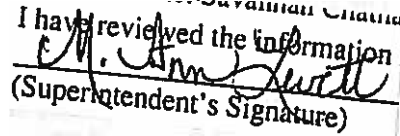
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: **Dr. M. Ann Levett**

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

District Name: **Savannah-Chatham County Public School System**

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


(Superintendent's Signature)

information is accurate.
(Superintendent's Signature)

Date: **2/14/19**

Name of Nominating Agency: **Georgia Department of Education**

Name of Nominating Authority: **Mr. Richard Woods**

(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: **2/14/19**

(Nominating Authority's Signature)



SUBMISSION

School Contact Information

School Name: Robert W. Gadsden Elementary School

Street Address: 919 May Street

City: Savannah **State:** Georgia **Zip:** 31415

Website: <http://internet.savannah.chatham.k12.ga.us/schools/Gadsden/default.aspx>

Principal Name: Dr. Renee Bryant-Evans

Principal Email Address: Renee.Bryant-Evans@sccpss.com **Phone Number:** (912) 395-5940

Lead Applicant Name (if different): Arnold Jackson

Lead Applicant Email: Arnold.Jackson@sccpss.com **Phone Number:** (912) 395-5563

<p>Level <input type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK-5/ 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12)</p>	<p>School Type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet</p>	<p>How would you describe your school? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural</p>	<p>District Name: Savannah-Chatham County Public School System</p> <p>School in one of the largest 50 districts in the nation? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>			<p>Total Enrolled: 558</p> <p>Graduation rate: N/A Attendance rate: 96.2%</p>
<p>% receiving FRPL: 98.2% % limited English proficient: 0% Other measures</p>			



Summary Narrative:

Robert W. Gadsden Elementary School (GES) of Savannah, GA has exemplified the concepts and ideas of conscientious environmental preservation and sustainability. GES was opened in 1955 and re-built in 2012. GES serves over 558 students from kindergarten through the fifth grade. Most students live in the surrounding urban neighborhood and nearly half walk to school. As a Title I school; ninety eight percent of student are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Business partners have played an active role in engaging students to be better citizens and supporting the sustainability efforts.

The campus is 7.25 acres, landlocked in an urban community. Less than 30% of the land is dedicated to buildings. When Gadsden was rebuilt in 2012, a second floor was included in the design to reclaim over an acre of greenspace. This resulted in a new athletic field and space for a 6400 square foot Photo-Voltaic System. GES has worked to improve its use of renewable energy while reducing its energy costs, which were essential in the school achieving one of the lowest utility costs per square foot in the district at \$.76. The school also achieved a 38% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

A variety of energy saving strategies to further reduce environmental impact & costs include incorporation of energy management performance guidelines, automated temperature control systems, integration of occupancy sensors and executing scheduled replacement of conventional lighting with LED, efficient student transport and recycling. Four transport buses adhere to strict bus idling guidelines. Over two tons of waste was recycled last year by third, fourth and fifth grader recycling club. The cafeteria transitioned from Styrofoam trays and bowls to paper trays. The trays are made of 80% paper board, from wood pulp grown in the U.S from certified forests and 20% recycled pulp. Gadsden reduced water use by 13% in the past year and installed a 30kW Photovoltaic (PV) System in December 2018. The PV System is expected to lower energy costs by 5% and avoid production of over two tons of carbon dioxide every month. Additionally, three bottle filling stations were installed throughout the building. The stations are expected to eliminate over 3,000 plastic bottles.

Leadership partnered with Southern Soccer Academy (SSA) Savannah United to increase the diversity of students' and provide additional education in health and fitness. Golf clinics are offered on the weekends through Camp Explore. Students gain experience in the sport and are educated on increasing quality of health. Through Gadsden's 21st Century after-school program students participate daily in fitness classes. A Running Club was established for students to exert energy before the school day. Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care, Inc. is a nonprofit community health center that provides services (including primary care, dentistry, behavioral health, and patient assistance) through an onsite clinic to Gadsden students. Students can remain at school during the day as opposed to being absent for medical appointments and missing valuable instructional time. Students also engage in 5-minute brain breaks throughout the day to focus and maximize instructional time. Safer Smarter Kids is an annual training session for students in grade K-5 teaching students how to better protect themselves from physical and mental abuse. A Character Counts program is implemented where six pillars of character development help students exemplify appropriate behaviors and provide a positive school climate. Coordinated Early Intervention Services (CEIS) and Dare to Be King programs focus on mental health. Students are



taught how to deal with trauma and daily stressors. Gadsden’s faculty and staff also participated in an annual wellness project “The Biggest Loser” to promote healthy eating and living.

Village Community Garden of Sylvester, GA and the YMCA partnered with GES to grow garden items. Students explore various career pathways related to agriculture and farming not normally presented to students from urban communities. Soccer and golf partnerships provide additional education in the importance of quality of health and maintaining fitness. Through an established partnership with Savannah State University (SSU), Gadsden has implemented a curriculum that exposes students to marine science, urban farming/ horticulture and other agricultural sciences and careers. This curriculum helps improve test scores on fifth grade state assessments. An integrated greenhouse/ aquaponics lab will be complete Spring 2019. This GES/SSU partnership is essential to groundbreaking research focused on reducing and eliminating food deserts in communities that surrounds the school. Lessons were designed on energy conservation by the Energy Efficiency Education Coordinator from Georgia Power. This educates and empowers students to play an active role in reducing global warming. Students also participate in STEM related competitions annually at the Student Success Expo. The #GadsdenGives initiative allows students to apply all they have learned through their environmental and sustainability curriculum to promote their civic duty of giving back to their community to sustain its vitality and beauty, while ensuring it remains sustainable.

1. Is your school participating in a local, state or national school program, such as EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, EcoSchools, Project Learning Tree, or others, which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars?

Yes **Program(s) and level(s) achieved:** EPA Energy Star Portfolio Manager

2. Has your school, staff or student body received any awards for facilities, health or environment? Yes

Award(s) and year(s) Received:

- A) Energy Star Award (2014)
- B) SCCPSS Green Ribbon School (2018)
- C) Georgia Environmental Finance Authority Solar Panel Grant (2018)
- D) 21st Century Learning Community (21st Century) Grant (2013 – 2018)
- E) Coordinated Early Intervention Services (2018-2019)

PILLAR I: REDUCED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND COSTS

Energy

1. Can your school demonstrate a reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions? Yes No

Percentage reduction: N/A **Over:** N/A

Initial GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person): N/A

Final GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person): N/A **Offsets:** None

How did you calculate the reduction? N/A



NOTE: Reduction could not be calculated due unavailability of the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. The website has the following note: “For the duration of the U.S. government shutdown, all ENERGY STAR tools, resources, and data services will not be available.”

2. Do you track resource use in EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager? (X) Yes () No
Energy Star Certification received 2014 (Last year the school received an Energy Star score of 91. Energy usage for this application was similar so a score above 75 is anticipated.)

3. Has your school reduced its total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline? (X) No; **Current energy usage:** kBTU/student/year, kBTU/sq. ft./year, % **Reduction:** N/A
NOTE: Reduction could not be calculated due unavailability of the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. The website has the following note: “For the duration of the U.S. government shutdown, all ENERGY STAR tools, resources, and data services will not be available.” Actual deduction will be calculated once EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is available.

4. What percentage of your school's energy is obtained from:
On-site renewable energy generation: 5% **Type:** Photovoltaic (PV) System
A new 30,000 watt photovoltaic system was added to the school in December of 2018.

5. In what year was your school originally constructed? 2012
What is the total building area of your school? 89,762 square feet

6. Has your school constructed or renovated building(s) in the past ten years? (X) Yes

Water and Grounds

7. Can you demonstrate a reduction in your school's total water consumption from an initial baseline? (X) Yes

Average Baseline water use (gallons per occupant): 1,819.74

Current water use (gallons per occupant): 1,589.78

Percentage reduction in domestic water use: 229.96 gallons per occupant

Time period measured: 07/2017 – 06/2018

How did you document this reduction (i.e. ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, utility bills, school district reports)? Utility bills and District Reports

8. What percentage of your landscaping is considered water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate? 100%

Types of plants used and location: Live Oaks trees, palm trees, wax myrtles and crepe myrtles.

9. Describe alternate water sources used for irrigation. Drought resistant vegetation: wax myrtle and crepe myrtle is installed around the perimeter of the campus.

10. Describe any efforts to reduce storm water runoff and/or reduce impermeable surfaces.



The athletic field and over 70 trees surrounding the building and perimeter serve to reduce storm water runoff. All turf areas are maintained and cut at acceptable heights to repel water runoff. The only impermeable areas are concrete sidewalks around campus.

11. Our school's drinking water comes from: (X) Municipal water source

12. Describe how the water source is protected from potential contaminants. Gadsden's water is supplied from the City of Savannah. The city's water department routinely tests water quality. Water is treated with orthophosphate to prevent lead leaching from contacted piping. Water samples are collected; they are meet State and Federal water drinking standards.

13. Describe the program you have in place to control lead in drinking water. The school was constructed after the ban on lead piping and soldering. Water was sampled and tested for lead levels Fall 2017. Sampling revealed no elevated lead levels; all federal guidelines were met.

14. What percentage of the school grounds are devoted to ecologically beneficial uses? 71%. Less than 30% of the land is dedicated to buildings. When the school was rebuilt in 2012, a second floor was included in the design to reclaim over an acre of greenspace. The reclamation resulted in a new athletic field and space for a 6400 square foot Photo-Voltaic System.

15. What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfilling or incinerating due to reduction, recycling and/or composting? Complete all calculations below to receive points.

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

$$\underline{30 \text{ cubic yard} \times 2 \text{ per month} \times 75\% = 45 \text{ cubic yards}}$$

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

$$\underline{2 \text{ cubic yard} \times 2 \times .50 \text{ conversion factor} \times 75\% = 2 \text{ tons}}$$

C - Monthly compostable materials volume(s) in cubic yards (food scrap/food soiled paper dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x % full when emptied or collected):

Currently, we are not composting food waste.

$$\underline{\text{Recycling Rate} = ((2 + 0) \div (45 + 2 + 0) \times 100): 4.2\%}$$

$$\underline{\text{Monthly waste generated per person} = (A/\text{number of students and staff}): 45/610=.073}$$

16. What percentage of your school's total office/classroom paper content is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed and/or chlorine-free?

Classroom and office paper are 100% certified through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), a nonprofit which recognizes fiber harvested from responsibly managed forests.

17. List the types and amounts of hazardous waste generated at your school:

There are no hazardous waste or hazardous materials being generated from this school. There are no labs or use of hazardous chemicals in the school. Most of the cleaning chemicals are certified green products with the Green Seal.

How is hazardous waste disposal tracked? N/A



Describe other measures taken to reduce solid waste and eliminate hazardous waste.

Gadsden has implemented and maintains a single stream recycling program with the City of Savannah as our partner. Currently, we are removing recycled materials in our waste stream. Our cafeteria switched from Styrofoam trays and bowls to paper- the paper trays are made of 80 percent grown paper board, from wood pulp grown in the United States specifically for the purpose and 20 percent recycle pulp. The Kraft board allows for printable surface, using only soy ink for the tray's surface. The tray is manufactured in a carbon neutral process and is biodegradable and compostable.

18. Which green cleaning custodial standard is used?

ISSA – (International Sanitary Supply Association)

What percentage of all products is certified? 75% **Cleaning:** Clean by Peroxy, NABC, 105 Green Solution, Bio-Renewable Glass Cleaner **Hand Soap:** Lite'N Foamy

What third party certified green cleaning product standard is used? Green Sealed products.

Alternative Transportation

19. What percentage of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 + student in the car) to/from school? (Note if your school does not use school buses)

47% (261 of 558) students, 40% bus riders and 13% car riders.

How is this data calculated?

Transportation audits bus routes and ridership weekly. The administrative staff conducts counts once a month on morning and afternoon.

20. Has your school implemented?

Designated carpool parking stalls.

A well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses).

Vehicle loading/unloading areas are +25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.

Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School

Describe activities in your safe routes program: The plan provides a walking audit from the furthest distance to the school, identifying all locations where students are originating, identifying sex offenders in the school route and the creation of a new safe pathways to school.

21. Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its

environment impact: Gadsden uses 4 transport buses, the lowest in the District. Extensive use of technology hardware and software, strict adherence to idling guidelines and 20-day bus inspections (ensures optimal efficiency and performance) greatly reduce greenhouse gases.

22. Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

Gadsden has one of the lowest utility costs per square foot in the District at \$0.76. A 30kW Photovoltaic System was commissioned December 2018, lowering energy costs by 5% and avoiding production of over 2 tons of carbon dioxide every month. Gadsden's automation control system schedules temperature-controlled equipment to lower energy consumption and costs. All



exterior lights including bus ramps and parking lots are LED. We have also installed three water bottle filling station throughout the building and it is estimated that each station will save over 1,000 water bottles from being disposed in the land field.

PILLAR 2: IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

Environmental Health

1. Describe school's Integrated Pest Management efforts: IPM/green certifications earned, routine inspections, pest identification, monitoring, record-keeping, etc.: Gadsden Elementary strictly adheres to EPA guidelines, implementing a pest management plan that outlines the use of pest control on an "as needed" basis. When pesticides are applied around campus, treatments are scheduled on weekends and staff and students are prohibited from entering the area for at least 8 hours. Currently, pest control consists of glue boards and trap boards whenever possible to protect students and staff from harmful chemicals.

2. What is the volume of your annual pesticide use (gal/student/year)? 0.01gal/ student
Describe efforts to reduce use: Pesticide control is provided monthly by Orkin through a prevention approach to Integrated Pest Management (IPM). From August 2017 to 2018, GES used a significant number of glue boards (six) and monitors (fifteen) which identified the presence of pests and mitigated their pathways and food sources before application of chemicals. GES has implemented several pest prevention recommendations from Orkin to bolster the maintenance (caulking and sealants) and sanitation (expert food debridement) programs. Additionally, maintenance staff conducts monthly inspection of limbs close to the building and take preventive measures to control entry into the facility.

3. Which of the following practices does your school employ to minimize exposure to hazardous contaminants? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice.

Our school prohibits smoking on campus and in public school buses.

The District prohibits smoking in schools, around school campuses and in all vehicles.

Our school has identified and properly removed sources of elemental mercury and prohibits its purchase and use in the school. Gadsden prohibits the purchase and use in the school.

Our school uses fuel burning appliances and has taken steps to protect occupants from carbon monoxide (CO). The school does not use fuel burning appliances and do not use natural gas on the campus.

Our school does not have fuel burning combustion appliances. (Kitchen is 100% electric).

Our school has tested all frequently occupied rooms at or below ground level for radon gas and has fixed and retested all rooms with levels that tested at or above 4 pCi/L OR our school was built with radon resistant construction features and tested to confirm levels below 4 pCi/L. Gadsden was built in 2012 with radon resistant construction features.

Our school has identified any wood playground or other structures that contain chromate copper arsenate and has taken steps to eliminate exposure. There is no wooden playground equipment on campus and all equipment was installed in 2012.



4. Describe how your school controls and manages chemicals routinely used in the school to minimize student and staff exposure. Application Treatment Logs are kept onsite. The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program is strictly managed and enforced by the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Program Manager (PM). IPM eliminates unnecessary chemical treatments that could compromise IAQ and/ or pose a health threat. Chemical treatment is only used as a last resort and when the building is closed. 100% of chemical treatments during the past school year occurred during winter or summer break. The IAQ PM also leads the custodial team and manages the purchase and use of chemical cleaners, over 75% of which are green certified.

5. Describe actions your school takes to prevent exposure to asthma triggers. GES leadership ensures a safe, non-pest work environment. We maintain summaries of all pesticide applications, as well as MSDS sheets in a binder in the administrative office. A District-wide IAQ program has been implemented with procedures and checklists for maintenance, custodians and administrators to compliment a multiple-tiered system, mitigating the risk of asthma triggers within or around the school.

6. Describe actions your school takes to control moisture from leaks, condensation, and excess humidity and promptly cleanup mold or removes moldy materials when it is found. The District Maintenance and Operations Department has a preventive maintenance program for roofs and gutters to ensure they are inspected and cleaned. Maintenance investigates IAQ inspections and has three (3) EPA Master Certified Indoor Air Quality Technicians on staff. The custodial and maintenance staff are properly trained and have the equipment necessary to clean mold. In addition, HVAC air conditioning cooling coils are inspected and cleaned annually.

7. Our school has installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources. (X)Yes. All HVAC systems meet ASHRAE Standard 62.2010. Exhaust systems are installed in restrooms, kitchens and mechanical rooms.

8. Describe your school's practices for inspecting and maintaining the building's ventilation system and all unit ventilators to ensure they are clean and operating properly. The HVAC system is serviced quarterly, semi-annually and annually. During inspections, filters are changed, motors/pumps are greased, belts checked, motor amp draw checked, cooling coils checked/cleaned and mechanical rooms cleaned. In addition, cooling towers water treatment is inspected monthly. The cooling towers, air cooled chillers and centrifugal chillers are cleaned annually.

9. Describe actions your school takes to ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation standards. GES has two energy recovery units (ERU) that precondition outside air and a reheat system to control humidity. The ERU's provide outside air to all water source heat pumps throughout the building. All air handling units have outside air dampers. Outside air dampers are activated by CO2 sensors in the gymnasium and cafeteria. The system meets all local and state codes as well as all national standards, including ASHRAE Standard 62.



10. Describe other steps your school takes to protect indoor environmental quality such as implementing EPA IAQ Tools for Schools and/or conducting other periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to identify environmental health and safety issues and take corrective action. The building’s ventilation and HVAC systems are designed according to ASHRAE standards. The ventilation system is monitored daily by our energy management control staff. Quarterly preventive maintenance work orders are created, and mechanics are scheduled to inspect, change filters and correct any issues. The District has developed a comprehensive Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Management Plan. IAQ teams consists of maintenance personnel, teachers, administrators, nurses and custodians who use checklists and annual inspections/evaluations at each site.

NUTRITION AND FITNESS

11. Which practices does your school employ to promote nutrition, physical activity and overall school health? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

[X] Our school participates in a Farm to School program to use local, fresh food. Twenty-five percent of Gadsden Elementary menus have Georgia grown and local produce incorporated on a weekly basis, which is indicated on the menus. The percentages were very small for the past two years due to extensive storm damage in the area. The district seeks Georgia grown items first before considering other products. Gadsden played a part in the District receiving the Golden Radish Award for excellence in Farm to School for five consecutive years.

[X] Our school has an on-site food garden. Gadsden Elementary School partners with the local YMCA (located across the street) to grow their garden items until the greenhouse is up and running. This is regularly used to integrate farm to school and farm to table into the school curriculum.

[X] Our school garden supplies food for our students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class or to the community. Gadsden utilizes select produce grown through the YMCA garden project to provide fresh items for the school salad bar.

[X] Health measures are integrated into assessments. FitnessGram uses several events to assess students’ current fitness levels: PACER, Curl Up, Push Up, Height and Weight, Set and Reach (measures muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, body mass index, and muscular strength). Affective Assessment uses a rubric to evaluate student engagement and score questions answered. Students are also assessed on “MyPlate” components. Health assessments are paramount; Gadsden’s student population is comprised primarily of low-socioeconomic, African-American communities where the risk and reality of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease are prevalent. Assessments provide motivation while educating students on the importance of eating a healthy diet and engaging in daily physical fitness.



[X] Food purchased by our school is certified as "environmentally preferable"

Percentage: 100% **Type:** Fresh Produce, dairy products and meat products

12. Describe the type of outdoor education, exercise and recreation available. Students have recess using playground equipment for 30 minutes daily. One acre of land was cleared for a fenced playground area which lends itself for more safe play space and classroom-rich activities related to math and science standards. We are using the extra space for running club, soccer, golfing, and football. Kickball tournaments and field day activities are annual events.

13. Describe any other efforts to improve nutrition and fitness, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in intramural sports, but finances are often prohibitive. GES removed the financial burden on families by leveraging business partnerships. Students now have a running club, golf clinic and membership with SSA Savannah United soccer club, all providing diverse exposure to health & fitness support they may not have had otherwise. 21st Century provided opportunities for students to engage in dance, golf, flag football, karate, and volleyball after school daily. Eighty 21st Century students walked in the MLK 5K Unity Walk, commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday- further promoting physical fitness.

COORDINATED HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, CLIMATE AND SAFETY

14. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues? (X) Yes () No

If yes, describe the health-related initiatives or approaches used by the school: GES utilizes a Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) approach focusing on: physical education and physical activity, nutrition environment and services, health education, social and emotional school climate, physical environment, health services, counseling, psychological and social services, employee wellness, community involvement, and family engagement.

Students in every classroom, including art, music, and P.E. engage in 5-minute brain breaks each hour of the day to assist them in maintaining focus and mental stamina. Students have reported to teachers that they particularly enjoy brain breaks because they are afforded the opportunity to relax for a few minutes with their classmates and recharge in preparation for the remainder of the lesson. Activities can include: 5-minute line dance, yoga, urban hip-hop or interactive websites such as Go Noodle or Calm. Brain Breaks have become an integral part of Gadsden's rituals and routines.

GES was awarded a CEIS (Coordinated Early Intervention Services) grant to assist several students who have experienced physical or emotional trauma. Faculty and staff are trained to understand the important role mental health plays in the overall success of our students, review research and learn about evidence based, trauma informed practices all which assist in improving teacher and student communication.



Professional Growth seminars have helped significantly. Practices such as enthusiastically greeting students at all doors each morning with high fives, handshakes, hugs, fist-bumps and smiles helps everyone start the day excited. The goal is to ensure students receive a warm welcome as they enter the school to learn. Teachers and staff also make a more concerted effort to build meaningful relationships with students, understanding that students from poverty achieve higher levels of academic success when they know how much teachers care about them – seemingly little things like taking the time to learn all of their names (not just students in their class), their likes, and their dislikes – go a long way.

Teachers also meet monthly as a CEIS team to discuss the behaviors of the 25 most trauma-exposed students and review the effectiveness of evidence based interventions being used with them, so that staff may better assist them in thriving inside and outside of the classroom. These students, affectionately known as “The Magnificent 25” meet with a behavior interventionist each to learn ways to effectively respond to everyday stressors. One day, one of “The Magnificent 25” was observed displaying his newly learned techniques for coping with anger. This was a student who historically exhibited fits of rage and became violent when stressors arose. He made a good choice as a result of what he is learned.

Outdoor activities to improve health are scheduled after school includes the following:

A golf clinic on the weekend is offered for students through Camp Explore to expose them to the sport and how it can improve quality of health. After the first few weekends, two of students enjoyed golfing so much, that they joined and continue to play with a local recreational league. They have acquired their own golf clubs and golfing attire. Participation in golf affords them the opportunity to play a sport not typically played in their community.

The GES Running Club not only promotes fitness, but also assists students who need to exert some energy to start the school day. Two students are selected from each kindergarten through fifth grade class each month to participate totaling 60 club members. The club uses pedometers to track steps, and distance covered, which motivates students to be more active. Students sneak to the gym every day in hopes of seeing Coach Smith wanting to sign up for the club and participate.

15. Does your school partner with any postsecondary institutions, businesses, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and/or safety? (X) Yes
Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care, Inc. (CVCPHC) – Nonprofit community health center, funded federally and locally to serve citizens of the Savannah-Chatham County area- especially those with limited financial resources and high-risk populations. CVCPHC provides onsite services (including primary care, dentistry, behavioral health, and patient assistance) to approximately 60 Gadsden students every month. The provision of services onsite is significant; students remain at school during the day as opposed to being absent for medical appointments and missing valuable instructional time. These services also afford students the opportunity to receive the mental health support needed, including counseling, therapy, and referrals for additional support. Many students who were placed in time-out or suspended now receive care and services needed to experience academic success in the learning environment. Mental health access is just one of Gadsden’s success story. There was a particular occasion that warmed the



hearts of all the staff members serving one day. A very joyful second grade student ran eagerly to see the dentist because he had never been. When he left the clinic, he was all smiles!

Savannah Vocational and Technical School – Partners to educate Gadsden students on the importance of dental hygiene and the positive impact of eating healthy. Students enjoy the opportunity to brush their teeth, floss, and use mouthwash under the guidance of dental instructors from the technical school. They become very excited about what they have learned and cannot wait to share what they have experienced with their families.

American Heart Association – Kids Heart Challenge (formerly Jump Rope for Heart) creates an environment for family and friends to support their Gadsden students while they learn about heart disease, how the heart works, and build excitement about exercise while financially assisting other children in need. Students raised at least \$750 to donate to the American Heart Association, which helps fund research for preventing heart disease.

Pennies for Patients – the GES family was directly impacted by the death of a student. Through this partnership, students, teachers and staff have been able to honor the life of a beloved 5th grade student, while helping other children experiencing similar situations. Pennies for Patients is the Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) education and fund-raising arm of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS).

Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) – Spearheaded by the Junior Beta Club as a community service project, students in grades K-5 participate in the MDA Shamrock drive to raise awareness about how the disease physically impacts both adults and children, introduce students to philanthropy and how the money they raise positively impacts research. This project serves as an illustration to students on how their actions relate to caring, one of the pillars of the character counts programs.

Red Ribbon Week – Annual drug awareness campaign that informs students on the many dangers of drug use. Students are educated on the long-term physical, emotional, financial and legal consequences that effects the user, family and community. Students then combine their knowledge with creativity during the Georgia Red Ribbon poster contest in Atlanta.

Business Partner Student Recognition – Annually, students visit GES partners at the Savannah Convention and Trade Center to be recognized for academic achievement High Honor Roll. The students participate in interactive games and physical fitness games like relay racing and Zumba.

16. Does your school have a school nurse and/or a school-based health center? (X) Yes
Savannah-Chatham County Public School System employs a full-time Registered Nurse (RN) at the school, who addresses acute care- minor incidents requiring first aid or major emergencies. The nurse also manages chronic health care for students with conditions that require medication and coordination with external providers. Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care, Inc. provides an on-site clinic for Gadsden students.

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

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training – Training for faculty and staff to recognize common mental health challenges for youth.

CEIS – Provides instruction on topics such as anxiety, depressions, substance abuse, disorders in which psychosis may occur (i.e. ADHD and eating disorders). Faculty and staff review typical



adolescent development and learn a five-step process for how to assist children in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

Safer Smarter Kids – The Rape Crisis Center offers students training that uses grade level appropriate materials to expose students to the necessary tools and language needed to better protect themselves from abuse. There are a number of students who have limited amounts of parental supervision before and after school. Some of their parents work long hours and others are absent due to neglect. This year, five students have been empowered to seek help, using the tools they have received to communicate about sensitive home situations. They have been placed in safer environments and those causing them harm have been held accountable.

Dare To Be King – Curriculum and instruction for sixty male students growing up in single-parent households covers three main coping strategies: dealing with anger, decision making, and impulsivity control.

Character Counts – Program which focuses on the six core pillars of character development: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. This program is used to help instill positive school climate and a culture of kindness ensuring a safe school environment. Awards are given to through our Student of the Month Program once a month for students who exhibit these pillars of character. Since implementing monthly Character events, the number of student incivility related incidents have decreased from 20 in the month of September to 14 in the month of December. Students want to meet expectations and report that it makes them feel good inside when doing so. They also want to be invited to the monthly character event which involves food, games, dancing, motivational speakers, and art projects. For example, in September one of the local high school bands came and performed for the student body. The smiles on the faces of the students and participation with the band and cheerleaders as they performed was memorable. In October, students had the opportunity to visit a friendly haunted house. They loved it! In November, students who displayed good character for the month were invited to a sock hop and in December students attended a disco dance with flashing lights. They were thrilled! In addition, teachers select one student from each class to serve as Student of the Month. Parents are invited, and students are honored for exhibiting good character for the month.

Second Step – Program which helps with social and emotional development. This program assists in changing Gadsden into a thriving and caring learning environment uniquely equipped to help students be successful.

Check and Connect – Mentoring program. School leadership has observed more persistent effort given in school, increased attendance, and higher test scores. While simultaneously observing a decrease in behavioral referrals, tardiness, and truancy. At the onset of Check and Connect there were 72 behavior referrals for the month. The most recent monthly behavior referral results ended in 15 referrals for the month.

Gadsden Attendance Block Party – Celebrates students who have 100% attendance and encourages and motivates others to come to school on time, along with no early releases. For 10 minutes every Friday, students are allowed to socialize, dance, and play to support this weekly goal. The anthem is “You’re too great to be late, and too cool to miss school!” In one year the attendance rate improved from 94.99% to 96.2% (August 2017 to August 2018). This year’s 97.60% rate can be directly attributed to this program. The school counselor recalled overhearing a student begging their parent not to sign them out early so they would still be able to participate in the Attendance Block Party.



10th Annual Student Success Expo – District-wide initiative that provides the community, parents and students an inside look at what every school has to offer. School leadership is available to answer questions and students participate in STEM competitions, oratorical contests and meet young entrepreneurs. GES students attended the Teddy Bear Clinic sponsored by Mercer University School of Medicine - Savannah Campus, where students who typically dread doctors can visit a medical student in a safe environment, helping ease anxieties associated with visiting a doctor's office.

Gadsden Behavior Intervention Support (GBIS) Festival – Students who have met behavior goals for the month participate in engaging activities centered around fitness and health.

18. Describe any innovative programs/technologies, unique practices/policies and impactful partnerships related to this Pillar. Please be sure to highlight any metrics listed above to help describe your school's creative approach.

All of Gadsden's programs, practices and partnerships are specifically selected to benefit the whole student and those who tirelessly to support them. Medical, dental and behavioral health support services is provided by CVCPHC, muscular & cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, body mass index, and muscular strength are measured by FitnessGram, and health & wellness and healthy choices are influenced by a new, innovative partnership with Village Community Gardens of Sylvester, GA (VCG). VCG provides students an opportunity to become stewards of their school gardens. The curriculum is an immersion of science, math, and civic lessons through an agricultural medium. Students learn about bees as natural pollinators, photosynthesis, composting, and its benefits. Measurements include garden square footage computation, aeroponic towers capacity and height measurement, and recording of produce yield. Students transmit knowledge of health, wellness and agriculture back to their community as they learn about sustainability and reducing environmental impact and costs.

PILLAR 3: EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION

1. Which practices does your school employ to help ensure effective environmental and sustainability education? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

[X] Our school has an environmental or sustainability literacy requirement. The literacy requirements are integrated throughout the curriculum. GES students are instructed on water conservation through aeroponics, hydroponics, and aquaponics. Key vocabulary words are: Pollution, recycling, consumption, ecology, effect, exhaust, environment, habitat, litter, nature, reduce, reuse, and resources. All students receive instruction on recycling and are involved in learning to reduce, reuse, and recycle plastic water bottles. Students were required to stretch beyond vocabulary recall. They engaged in project-based learning and created presentations on the impacts of pollution/ global warming and ways to reduce its effects. The school recently purchased several environmental science books for students to read. The books are paired with the science curriculum and follow-up activities for students to complete with guidance from their teachers. At least six copies of the following titles were purchased: 10 Things I Can Do to Help My World (Level K), Protect Nature (Level L), Manatees (Level P),



Our Natural Resources (Level O), People and the Planet (Level O), and A River Ran Wild (Level O). In addition, an eight page document containing multiple writing prompts was developed to further gauge student understanding of the impact of humans on the environment.

[X] Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated throughout the curriculum.

All students receive instruction on environmental and sustainability concepts. For instance, Third Grade Standards (S3L2) require students to obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the effects of pollution (air, land, and water) and humans on the environment by: asking questions to collect information and create records of sources and effects of pollution on the plants and animals and exploring, researching, and communicating solutions (such as conservation of resources and recycling of materials, to protect plants and animals. To date, GES has saved almost 3000 water bottles. Plastic waste reduction instruction and projects on campus were integrated into whale conservation learning activities at Camp Explore and Oatland Island Wildlife Center. Though no newborns of endangered North Atlantic Right Whales were spotted along the Savannah coastline last year where they normally calve, the three calves spotted this year are sure to build excitement and renewed recycling efforts. Small-scale, classroom aquaponics gardens provided interactive depth to conservation instruction. Third graders were taught the importance of gardening in small spaces or with unsuitable land.

[X] Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated into assessments. Fifth graders are assessed on the Georgia Milestones Assessment (GMAS) on environmental and sustainability education K-5 objectives. Topics include soil conservation, recycling, plant and animal interactions, and beneficial and harmful micro-organisms. Upon adding additional environmental and sustainability concepts to the curriculum, students experienced a 14 percent gain in content mastery on the GMAS. Negative environmental practices historically impact citizens under the poverty line first and exponentially greater than others. Many GES students are from depressed socioeconomic areas. Students in grades 4-5 participated in financial literacy instruction through the Whitefield Center. The instructor taught for nine weeks covering saving accounts, checking accounts, credit, and interest. Upon completion of the course, students were assessed. All students who exhibited an understanding of course concepts on the exam earned a silver dollar and personal piggy bank from the foundation. The students loved sharing what they learned with their families. Junior Achievement of Georgia is an active Gadsden partner. Students received instruction on financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and workforce readiness, all of which are correlated to the Georgia Standards of Excellence in all academic content areas. These programs indirectly increase the sustainability of the community, assisting in breaking the cycle of poverty.

[X] Professional development in environmental and sustainability education are provided to all teachers. Twice each year, the teacher specialist for K-5 Science visits the school to train all teachers in pedagogy in the Science Curriculum and environmental and sustainability education integration. Specific strategies are taught, and feedback is garnered from teachers to address any potential barriers to implementing the curriculum. Training is followed by classroom observations to ensure implementation.

2. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning science, technology, engineering and mathematics thinking skills and content knowledge?



Through a partnership with Savannah State University, Gadsden is implementing an aquaponics lab: a symbiotic environment of fish and plant production using aquaculture and hydroponics systems. Utilization of this curriculum is integrated in health and science standards across K-5. For example, the students participate in research and design of a small classroom system that supports or prohibits bacterial growth. After creating this system, students report their findings in a classroom presentation, comparing and contrasting research findings provided by their peers.

3. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning green technologies and career pathways?

May Street YMCA – Students, K-1, walk to the YMCA to learn about nutrition, self-sufficiency, and the benefits of growing their own products. They are exposed to urban farming as a career and share all of their knowledge with family and friends.

#Gadsden Gives - GES hosts “Give Back to the Community” days bi-monthly, sharing garden items with others. Planned parent sessions include healthy eating/cooking topics in the spring.

Savannah State University (SSU)- Through the Savannah State partnership in aquaponics, students are exposed to marine science and other agricultural careers.

Georgia Power –Mr. Wayne Grimes educates third and fifth grade students annually about energy conservation and sustainability and the different career pathways available.

College and Career Readiness - Students are exposed to 17 career clusters across the K-5 STEM curriculum which includes agriculture, food and natural resources, health science energy

4. Describe students’ civic/community engagement projects integrating environment and sustainability topics.

21st Century – Students engage in Camp Explore. Camp Explore prepares students for tomorrow's workforce by teaching Science and Technology, demonstrated through Engineering and the Arts, communicated through reading and writing, all based in elements of Math.

Ink Cartridge Recycling – students, parents, and community recycle ink cartridges. “Recycling Day” allows students to bring in used ink cartridges. A graph displayed in the entrance to show the number of ink cartridges each class has recycled and acknowledges the winner.

Village Community Garden – Our partnership with the Village Community Garden allows students to learn about farming and how it benefits them. They will assist us in creating our garden by providing seeds for planting, and a junior garden manager to help train our students as managers.

5. Describe students’ meaningful outdoor learning experiences at every grade level.

To commemorate the installation of solar panels, students participated in Solar Panel Day to help them understand the importance of solar energy in sustaining and maintaining the environment. Students in K-5 participate in outdoor learning experiences connected to solar energy, such as the construction of pinwheels, to better understand how solar energy powers the wind. Solar bracelets are also designed to show how solar energy can change colors. Data collection from the solar panels is projected daily in the cafeteria and is downloadable so that teachers and students can utilize this information in measurement lessons (ie. conversion of Fahrenheit units to Celsius temperatures), graphing projects that include the construction of pie charts, and line graphs



depicting daily data, and scientific investigations on energy production and conservation as recorded by the solar panels.

6. Describe how outdoor learning is used to teach an array of subjects in context, engage the broader community, and develop civic skills. An outdoor learning experience, “When are We Wasting Water?” (Green Education Foundation) teaches students the impact that washing hands has on water sustainability. Students conduct scientific investigations, in an outside setting, learning about water conservation when washing hands, how to prevent the spread of diseases, and how water can be better managed. This experience builds an understanding of measurement, scientific inquiry, health management, and global environmental issues. A school garden is a powerful educational tool. Through gardening, all students learn how to become responsible caretakers, engage agricultural practices of traditional and aeroponic farming, learn about responsibilities and impacts of land cultivation.

7. Describe your partnerships to help your school and other schools achieve in the 3 Pillars. Include both the scope and impact of these partnerships.

Biggest Loser Challenge – GES hosted the challenge amongst staff members to improve health and staff morale. Overall, staff lost a total of 75 pounds over the six-month period. The positive impact on staff was such a huge success that leadership contacted other elementary, middle and high schools to assist them in replicating the initiative.

Kickball – Gadsden has a school kickball team that participates in a recreational kickball league after school to improve health and wellness. The league allows GES to compete in a health enhancing activity with other schools in the district.

Recycling – Students created a video presentation, shared on the school’s website, to increase awareness on the negative impact plastics have on the environment. The focus of the presentation is reducing the usage of plastic straws and water bottles. Sharing the presentation on the website gives other schools access to share with their staff and students.

8. Describe any other ways that your school integrates core environment, sustainability, STEM, green technology and civics into curricula to provide effective environmental and sustainability education, highlighting on innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

STEAM Camp – Throughout the year students engage in STEM activities and varying levels of competition tied to 21st Century. Saturday Camp Explore Steam Camp both implements the curriculum and compliments the curriculum in fun and exciting settings. Students participated in the Mixed Media Whale Project, where they were taught about the North Atlantic Right Whale, the world’s most endangered large whale species. Students developed an understanding of how human interactions pose a great danger to the species. The lesson ended with students making an 18 x 24 mixed media masterpiece depicting the North Atlantic Right Whale which will be featured in #WhaleWeek2019.

Oatland Island Wildlife Center – Pre-K students visit Oatland Island each year to explore wildlife, conservation, and habitats. K-5 students learn about the environment and coastal wildlife through a Tybee Island Marine Science Center (TIMSC) partnership. The center’s mission is to cultivate a responsible stewardship of coastal Georgia’s natural resources through education, conservation, and research. Students will visit Sidewalk by the Sea to learn about



coastal habitats and conservation. TIMSC offers a sea turtle outreach program that educates students on the local sea turtle population and how to protect the local environment they share with them.

9. Describe any innovative programs/technologies, unique practices/policies and impactful partnerships related to this Pillar. Please be sure to highlight any metrics listed above to help describe your school's creative approach. Students are taught how to prevent waste and can measure their progress: water saved by bottle filling stations and changed behavior (District Utility Bills), decrease in greenhouse gases/ energy costs and environmentally safe power generation (Photovoltaic System data including tons of CO₂ prevented and kW produced). New partnerships with VCG, SSU, Fort Valley University, and Savannah High School, have been instrumental in constructing the school garden. Historically, GES students have little exposure to career options. This multi-faceted project gives our students the opportunity to explore various career paths through the integration of STEAM related concepts. Hands-on career exploration help deepen understanding. Experiences include the following: Water/Soil Conservation, Agriculture/Aquaponics/Aeroponics, Landscaping and Culinary Arts/Nutrition. By the end of 5th grade, each child is required to produce a rubric-based portfolio highlighting a career path of their choice, reinforcing efforts to develop the whole child.