



District Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

CERTIFICATIONS

District's Certifications

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

1. The district has been evaluated and selected from among districts within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The district is providing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school district has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the school district has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
5. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
6. The district meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

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

Name of Superintendent: Dr. Allen Bourff
District Name: Hamilton Southeastern School Corporation
Address: 13485 Cumberland Road Fishers, IN 46038
Telephone: 317-594-4100 Fax: 317-594-4389
Web site/URL: hseschools.org E-mail: abourff@hse.k12.in.us

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



(Superintendent's Signature) 11/1/19 Date:

Nominating Authority's Certifications


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

1. The district is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental education.
2. The district meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: Indiana Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: M. J. Matthew Walsh
(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.



(Nominating Authority's Signature) Date: February 10, 2020

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: March 31, 2021

Public Burden Statement

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

Nominee Information

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Lead Applicant: Mr. Bob Rice

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Hamilton Southeastern School

Early Learning

Elementary

Middle

High

Public

Rural

Suburban

Free and Reduced Price Lunch: 16.2%

Limited English Proficient: 5.4%

Graduation Rate: FHS 97.3% & HHS 96.6% for 2018

Minority: 27.6%

Special Education: 9.3% SpED & 4.5% 504

Attendance Rate: 96.4%

Total Enrolled: 22,137

Number of Schools: 23

Buildings: 25

Summary

[Hamilton Southeastern School Corporation](#) (HSE) is in Fishers, IN, a suburb of Indianapolis. The population of Fishers grew from 77,802 in 2010 to 91,832 in 2017. This rapid population growth resulted in HSE Schools becoming the fourth largest school district in the state. HSE serves more than 22,000 students and is comprised of 13 elementary schools, four intermediate schools, four junior high schools, and two high schools. It is the mission of HSE to be a forward-thinking school district, providing education opportunities to ensure the success of each and every student teaching them, to become a responsible citizen and to positively influence an ever-changing world community.

HSE has taken significant steps to reduce its environmental impact and cost. In 2017, HSE hired an energy manager with the task of monitoring energy use, increasing efficiency, and engaging students and staff in sustainability endeavors. Since the creation of this position the district has increased enrollment and opened a new school, but total energy costs have decreased. HSE Schools used fewer kilowatts in 2018 than it did in 2016 with one less school and 1,000 fewer students.

In 2019, HSE installed 4,800 solar panels. These arrays have an annual predicted production of 2,385,600kWh enough to power three of the 23 schools in the district. The incorporation of solar arrays will help HSE avoid releasing 1,318 metric tons of carbon dioxide yearly. The solar arrays are providing students a first-hand example of sustainability adopted by a corporation. STEM and Humanities classes have incorporated information from the arrays into curriculum as a tangible local example of sustainability.

HSE Schools also has single-stream recycling at every school in the district. Student organizations partner with Food Services and other stakeholders to facilitate this initiative, which is incorporated with the [United Nations Global Goals](#) initiative. The HSE recycling program helps reduce its environmental impact, but is also a component of the district's sustainability curriculum and school climate.

The health and wellness of staff and students is a major focus of HSE Schools. As a district, HSE meets or surpasses state and federal guidelines pertaining to indoor air quality and water quality. HSE has won the National Clean Air Award from the National Air Filtration Association two years in a row. The district also proactively monitors and tests for lead, radon and mold in all buildings, exceeding above state requirements.

As a district, students are supplied with superior nutrition that meets or exceeds the USDA School Dietary Guidelines. Schools incorporate smart snack ala carte options such as carrots, broccoli, and tropical fruits. Food Services also collaborates with school nurses to identify students with health concerns to provide them with alternatives that meet their needs. HSE has partnered with a local food bank to provide students in need with additional meals for weekends and holidays.

HSE Schools is a leader in the state and nation when it comes to mental health and social emotional learning initiatives. In 2017, HSE was awarded the Lilly Endowment Comprehensive Counseling Initiative Grant and was selected to participate in the national Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network with the Center for School Mental Health. HSE has partnerships with Community Health Network, Prevail of Central Indiana, Fishers Youth Assistance, and the Peyton Reikhof Foundation to help support students, teachers, and community members who need assistance.

HSE takes pride in its extracurricular offerings. More than 80 percent of students at Hamilton Southeastern High School and Fishers High School are involved in school sponsored clubs. Students who participate in school sponsored events have a higher level of engagement which helps improve mental health and wellness.

The district believes that by equipping students with deep learning, unique skills, and new literacies they will be able to contribute positively in the community and thrive as individuals in the ever-changing 21st century. HSE teachers use real world, local examples when possible and emphasizes hands-on learning.

The City of Fishers has partnered with HSE to create [CurioCity](#), an online portal allowing teachers to request guest speakers, panelists, apprenticeships, internships, externships, study trips, project-based learning experiences, and service-based learning. Local businesses and stakeholders can also access this portal and submit opportunities that they are willing to host or sponsor. CurioCity has facilitated the pairing of scientists, engineers, political figures, and others to meet with staff and students to share experiences and resources.

The Hamilton Southeastern Schools Foundation is a great resource for teachers as they focus on implementing environmental and sustainability education. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that awards more than \$100,000 per year to teachers in scholarships and grants. Many of the funded projects focus on sustainability.



Hamilton Southeastern Students collecting, sorting, and boxing 41,000 pounds of donated pasta for local food pantries.

Across the district students are working with greenhouses, beehives, chicken coops, robotics labs, and using equipment purchased through a HSSF grant. They also host a yearly donation drive called PastaBowl through which, HSE Schools collected and donated more than 41,000 pounds of pasta to local food pantries in 2019 alone.

In recent years, Hamilton Southeastern Schools has made progress reducing its impact on the environment, creating initiatives that improve the health and wellness of staff and students, and effectively teaching the next generation to be aware of the environment and to understand sustainability. Thank you for taking time to review the progress HSE has made on its journey to become a Green Ribbon School.

Narrative for Pillar 1: Your Efforts to Reduce Environmental Impact and Cost

Hamilton Southeastern Schools (HSE) has adopted many environmental-friendly programs across the district. In 2017, HSE hired a full-time Energy Manager to help lead these efforts. In partnership with district stakeholders, HSE has reduced its energy use, installed solar arrays, created a districtwide recycling program, altered its food services program, and other completed initiatives advanced by students and staff.

As a district, Hamilton Southeastern Schools has experienced rapid growth for several years. Student enrollment increased five percent from 2016 to 2018, and HSE opened a new elementary school. During

Year	Electricity Use (kWh)	Electricity Cost	Natural Gas Use (Therms)	Natural Gas Cost	Total Energy Cost
2016 Total	39,545,320	\$3,611,565	868,560	\$548,633	\$4,160,198
2017 Total	36,788,152	\$3,556,772	912,927	\$484,728	\$4,041,500
2018 Total	34,924,505	\$3,408,043	968,708	\$501,876	\$3,909,919

the same time period HSE reduced its electricity use by 13 percent. This was accomplished through a purposeful effort of changing mindsets pertaining to energy use. We also installed high efficiency HVAC units and retrofitted buildings with LED lights.

During the 2018 calendar year, HSE Schools consumed 1,853,648kWh less energy than it had consumed in the previous year, enough energy to power 158 homes for a year. This reduction in energy use avoided 1,318 metric tons of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere and reduced the need to burn 1,440,741 pounds of coal.

While HSE Schools was making conscious choices to reduce its energy usage, the school board approved a solar array project. Partnering with Ameresco, the district set a goal to power three schools with solar energy. On May 30, 2019 we broke ground at Sand Creek Elementary, Sand Creek Intermediate, and Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High School. The solar arrays went active on September 24th and are now powering three sites with renewable energy. In total, 4,800 solar panels were installed with an average annual predicted production of 2,385,600kWhs. The arrays will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by over 1,687 metric tons annually. In addition to the arrays, HSE has created an educational component that will be discussed in more detail in the Pillar 3 section.

HSE Schools currently has four Energy Star Rated schools. In 2020, HSE plans to submit Energy Star applications for two additional schools. When approved, this would mean that more than 25 percent of the buildings in the district are Energy Star certified. As part of HSE’s 10-year plan, the Facilities Department will address energy efficacy projects at the remaining schools with the hope of one day having all school buildings Energy Star certified. HSE has also have partnered with Duke Energy to participate in their Energy Design Assistance Program for any remodeling or construction of new schools.



Students and teachers “flip the switch” energizing the solar arrays at Sand Creek Elementary and Intermediate.

In addition to energy reduction and switching to a renewable energy source, Hamilton Southeastern Schools continues to gain inspiration from the United Nations Global Goals initiative (<https://www.globalgoals.org/>). An example of how this made an impact in the community was during the 2017-2018 school year when students from several elementary schools researched the impact of single-use plastics on the environment. Working with Food Services, students and staff helped to eliminate many of the single-use plastics coming from the cafeteria. The students then created an art campaign and engaged the community. A local restaurant, C.R. Heroes (crheroes.com) began displaying art work and removed plastic straws from their establishment due to the passionate advocacy of the

students.

The passion of the students also inspired the Facilities Department to install single-stream recycling bins at every school in the district. HSE Schools has a club or student group at every school that helps promote and monitor the recycling in their building. Additionally, Food Service has supported this initiative and changed their supply chain to adopt reusable containers and utensils and created a kitchen-based recycling program led by the kitchen manager. HSE partners with Ray's Trash Service to remove its recycling material. Ray's estimates they collect 1,170 bags of recyclables throughout the district weekly. This means during the school year, HSE has prevented 42,120 bags of trash from ending up in a landfill by participating in a recycling program.

The Custodial Service teams have also helped reduce HSE's environmental impact by changing the way they purchase and use chemicals. HSE has standardized the chemicals used throughout the district by installing centrally-located chemical dispensing system instead of single-use spray bottles at every school. This has shown a decrease in the chemicals used while maintaining cleaning standards. Custodians perform yearly chemical inventories and partner with Safety Kleen to remove any unused or unwanted chemicals properly. The use of a centrally-located chemical dispensing system also helps to control the amount of water used to clean and dilute the chemicals.

HSE Schools is focusing on its water usage in addition to the above mentioned. The district has installed more than 60 water bottle filling stations to reduce the use of single-use plastic bottles. The stations contain filtration systems to ensure students and staff are drinking clean water. Parent Teacher Organizations have also sponsored the installation of these stations at several schools. The goal is to soon have these installed in all buildings. In addition to the filtration system, Hamilton Southeastern Schools has adopted a lead testing protocol. This goes above and beyond any state guidelines, but the district wanted to be proactive in monitoring the quality of the water that is consumed by students and staff.

Outside of the school walls, HSE strives reduce its environmental impact. The district has partnered with the City of Fishers to maintain the grounds around all buildings. The city utilizes natural and organic chemicals as needed to maintain the grounds and only mows on an "as-needed" basis. This helps to reduce air pollution around the buildings and lower the carbon footprint.



Durbin Elementary students documenting observations while using the outdoor learning space.

Staff and students are passionate about the outdoor spaces around the buildings. Student-led projects have introduced vegetable gardens, rain gardens, pollinator gardens, flower beds, trails, and other environmental-friendly projects. Several of the schools have created outdoor learning

spaces that can be used as an extension to the classroom. One example of this can be found at Durbin Elementary which has a .35-acre pond, wooden hiking trail, and natural seating amphitheater that is

utilized by the staff as an outdoor classroom. Staff incorporates this space into their curriculum by having students conduct water testing, population counts, tree identification using dichotomous keys, and utilizing the space as an outdoor reading zone. This is only one example of how outdoor spaces are utilized by staff and students.

As a district HSE Schools understands it has an impact on the environment due to its transportation fleet. HSE currently has 314 buses that travel more than two million miles per year. To reduce the carbon footprint, HSE has a schedule that replaces older buses with more efficient models. Three-quarters of the fleet has been replaced with newer, more efficient diesel engines. There is a plan to replace the remaining 78 less efficient models within a few years. The new diesel engine buses get 9 to 10 miles per gallon instead of 6 to 7 miles per gallon compared to the older fleet. This vast improvement means that over the course of a year, the modern bus fleet uses 85,714 less gallons of diesel to travel the same distance. Additionally, the newer buses have a particulate filter. Today's diesels are 90 percent cleaner at the tailpipe than the standard bus from 10 years ago. HSE also pays a premium to fill the buses with 50 cetane diesel gas. This type of fuel starts quicker with less smoke, improves lubricity to reduce fuel injection system wear, and burns cleaner, reducing harmful emissions such as sulfur. HSE is currently exploring grant opportunities that would allow for electric buses to be added to the fleet.

Hamilton Southeastern Schools has made vast strides to reduce its environmental impact and cost. Reduction in electrical usage, installation of renewable solar energy, expanded recycling programs, community engagement, chemical management, water management, transportation, and lawn care are all areas that HSE has focused on that pertain to this pillar. It's the goal of HSE to ensure a better place for graduating seniors than when they started school in kindergarten.

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

Hamilton Southeastern Schools strives to maintain the optimal learning environment for staff and students. HSE Schools has an Indoor Air Quality Coordinator who ensures the schools are within the Indiana Department of Health Indoor Air Quality standards ([410 IAC 33](#)). According to these standards, the carbon dioxide levels are to be no higher than 700 parts per million (ppm) over outside, which ranges from 300-500ppm. The district typically increases outside air flow whenever carbon dioxide levels approach 900ppm to ensure it never exceed the carbon dioxide limits established by the Department of Health. Additionally, HSE has no idling zones around its buildings to ensure cars and buses are not ventilating fumes into buildings.

The Department of Health also establishes temperature and relative humidity guidelines for spaces. The state requires that during occupied times, instructional areas in the building remain between 68 and 78 degrees Fahrenheit with less than 65 percent relative humidity. The district felt this temperature range was not optimal for the learning environment, so HSE adopted a narrower range more conducive to learning. Classrooms are kept at a temperature range between 71 and 74 degrees Fahrenheit with relative humidity under 65 percent.

HSE Schools has forged a professional agreement with Leach and Russell Mechanical and other vendors to perform preventive maintenance on all its HVAC equipment. The district believes that a strong and proactive preventive maintenance program will provide the best environment for students while keeping equipment running at peak performance level to maintain efficiency. HSE Schools also has a

professional agreement with Filter Services of Indiana to change air filters throughout the district on an as needed basis. The district uses filters that range from MERV 8 to MERV 13 based on the equipment and space needs. HSE won the Clean Air Award from the National Air Filtration Association in 2018 and 2019.

Working in conjunction with the Indoor Air Quality Coordinator, Hamilton Southeastern Schools has a licensed, certified pesticide applicator on staff who helps monitor the district's pest management program. They work closely with custodial staff to create a synergistic pest management plan. A clean building without a food source helps to create an environment unconducive to pest infiltration. However, if pests do attempt to invade, she initially uses baits, gels, or traps before resorting to aerosols. Whenever possible, HSE uses natural oil, soap, organic or environmental-friendly chemicals. This reduces dependence on synthetic products that are persistent in the environment. These steps help HSE maintain great indoor air quality and protect the outdoor spaces while effectively controlling the pests.

The Custodial Service team is also a key player in HSE's indoor air quality program. The head custodian and support staff walk the buildings daily performing a visual inspection for anything that could lower the indoor air quality, such as sources of moisture. They work collaboratively with the Indoor Air Quality Coordinator and Facilities Department to monitor the air quality of the buildings and proactively address issues if they arise.

HSE Schools is one of the only school districts in the state on Indiana that implemented an existing radon testing program before recent changes in state law. HSE brings in a licensed radon testing professional on a yearly basis to take air samples of all buildings. HSE has created a rotation so that every school is tested once every five years. This program is above and beyond what was called for by state law, but the district wants to ensure that staff and students have a safe and healthy learning environment.

In addition to air quality and thermal comfort, HSE Schools wants to guarantee that students are also receiving the proper nutrition to be successful. The district employs a Director of Nutrition and Food Services to help keep within USDA School Dietary Guidelines, who holds a master's degree in nutrition and dietetics and is a registered dietitian. They work with the school's cafeteria managers to guarantee all state and national guidelines are followed. They have also worked to incorporate smart snack ala carte options at every school, which contains fresh fruits and vegetables. This option is provided twice-a-week and is free to any student, whether they purchased a lunch or not. Food Services works closely with vendors to ensure students are receiving fresh and seasonal options all year long.



Elementary students lining up for lunch which includes the smart snack ala carte veggie bar. This is provided to all students twice a week for free whether they purchase a lunch or not.

Food Services also works with school nurses to identify students who have special dietary requirements. For example, gluten-free meals for students with celiac disease are provided. This year for the holiday

meal, students could elect to purchase a gluten-free meal including gluten-free cheese lasagna, gluten-free garlic toast, steamed seasonal vegetables, fresh tropical fruits, and a warm cinnamon roll containing no gluten. HSE also offers lactose-free milk for students, nut-free options and special seating for students with allergies. Fish or nonmeat options for students are available during Lent. In addition there are options for vegetarian and vegan students.

Furthermore, Food Services has partnered with the PTO's and Gleaners Food Bank to provide "backpacks" for students in need. These backpacks help provide food stability for families who may not always have fresh and consistent meals at home.

Hamilton Southeastern Schools has partnered with Community Health Network to provide nurses for the schools. It has been the practice of HSE to have a Registered Nurse in each school building. This partnership brings increased resources for students, staff, and families along with nurse-focused professional development. This ensures that students using HSE clinics obtain care from highly qualified, educated, and skilled health providers.

Mental health is also important to HSE Schools. In 2017 the district was awarded the Lilly Endowment Comprehensive Counseling Initiative Grant which allowed HSE to expand the services already in place to help and support students and families. In 2019, the Indiana Department of Education saw the progress at Hamilton Southeastern and selected the district to participate in the national Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (COIIN) with the Center for School Mental Health.

The partnership with Community Health Network has allowed for licensed mental health therapists to serve all schools. There are 22 Community Health Network therapists working collaboratively with staff, counselors, students and families. Services can be provided in school or through a referral at an offsite location. The program works as a wraparound service providing needed assistance at school, home, and in the community. Collaboratively, HSE Schools and Community Health Network meets the needs of a child and helps to remove barriers to learning.

Prevail of Central Indiana also has a relationship with HSE. They work alongside school counselors to offer sexual assault and healthy relationship support groups to students on-site. Staff have also worked with Prevail to create a curriculum taught to all eighth-grade students during their wellness class about creating healthy relationships.

Fishers Youth Assistance and Youth Mentoring Initiative are programs at Hamilton Southeastern Schools that provide early intervention to students and families in need of additional support to succeed. HSE Schools has also formed a partnership with the Peyton Reikhof Foundation for Youth Hope. This



Indiana Governor Holcomb having a conversation with Fishers High School students about health risks facing youth today.

group provides support to schools with the purpose of reducing suicide, reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness, providing access to two licensed mental therapists that co-lead anxiety and depression support groups for students. Students have expanded this and created Bring Change to Mind- Stigma Free Clubs. The Stigma Free Clubs, in collaboration with the City of Fishers, have made strides throughout the community to help raise awareness. They have successfully worked together to bring the Big Brain traveling art installation to HSE and the city to raise awareness of mental health issues.

As a district HSE is piloting a social emotional learning lesson for grades K-8. Using MindUP, Second Step, and Common Sense Media lessons, HSE created and implemented its own scope and sequence. Additionally, there is a team assembled that will start to address the social emotional learning of 9-12 grade students with plans to roll that out next year.

Hamilton Southeastern has many programs in place to address mental health and to help students and staff where they are, but these programs are only effective if people utilize them. As a way to increase awareness with students, staff, stakeholders, and the community, Freedom Kolb (Special Projects Coordinator), Brooke Lawson (Mental Health and School Counseling Coordinator), and their team created the [#WeGotThis Campaign](#) with the purpose of raising awareness of what HSE is actively doing to help students. They plan to continue creating videos to cover topics such as neuroscience, equity, community circles, health risks of vaping, and the importance of students “finding their people.”



Students from Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High help create a large-scale art project to promote HSE’s #WeGotThis mental health campaign. The aerial image taken by a drone shows students on a grassy field arranging themselves to spell out #WeGotThis with their bodies.

HSE recently launched a web-based application for smart phones called [HSEReportIt!](#) The mobile reporting application allows students, staff, and community members to provide anonymous information about concerns for their own safety or the safety of others. This is a proactive way to engage HSE’s 22,000 students to help improve school safety. School counselors, mental health providers, building administrators, and school safety officers will have access to the information so they can respond to any concern and ensuring the health, wellness, and safety of students. Children achievement increases when they feel safe, supported, and heard.

The health of staff is also important to Hamilton Southeastern Schools. HSE has partnered with Community Health Network to provide a health clinic for staff and family members. The HSE Health Clinic has a wellness coach who helps promote healthy choices and sponsors health challenges promoting wellness. In addition, the clinic offers free biometric scans for staff once a year. As a district HSE strives to ensure that students, staff, and the community are healthy in mind and body.

The physical health of students is also important. HSE Schools provides sporting programs for students from grades K through 12. HSE offers club sports to varsity programs to meet the needs and desires of students of all ages. Recently, HSE has seen massive growth in its youth soccer and wrestling clubs. At

the high schools more than 30 percent of students participate in a varsity sport. The youth feeder programs have led to many of the schools to state championships in various sports. HSE has produced college and professional athletes. The school's sports programs promote health and wellness, but also teach students life skills, such as self-reliance, mental fortitude, and teamwork.

As a district, HSE takes a holistic approach when looking at the health and wellness of students and staff. Student engagement, athletics, and support services help create a healthy and happy environment in all HSE schools.

Narrative for Pillar 3: Your Efforts to Ensure Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

The mission statement of Hamilton Southeastern Schools states that as a forward-thinking school district, it provides educational opportunities to ensure the success of each and every student, to become a responsible citizen and to positively influence an ever-changing world community. As a component of that HSE incorporates the environment and sustainability in various grade levels and content areas.



In recent years, Hamilton Southeastern Schools has made the mindful choice to shift from traditional learning models to one referred to as HSE21. The mission of HSE21 is to equip students with deep learning, unique skills, and new literacies they will need to contribute positively in their communities and thrive as individuals in the ever-changing 21st century global economy and environment. The schools are committed to providing each student with learning experiences that are deep and relevant. The hope is that this will encourage the development of their unique identity and prepare them for the future, also HSE21 allows for vertical alignment of topics such as the Global Goals Initiative or sustainability curriculum.

Hamilton Southeastern School employs nine Teacher Development Specialists (TDS). The Teacher Development Specialists are responsible for assisting staff in professional development, implementing curriculum, assisting delivering lessons, and providing training support. The TDS' worked to create and implement STEM, energy, and sustainability curriculum. HSE has established weekly professional development meetings for staff. During this time, the TDS' can work with a specific teacher, grade level, or cohort teams to provide the educators with resources that can be executed in their classroom. The weekly professional development and support of the teacher development specialist helps to ensure that HSE is intentional with its sustainability education and that these is consistency across grade levels.

As an additional tool to help reinforce this shift and to make the learning more practical and hands-on, HSE Schools has created local partnerships that advance these goals. One example of this is the district's partnership with Conner Prairie, a Smithsonian-affiliated living history museum in Fishers, Indiana. Every fourth-grade student in the district gets several chances to visit Conner Prairie throughout the year. Hamilton Southeastern has a full-time, teacher-in-residence at Conner Prairie who works collaboratively with museum staff to create authentic and hands-on lessons for students. Students may visit the 1836 Prairietown to discuss the simple machines used during that period or travel to a Lenape

Indian Village to speak with a museum interpreter assuming the role of a period appropriate chief. Students can also visit a working farm. For some, this may be their first exposure to agriculture and its environmental impacts. The interpreters create a fully immersed experience and can help students gain deeper understanding about human's impact on the environment. After this experience, students and staff continue hands-on learning by utilizing the spaces around their building. A majority of the schools have gardens, detention ponds, grassy fields, wooded areas, or streams that can be used as outdoor learning centers.

The Hamilton Southeastern School Foundation is another resource teacher have available when implementing environmental and sustainability education. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization established in 2001 with the goal of benefiting every student, every grade, and every school. Since their inception they have awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships and [STEM grants](#) per year. The grants have helped fund various projects including a fruit orchard, nine beehives, a goat farm, chicken coops, green houses, robotics programming, and various other STEM and civic projects.

This year, Hamilton Southeastern Schools, in collaboration with the City of Fishers, created a pilot program called [CurioCity](#). CurioCity is an online portal that allows teachers to access a variety of experiences and opportunities for students, such as guest speakers, panelists, apprenticeships, internships, externships, study trips, project-based learning and service-based learning. The city, local businesses, stakeholders and experts can submit opportunities for teachers to review and accept. Conversely, teachers can post a need or request and the community can respond. This two-way dialogue in between the schools and community stakeholders expands the walls of the buildings to make the entire city a potential classroom, with every expert becoming a teacher. This program has been very successful in pairing local scientists (Eli Lilly, Roche, etc) with staff or even connecting school employees within the district. The HSE Energy Manager utilized the portal to create a guest speaking opportunity to discuss the school's solar array projects. During the first five months of the 2019 school year, this opportunity through CurioCity allowed him to speak to more than 1,900 students about the solar arrays, renewable energy, environmental impact, and sustainability powering Sand Creek Elementary, Sand Creek Intermediate, and Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High.

As part of the solar array installation Ameresco provided Hamilton Southeastern Schools two solar powered wagons. These wagons can travel to any school or event that the district host to expose the students to solar power and renewable energy. In the first five months of school, the solar wagons were utilized by 16 schools, with seven more school visits scheduled. The solar power wagons allow the HSE Energy Manager to impact classrooms and expand the National Energy Education Development (NEED) curriculum currently used in the district.



Sand Creek Intermediate students learn about solar power using the solar power wagon and student built solar tracking systems.

The National Energy Education Development project has made an impact in the district over the past few years with teachers starting to incorporate more NEED lesson plans into their classrooms. In 2017, Sand Creek Elementary was named the National Rookie of the Year for Primary Schools by the NEED project, and in 2018 Sand Creek Intermediate was named National Rookie of the Year Intermediate School. These awards allowed Hamilton Southeastern students and teachers to travel to Washington D.C. to meet with peers from around the country. While at the youth awards the students were exposed to energy concepts, environmental studies, and additional sustainability lesson plans. According to the students and teachers, this award and opportunity made a lasting impact.



STEM is not the only class that focuses on environmental and sustainability education. HSE Media Specialists, Energy Manager, and Humanities teachers have started to promote and incorporate the [American Library Association's Top 10 Sustainability Themed Children Books](#). One media specialist in the district created a display showcasing these books to the students. The books work with the district's initiative to support the United Nations Global Goals.



Dog Man visited Southeastern Elementary during their book fair.

In 2015 world leaders from the United Nations created a list of 17 goals that would lead to a better world by 2030. HSE teachers from kindergarten to 12 grades actively look for ways to incorporate these in their courses. Many of the goals lead to co-curricular collaborations. At Hamilton Southeastern High School, chemistry classes created a political action campaign with the focus of promoting renewable energy. They asked local

stakeholders, such as content experts, administrators, and other teachers to review their campaigns and provide feedback. After the initial review process, the students made a presentation to a mock city council in hopes of swaying their choice into adopting a more sustainable energy portfolio. The incorporation of these goals creates vertical alignment that allows students to grow in their depth of impact and understanding. Common vocabulary, building skills, increased engagement, and collaboration are accomplished by incorporating the Global Goals across the various age ranges. Since the Global Goals were incorporated into the curriculum, HSE has seen an increased engagement in civil action by students on environmental fronts.

Each high school offers a Socratic seminar class through the government program. A large component of this class is to investigate a major political issue. In recent years, more and more students have selected environmental policies. Students must consider liberal and conservative viewpoints, demonstrating knowledge from both sides. This is accomplished through various methods, such as debates, writings, video creation, and stump speeches. In the students' final project, they must select a local site impacted by the political topic they researched and contact local officials to advocate for their stance. This typically means that local elected officials will receive numerous calls and letters from high school students advocating for environmental reforms.

HSE's Foreign Language departments also incorporate environmental education. During several of the third-year foreign language classes, students research, create, and promote an ecotourism guide for a country of their choice. During this lesson, students must also discuss threats to that ecosystem and create a political action plan on how to preserve the ecotourism for future generations.

Chemistry courses have also taken steps to reduce their impact on the environment by removing labs and demonstrations that use potentially harmful chemicals. Many of the labs have been modified to reuse chemicals. An example of this purposeful planning occurring in a lab requires students to calculate the percent of water in a hydrated crystal. Students heat the crystal to drive off the water. When completed, minerals are collected, dissolved, filtered, and then can be recrystallized for next year. Mindfulness of the environment present in teachers engages students in discussions about sustainability during their labs. This is an active attempt to incorporate sustainability in to the daily educational experience.

HSE Schools also offers a Preschool program that serves more than 300 students. The Preschool of the Natural Sciences for HSE Schools is based on the belief that children are naturally curious and eager to learn. This is a critical period for young learners and an opportunity for the schools to support and push the growth of their overall development. It is accomplished by marrying authentic and thoughtful project work in the natural science arena with foundational academic skills. The students are provided with a quality preschool experience that values, promotes and respects intellect, nature, and the environment while fostering social-emotional growth of young children.

October is National Energy Conservation and Action Month. In honor of this, HSE Schools sponsors an art contest. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to show off their artistic skills by creating poster art and slogans for conserving energy. This contest is open for all HSE students. District administrators review student submissions and then display some of the best work in the administration building. The selected artist has won prizes in the past and has been honored by the school board. The artwork is also distributed through social media, expanding its impact to the community.

Three students from Thorpe Creek Elementary studying biodiversity of insects' populations at Ritchie Woods. They are walking on a grass path through a prairie grass field holding nets used for insect collection.

HSE believes education continues outside of the classroom. HSE Schools utilizes the natural space around many buildings. Ponds, detention ponds, nature trails, and playgrounds are all educational spaces with purposeful use and design. Water samples, population studies, soil judging, and macroinvertebrate identification are a few things commonly done throughout the district in these outdoor spaces. In addition to the outdoor space available on each campus, every second grader in the district travels to [Ritchie Woods Nature Preserve](#) to work with a naturalist. During their time at Ritchie Woods, students study water, soil, biodiversity, and sustainability. This adventure sparks passion projects in their classroom that continue throughout the year.

HSE Schools is cultivating a new relationship with



Three students from Thorpe Creek Elementary studying biodiversity of insects' populations at Ritchie Woods. They are walking on a grass path through a prairie grass field holding nets used for insect collection.

Flat Rock River Camp in St. Paul, Indiana. After piloting the program, HSE plans to send four sixth-grade classes to the park to study environmental science. The classes going to Flat Rock River Camp will take water samples, study erosion, and collect biodiversity data that will be used in their STEM course work. This program will be expanded next year to include more classes and hopefully will grow to include every sixth-grade student.

During students' seventh grade year they travel to Camp Tecumseh in Carol County, Indiana. Students on this trip stay at the camp for three days and two nights. While on this trip they learn about environmental science issues ranging from ecosystem recovery, water health monitoring (turbidity, micro inveterate counts, and nutrient samples), plant identification, and population counts. Students report this is an impactful and memorable moment in their education. Many of the students reside in suburbs and this may be their first time to travel and camp in a wooded environment.

During a student's tenure at Hamilton Southeastern, they will be exposed to many environmental and sustainability topics. Through grade level field trips, course offerings, projects, corporate partnerships, and various other forms, HSE has woven the outside world and the environment into the fabric of its curriculum. Hamilton Southeastern has incorporated the United Nation's 17 Global Goals as a focus in many of the courses, which helps to make students into responsible citizens and to positively influence an ever-changing world community.



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Corporation and central office digital and social media accounts:

- Website: <https://www.hseschools.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HSESchools/>
- Twitter: @HSESchools

Elementary Schools digital and social media accounts:

Brooks School Elementary

- Website: <https://bse.hseschools.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/500166933345385/>
- Twitter: @BSEhseIN

Cumberland Road Elementary

- Website: <https://cre.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @CREhseIN

Durbin Elementary

- Website: <https://des.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @DurbinPrincipal

Fall Creek Elementary

- Website: <https://des.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @FCEhse
- Twitter: @TherisaSeymour

Fishers Elementary

- Website: <https://fes.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @FESHseIN

Geist Elementary

- Website: <https://ges.hseschools.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GeistElementaryPTO/>
- Twitter: @Geistgators

Harrison Parkway Elementary

- Website: <https://hpe.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @HPEPatriots

Hoosier Road
Elementary

- Website: <https://hre.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @HRErockets

Lantern Road Elementary

- Website: <https://lre.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @lrehsein

New Britton Elementary

- Website: <https://nbe.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @NBEbulldogs

Sand Creek Elementary

- Website: <https://sce.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @SCEcougars

Southeastern Elementary

- Website: <https://ses.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @SoutheasternE11

Thorpe Creek Elementary

- Website: <https://tce.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @ TCEcardinals
- Twitter: @TCEprincipal

Intermediate and Junior Schools digital and social media accounts:

Fall Creek Intermediate

- Website: <https://fci.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @FCI_Falcons

Fall Creek Junior High

- Website: <https://fcj.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @FallCreekJH

Fishers Junior High

- Website: <https://fjh.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @FJHChargers

Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High

- Website: <https://hij.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @HIJHPanters

Riverside Intermediate

- Website: <https://rsi.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @RSIHawks

Riverside Junior High

- Website: <https://rjh.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @RJHHawks

Sand Creek Intermediate

- Website: https://sci.hseschools.org
- Twitter: @SandCreekInt

High Schools digital and social media accounts:

Hamilton Southeastern High School

- Website: <https://hhs.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @HSEhighschool

Fishers High School

- Website: <https://fhs.hseschools.org/>
- Twitter: @UrbanJason

Other digital and social media accounts

FOCUS Program

- Website: <https://fcf.hseschools.org/>

Hamilton Southeastern and Fishers Academy

- Website: <https://hfa.hseschools.org/>

Preschool of Natural Sciences

- Website: <https://pre.hseschools.org/>

Hamilton Southeastern Schools Community

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/284779269013336/>

Hamilton Southeastern Foundation:

- Twitter: @hsefoundation

Hamilton Southeastern Student Success Team

- Twitter: @HSEsst

Hamilton Southeastern Energy Manager

- Twitter: @HSEsavingenergy

Images Page

[Link to a OneDrive Document with Images](#)