



## District Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

### CERTIFICATIONS

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#### 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. Robert Maxwell

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

District Name: Pullman School District

(As it should appear on an award)

Address: 240 SE Dexter Street, Pullman, WA 99163

Telephone: 509-332-3581 Fax: 509-336-7202

Web site/URL: [www.PullmanSchools.org](http://www.PullmanSchools.org) E-mail: [rmaxwell@psd267.org](mailto:rmaxwell@psd267.org)

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



*[Handwritten Signature]*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
di (Superintendent's Signature)

Date: January 31, 2020

**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: Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Name of Nominating Authority: Dr. Ellen Ebert  
(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.

*Ellen Ebert, Ph.D.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: February 11, 2020

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

**SUBMISSION**

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509  
Expiration Date: 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](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

# U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools District Application

Pullman Public Schools

240 SE Dexter Street, Pullman, WA 99163

## Summary Narrative

Pullman Public Schools continues to engage in efforts to meet and exceed green goals by establishing a sustainability committee as an umbrella structure of governance to support overall district operations and individual building goals, to reduce environmental impacts, improve health and wellness, and enhance environmental and sustainability education efforts. The foundation of this work involves partnering with community organizations with like-minded sustainability missions, to increase the breadth and depth of sustainability education in Pullman Public Schools.

In 2019 Pullman Public Schools developed a “Sustainability Committee” dedicated to exploring and implementing ways for the district to reduce environmental impact. The committee consists of teachers from each of the district’s six schools, several administrators, and a high school student that is passionate about environmental conservation. In the fall of 2019, the committee approved the expenditure of approximately \$11,000 of district funds towards the important task of an energy audit. The committee worked with experts at McKinstry to complete a baseline energy audit and develop a baseline of energy usage for each school and the district office. With these baseline energy consumption numbers, Pullman Public Schools is carefully looking at opportunities to reduce energy consumption, improve performance, and develop an informed comprehensive plan for sustainability efforts in the district. As the district moves forward with sustainability work, the committee’s mission, goals, and efforts are shared with all staff and the Pullman community on the Pullman Public Schools website.

Pullman Public Schools’ students and staff uses a company called “Recycle Boise” to collect outdated or unused electronics. Rather than sending these items to the landfill, Recycle Boise refurbishes many of the district’s unused electronics for donations to students and schools that can benefit from them. This initiative is inspiring staff and students to consider both the environment and the needs of other students outside of the Pullman community. As a result of the district’s participation in this program, over 1000 devices were saved from the landfill in 2019!

A “Green Team” club has already been established at Pullman’s brand-new school, Kamiak Elementary! Among the initiatives they’ve undertaken is a unique plastic bag recycling program. Plastic bags from grocery stores, food products, and more, are often not accepted by conventional recycling centers, including Pullman’s own local recycling center. The Kamiak Green Team partnered with a local grocery store and identified a company that recycles plastic bags into composite decking and railings and has placed collection bins around the school to gather these materials that usually end up in landfills.

Pullman Public Schools is committed to improving the health and wellness of students and staff. The district has a highly engaged Wellness Committee that consists of staff members, parents, community partners, and administrators. The committee meets quarterly and is always open to guests. In 2017 the committee revised the district’s Wellness Goals. Over the past 2 years, the committee has made considerable efforts towards implementing initiatives and policies that benefit the well-being of Pullman Public Schools’ students.

In 2018, the committee encouraged the district to move towards offering more scratch cooked meals to students. As a result, nutrition services staff participated in a week-long intensive scratch cooking program, learning great techniques and recipes to implement in schools. Pullman Public Schools is now in the second year of a scratch cooking program, and the menu is increasingly made up of scratch cooked foods, with an emphasis on locally sourced ingredients. At Pullman High School (PHS), approximately 85% of meals include one or more component that is cooked from scratch. Another exciting initiative in Pullman schools that benefits the wellness of students is the implementation of gardens and gardening clubs at several schools. Students learn about gardening and the source of their food, and are able to grow vegetables that district kitchens can then use as ingredients for student meals. This is a fun, interactive way for students to learn about healthy eating! The gardening programs have been so successful that an additional school, Franklin Elementary, is in the process of developing a garden program.

Another accomplishment of the Wellness Committee is the creation and enforcement of a “Snack Policy” for schools. To better protect students with allergies and diabetes, Pullman Public Schools now has a specific list of snacks, including the exact brands, that are approved for classrooms and schools for celebrations.

Pullman Public Schools has put considerable time and resources towards the mental health and wellness of students. Additional counselors have been hired at the secondary and elementary levels - each school has a least one counselor. Counselors focus on three essential components – academic, career, and social emotional development. In addition, a school-based mental health therapist was recently hired to provide screening and direct services to students. Pullman Public Schools works with several community partners to facilitate students’ access to mental health resources available in the community and has increased the number and depth of professional development course offerings and presentations available to staff related to mental wellness. The Second Step Social Emotional Curriculum was recently adopted; it is in the implementation stage at all elementary schools and the middle school.

The district has established partnerships with several local and regional organizations to help advance green goals and efforts. Partnerships involve utilizing the expertise of individual specialists from each organization and resources to not only educate students, staff, and community, but to construct systems and functioning outdoor laboratories and gardens. The district is fortunate to have considerable support from within the schools and from the greater Pullman community. Within the district there are many environmentally focused groups: a district Sustainability Committee, Lincoln Middle School Environmental Club, PHS Environmental Awareness Club, Jefferson Green Team, Kamiak Green Team, Franklin Gardening Club, and Sunnyside Gardening Club. These groups all receive support of various kinds from the Pullman community. Some of the many valued community partners include Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute, the City of Pullman, Palouse Conservation District, Pacific Education Institute (PEI), and Washington State University (WSU).

Pullman Public Schools' progress towards green goals covers all three pillars, with each school contributing individually towards district green goals. Across each of the district's six schools, there are a wide variety of unique activities and experiences related to environmental and sustainability education. A sampling of the ways students are learning to be responsible stewards of the environment:

- A great example of both civic and environmental mindfulness, second graders in two classes at Franklin Elementary wrote and delivered letters to the Pullman School Board, urging the school district to plant more trees. Reasons cited by the second graders included enhancing the habitat for animals and adding beauty to the school. Another reason given most often was to provide shade for students, on a playground that gets particularly hot without any current sources of shade.
- In spring of 2019, Lincoln Middle School students participated in an unprecedented Earth Day event. All 650+ students in the school spent a portion of their day caring for the earth! Groups of students traveled to various corners of the Pullman community to clean trash from streams, parks, trails, and more! Students had a hand in organizing this service day, leading to increased excitement and buy in.
- In the fall of 2019, PHS students banded together to create an Environmental Awareness Club. In its early stages, the group has received significant support and partnership offers from PHS staff, the PHS Student Ambassadors team, and the district Sustainability committee. The group has passion and big goals, and it is exciting to consider how much they will accomplish! An initial goal they've expressed is to eliminate all plastic utensils from the high school cafeteria.

The sustainability committee also takes an active role in promoting the direct teaching of the Washington State Sustainability Standards across all grade levels.

## Crosscutting Questions

### Awards and Programs

#### **Does your district participate in a local, state, or national green schools' program?**

Washington Green Schools:

Franklin Elementary School, Bronze Level – Certification in 1 Environmental Category (2013)

Jefferson Elementary School, Silver Level - Certification in 2 Environmental Categories (2019)

Kamiak Elementary School, Active Level (2019)

Lincoln Middle School, Bronze Level - Certification in 1 Environmental Category (2012)

#### **In the past five years, has your district received any awards relevant to the Green Ribbon School/District recognition?**

Washington State Green School Leaders, Pullman High School, Washington Green Ribbon Schools (2018)

### Communication Strategies

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

In 2019 Pullman Public Schools developed a Sustainability Committee dedicated to exploring and implementing ways for the district to reduce energy consumption and environmental impact. The committee consists of teachers from each of the district's six schools, several administrators, and a high school student that is passionate about conservation. In the fall of 2019, the committee worked with experts at McKinstry to complete an energy consumption audit and develop a baseline of energy usage for each school and the district office. With these energy usage metrics, the committee is taking a careful look at opportunities for conservation and develop an informed comprehensive plan for sustainability efforts in the district. As the Sustainability Committee moves forward with their work, their mission, goals, and efforts made are shared with all staff and the community on district's website, in community presentations, and in classrooms.

Pullman Public Schools families rely on the district website for its depth of information. The website features a page dedicated to sustainability, including the Sustainability Committee philosophy, related policies, membership, and minutes showcasing the committee's current work.

Families and staff receive specific communications related to initiatives that might impact them. For example, the district is moving towards green cleaning, with reusable spray bottles and washable microfiber cleaning rags. A detailed memo was sent to all staff announcing the

initiative, giving background information and reasoning, and providing links to helpful articles. It is always the goal to keep families and staff as well informed as possible!

## Equity

### **Please describe how your students and broader community members are being included in, honored for, and engaged in this work.**

Pullman Public Schools has considerable support for increased sustainability, both from within the schools and from the Pullman community. Within the district are many groups: a district Sustainability Committee, Lincoln Middle School Environmental Club, PHS Environmental Awareness Club, Jefferson Green Team, Kamiak Green Team, Franklin Gardening club, and Sunnyside Gardening Club. These groups all receive support of various kinds from the Pullman community. Some of the many community partners include Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute, the City of Pullman, Palouse Conservation District, Pacific Education Institute (PEI), and Washington State University (WSU).

Jefferson Elementary School partnered with the Washington State University Landscape Architecture program in 2018-2019 to design an outdoor learning lab for their campus. The project provided WSU students with a service-learning opportunity participating in the architectural design and preliminary construction of the outdoor learning lab. In addition, students from the WSU Center for Civic Engagement assisted with the ongoing construction of the Jefferson Elementary project.

Pullman Public Schools has partnered with Pacific Education Institute (PEI) since 2018 to provide teachers with high-quality professional learning to advance science literacy and deepen student engagement by empowering educators to teach real-world science outdoors. The training started with fifth grade teachers and then expanded to grades K-12. The FieldSTEM training and commitment provided by PEI staff helped teachers understand the components that make systemic and sustainable FieldSTEM implementation in Pullman Public Schools a reality. Pullman staff and students understand the value of natural resources and the ecosystem, and that the economic opportunity they provide are the foundation of the Pullman community.

The Palouse Conservation District partners with Pullman Public Schools to provide high quality training and workshops for district staff and students throughout the school year. This partnership is ongoing. For example, on November 12<sup>th</sup> fifth-grade students learned about the Palouse watershed and the effects of storm water pollution in rivers and oceans. Students from Kamiak, Sunnyside, Franklin, and Jefferson elementary schools participated in a field day at Pullman City Playfields, looking for macro-invertebrates and testing the water quality of the South Fork of the Palouse River.

The Jefferson Green Team conducted a water audit in 2017, and the student team found 44 aerators in the building that were inefficient. The students then teamed up with the City of Pullman to conserve water by replacing the old aerators with newer, water conserving models. The students also marked 10 storm drains around campus to remind students that water will



end up in nearby waterways. Finally, the students on the team engaged with their peers and shared what they learned about conservation at a school science fair. For their efforts, the school is now recognized as a Washington Green School, which is a state-wide program that provides schools with support and resources to help empower the next generation of environmental leaders.

## Pillar 1: Reduce environmental impact and costs

### Element 1A: Energy conservation strategies

**Describe how your school programs, policies, and actions have reduced the amount of energy used in your building(s). Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

With new construction, Pullman Public Schools has high standards for the sustainability of buildings. The district's two new schools, PHS and Kamiak Elementary, are Energy Star Certified. Avista Utilities provides energy for all of Pullman's schools. More than fifty percent of their energy is from renewable resources such as wind and solar.

Pullman Public Schools has taken significant measures to increase the sustainability and reduce the environmental impact of the four older schools. Each year every building is surveyed to determine the condition of the facility both internally and externally. Based on each building assessment a priority plan is developed to reduce energy and overall environmental impact.

In 2019 Pullman Public Schools developed a Sustainability Committee dedicated to exploring and implementing ways for the district to reduce energy consumption and environmental impact. The committee consists of teachers from each of the district's six schools, several administrators, and a high school student that is passionate about conservation. In the fall of 2019, the committee worked with experts at McKinstry to complete an energy audit and develop a baseline of energy usage for each school and the district office. With these baseline energy use metrics, the committee plans to carefully look at opportunities for conservation and develop an informed comprehensive plan for sustainability efforts in Pullman Public Schools. In addition, the committee developed a sustainability policy that was approved by the Pullman school board in January 2020. As the Sustainability Committee moves forward with their work, they share updates on the district website, at community presentations, and in classroom lessons.

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

**Describe how your school implemented and is maintaining your water conservation program. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

The Jefferson Elementary School Green Team conducted a water audit in 2017, and the student team found 44 aerators in the building that were inefficient. The students then teamed up with the City of Pullman to conserve water by replacing the old aerators with newer, water conserving

models. Jefferson students were able to save 1.2 gallons of water for every minute of use at every faucet. The students also marked 10 storm drains around campus to remind students that water ends up in nearby waterways. Finally, the students on the team engaged with their peers and shared what they learned about conservation at a school science fair. For their efforts, the school is now recognized as a Washington Green School, which is a state-wide program that provides schools with support and resources to help empower the next generation of environmental leaders. In addition, Jefferson Elementary received a rebate for incorporating drought tolerant landscaping and reducing water and energy usage.

In the fall of 2019, the district Sustainability Committee worked with experts at McKinstry to complete an energy audit and develop a baseline of energy usage for each school and the district office. The audit included baseline water usage. This will enable the district to establish a water conservation program including specific water conservation goals. Some steps taken to reduce water consumption include reducing or eliminating watering of landscaping and installing water bottle fillers in some of Pullman's schools to reduce water waste from water fountains.

The district works closely with Design West Architects to incorporate drought tolerant plants and minimal landscape irrigation to help reduce water usage with each building design project (specifically Kamiak Elementary and the proposed Whitman County Transportation Cooperative).

In fall of 2018, Pullman Public Schools partnered with the Washington State Department of Health to test the water from all water fixtures in each school that might provide drinking water to students or staff, or that was used in the preparation of food. After replacing all fixtures with a test result of 10 parts per billion (ppb) or more, a re-test of each fixture was requested from the Washington State Department of Health. On December 18, 2018, all fixtures that had previously tested with a ppb of 10 or more, were retested. Each of the fixtures was found to have 1 ppb or less, which is within a healthy range.

## Element 1C: Waste Management and Product Procurement

**Describe your solid waste management plan and practices. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

One of the most successful Pullman Public Schools solid waste management programs is the Lincoln Middle School composting program. The LMS Environmental Club emphasizes reducing waste and reducing the use of single use products. In addition, the club has a robust composting program in place. They educate students about how to best sort their waste and do an incredible job of collecting compostable materials. The students have an on-site composting pile, which is used as a component of the Lincoln Middle School gardening program. As part of the full cycle of this sustainability program, students have an opportunity to receive hands-on experiences and education – composting waste, preparing soil, making cold frames, planting, weeding, and harvesting crops to be used by the school's kitchen, the LMS Culinary Club, and

the YMCA. This program – “Spartan Seed to Feed” - will become the prototype for future gardens being planned by Jefferson and Franklin Elementary Schools.

Pullman students and staff use a company called “Recycle Boise” to collect outdated or unused electronics. Rather than sending these items to the landfill, Recycle Boise refurbishes many of the district’s unused electronics for donation to students and schools that can benefit from them. This initiative is inspiring staff and students to consider both the environment and the needs of other students outside of the Pullman community. As a result of the district’s participation in this program, over 1000 devices were saved from the landfill in 2019!

Each school also collects used paper and cardboard for recycling, and various student clubs encourage and support this effort.

A powerful example of the conservation mindset being instilled in Pullman students: in the spring of 2019 the district conducted a survey of Lincoln Middle School students, to see what their priorities are for a future middle school expansion and renovation. One of the most common responses from the middle school students was “water bottle filling stations”! Pullman Public Schools’ students grasp the importance of taking small steps to care for the environment.

The sustainability mentality of Pullman Public Schools carries over to the purchasing of products. The district follows preferred procurement requirements and is committed to purchasing furnishings for schools that are not only safe, comfortable, and durable for students and staff, but also certified sustainable.

Pullman Public Schools has gradually moved towards reducing the use of chemical-laden materials in the district. In February 2020 the district introduced a green cleaning initiative: all classrooms were offered reusable spray bottles with a soap (environmentally friendly Dawn) and water cleaning solution, and microfiber cleaning cloths for general classroom cleaning. Cleaning products allowed in classrooms will be limited to these products and Alpha HP, which can be used only after school, when no students are present. Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes are no longer allowed for classroom use.

The very few products that the district still utilizes that have chemicals in them are strictly managed. Pullman Public Schools abides by MSDS regulations, closely monitoring the storage, labeling, and disposal of any product deemed hazardous.

## Element 1D: Alternative transportation

**Describe alternative transportation options to driving in a single occupancy vehicle to and from school. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

Pullman Public Schools takes several measures to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles dropping off or picking up students at schools each day. In 2017 the district contracted with experts at FloAnalytics to assist in creating elementary school attendance areas to reduce travel time to and from school. The district’s elementary school attendance areas are laid out in a way that if a student lives within a safe walking distance to a school, they are assigned to that

school. This increases the number of students potentially able to walk or ride a bike to school each day, using a “Safe Route to School” that is shared on the district’s website. With the establishment of these attendance areas and a new elementary school this year, a significantly higher number of students can walk to their elementary school.

School buses are a safe and economical way to transport students to schools. This year, approximately 415 elementary aged students (33%) use school bus services daily to go to school in the morning and leave school in the afternoon. This number is down from approximately 38% in 2018-2019 as more students now live within a safe walking distance of schools with the opening of a new elementary school. In addition, these new attendance areas have directly impacted the district’s fuel consumption and carbon output: in October of 2018 Pullman Public School’s bus fleet drove 25,522 miles, and in October of 2019 that number was reduced nearly 18%, with 21,024 total miles driven by the bus fleet. All secondary students living within Pullman city limits have access to city bus passes to ride public transit to and from school. Approximately 36% of the district’s secondary students (grades 6-12) have a bus pass that they use. Students living outside of Pullman city limits are transported by district buses.

Pullman Public Schools relies on school buses as a safe, economical, and efficient way to transport students. Significant efforts are made to make bus transportation as environmentally friendly as possible: all the district’s school buses were built after 1994, ensuring that they meet current emission standards. The district also has a bus replacement schedule in place, replacing older school buses in alignment with the Washington State bus depreciation schedule, with newer and more energy efficient buses. An exciting development for Pullman Public Schools: the district received a grant to fund the purchase of an electric bus! The district will be placing an order for the bus, with delivery scheduled for Fall of 2021. This will further efforts towards greener transportation.

Though measures are taken to encourage walking, biking, and busing to school, some Pullman families choose to drive their student to school. The district has installed electric car charging at two schools, hoping to provide a convenient location for families to charge their vehicle if they own an electric car. Another proactive way that students are encouraged to avoid single occupancy vehicle use is through promotion of an annual “bike or walk to school day” campaign in collaboration with the City of Pullman. This is a great way to build excitement around walking and biking to school – students that may not normally use this method to school may try something different and find that they enjoy walking or biking to school with neighbors!

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

### Element 2A: An integrated district-wide environmental health program

**Describe how your school implements and measures the success of your integrated environmental health programs and practices to ensure the health and safety of the school community. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

In October of 2018, as part of Pullman Public Schools' commitment to ensuring the health of students and staff is protected, the district had the Washington State Department of Health test for lead in all drinking water sources in each school, in an effort to reduce children's overall exposure to lead in the environment.

Between October 10-18, 2018, water samples were taken from every fixture that provides drinking water to students or staff, or is used to prepare food, in all five schools (Pullman Public Schools now has six schools). The testing was done prior to the school day, before students were in the building. Test results were received on the afternoon of October 29<sup>th</sup> and before the start of school on October 30<sup>th</sup>, each of the fixtures with an elevated level were taken out of service (turned off completely so that they were not usable). Bottled water was provided to staff and students in the impacted areas. The district worked quickly to fully replace and retest each fixture that had an elevated level prior to turning the water back on in that location. After replacing all fixtures with a test result of 10 ppb or more, the district requested that the Washington State Department of Health re-test each of these fixtures. On December 18, 2018, all fixtures that had previously tested with a ppb of 10 or more, were retested. Each of the fixtures was found to have 1 ppb or less, which is within a healthy range!

Student safety is of utmost importance to Pullman Public Schools. The district has ensured that all playground equipment is free of chromate copper arsenate, meeting the International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association (IPEMA) standards. All spaces in schools have been tested for radon, all schools are radon free.

In addition to facility safety and security, lesser-known measures are taken to care for the health of students. For students with asthma, environmental factors can trigger their symptoms. Pullman Public Schools works to reduce or eliminate these triggers by not allowing air fresheners in schools, advising staff to avoid perfume or other scents, and the district is working towards eliminating soft/porous furnishings in all schools. All staff are required to complete an annual training related to asthma, including general information, preventing triggers, symptoms of asthma episodes, and how to address an episode.

Pullman Public Schools has gradually moved towards reducing the use of chemical-laden materials in the district. In February 2020 the district introduced a green cleaning initiative: all classrooms will be offered reusable spray bottles with a soap and water cleaning solution, and microfiber cleaning cloths for general classroom cleaning. Cleaning products allowed in classrooms are limited to this and Alpha HP, which can be used only after school, when no students are present. Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes are no longer allowed for classroom use.

The very few products that the district still uses that have chemicals in them are strictly managed. Pullman Public Schools abides by MSDS regulations, closely monitoring the storage, labeling, and disposal of any product deemed hazardous. Another accomplishment of the Pullman Public Schools Wellness Committee is the creation and enforcement of a "Snack Policy" for all schools. To better protect students with allergies and diabetes, the district developed a

specific list of snacks, including the exact brands, that are approved for classrooms and schools for celebrations.

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

**Describe how your school implements high standards of nutrition, fitness, and quality outdoor time for both students and staff. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

Pullman Public Schools has a highly engaged Wellness Committee that consists of staff members, parents, community partners, and administrators. The committee meets quarterly and is always open to guests. In 2017 the committee revised the district's Wellness Goals. Over the past 2 years, the committee has made considerable efforts towards implementing initiatives and policies that benefit the well-being of all students. In 2018, they encouraged the district to move towards more scratch cooked meals served to students. Pullman Public Schools nutrition services staff participated in a week-long intensive scratch cooking program, learning great techniques and recipes to implement in schools. The district is now in the second year of the scratch cooking program, and school menus are increasingly made up of scratch cooked foods, with an emphasis on locally sourced ingredients.

Another accomplishment of the Pullman Public School Wellness Committee is the creation and enforcement of a Snack Policy for all schools. To better protect students with allergies and diabetes, the district now has a specific list of snacks, including the exact brands, that are approved for classrooms and schools for celebrations.

Current Wellness goals, updated in 2017:

- a. Improve the quality of school food by emphasizing healthy fresh foods
  - Cooked on site from scratch
  - Locally or regionally sourced
  - Presented attractively and sustainably
- b. Implement a school pantry program to promote student nutrition during times when school food is not available.
  - Provide staples to families in need
  - Develop discreet methods of distribution
- c. Support walking and biking to school through
  - Collaboration with City of Pullman et. Al. to develop safe routes and path networks
  - Parent education and outreach

The gardens at Lincoln Middle School and Jefferson Elementary School allow students the opportunity to see food from seed to table. It's an exciting step in developing healthy habits at a young age – students are more likely to try and enjoy vegetables that they've grown! Franklin

Elementary is developing a garden program, after seeing the success of other garden programs in the district.

Pullman Public Schools places importance on many aspects of wellness, including physical activity. Elementary students attend 80+ minutes of physical education classes each week. Much of that time is spent outdoors, as weather allows. In addition, elementary students have recess outdoors two or three times a day depending on the grade level. The fresh air and activity is vital for students to learn well in class. It is not unusual for teachers to take a class outdoors for instruction when the weather is pleasant. Sometimes the instruction is related to the environment surrounding the school, and sometimes the instruction is outdoors simply to enjoy the fresh air and change of scenery.

Lincoln Middle School recently received a grant that allowed the district to purchase bicycles, helmets, and bike trailers. This new unit will provide students with the opportunity to practice bicycle safety and gain an appreciation and hopefully a love for bicycle travel. Pullman Public Schools is looking forward to offering more outdoor activities for students to promote a lifelong love of movement and physical activity.

### **What proportion of schools in your district have a school nurse and/or school-based health center?**

Currently, four nurses serve the district's six schools.

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

#### **Mental Health Wellness is a Priority in Pullman Public Schools**

**Staffing:** Pullman Public Schools hired additional counselors at the secondary and elementary levels. Each school has a least one counselor. Counselors focus on three essential components – academic, career, and social-emotional development. In addition, the district recently hired a school-based mental health therapist.

**Partnerships:** Pullman Public Schools works with several community partners to facilitate students' access to resources available in the community. These partnerships include:

- Palouse River Counseling provides individual support and programming for students and families based on a wraparound philosophy of care.
- Washington State University – Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR) currently partners with Sunnyside Elementary in the promotion of trauma-informed practices aimed at professionals' ability to enhance healthy student development and academic success.
- Washington State University Athletics—Behind Happy Faces is a program that empowers young people to start talking about issues and break the stigma associated with mental illness. The program provided mental health professional development to athletic

coaches across the county and training for student athletes regarding strategies and resources to help recognize depression/stress and improve mental health wellness.

**Professional development course offerings and presentations:** Staff, including teachers and paraeducators, receive directed and self-directed trainings. Training topics are based on staff surveys designed for noting needs and preferences. In the past two years, the district has offered multiple professional development sessions supporting the wide spectrum of mental health wellness. The most recent Professional Development Day included: "Integrating Social Emotional Learning into Your Daily Content" and "When Caring Becomes Exhausting: Compassion Fatigue and What to do About It". Other professional development offerings have included:

- **Socio-Emotional Learning** – Practices and strategies to help students build awareness and skills managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions
- **Differentiated Instruction** - Practices and strategies for meeting the needs of different learners through varying content, process, and product
- **Mental and Physical Health** – Practical tips and information to support students with mental & physical health struggles including depression, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, addiction, anxiety and other areas.
- **Various speakers covering topics such as:**
  - Autism
  - Social Emotional Learning
  - Anxiety

**Curriculum:** The Second Step Social Emotional Curriculum has been adopted and is in the implementation stage at all elementary schools and the middle school. A big component of mental health in youth is the implementation of anti-bullying curriculum programs and policies. Pullman Public Schools is pleased that the Second Step curriculum includes anti-bullying components and units designed to increase emotional intelligence.

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

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



**Describe how your district integrates and measures students' environmental and sustainability literacy at each grade level, including curriculum and outdoor learning. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

While Pullman Public Schools proudly weaves environmental and sustainability literacy into components of many courses, units, and lessons, the most exciting example of this is the robust 5<sup>th</sup> grade outdoor environmental education camp. Pullman Public Schools has a legacy of providing 5<sup>th</sup> graders with a memorable week at Camp Wooten, in Dayton, Washington, where they participate in 5 days of science lessons and activities, based on the Next Generation Science Standards. In addition, many of the lessons involve and promote energy conservation and sustainability practices.

Additional lessons that model the district's dedication to teaching sustainability literacy:

- All 2<sup>nd</sup> graders in the district take a field trip to explore a local aquifer site and learn about how it impacts the Pullman community, and how they can care for these resources and reduce consumption.
- Another 2<sup>nd</sup> grade team in the district has developed a lesson that engages the student's family, too. First, students learn about the concept of carbon footprints and the impact each individual has on the environment. Families are then encouraged to participate in an activity to determine their family's carbon footprint, using an interactive worksheet, coloring in rings of a "footprint" to visually see how their family might be making an impact on the environment.
- For many years, students at Jefferson Elementary have engaged in a unit related to bees – the science behind hives, pollinating, and honey. With the addition of the Outdoor Learning Lab at Jefferson Elementary, students are now able to get hands-on with the curriculum, farming bees in two hives on campus!

The Pullman Public Schools Sustainability Committee promotes the incorporation of the Washington State Environmental and Sustainability Education Standards into appropriate lessons and units K-12.

**Describe professional development opportunities available to your teachers in environmental and sustainability concepts, and the number and percentage of teachers who participated in these opportunities during the past two years. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

Pullman Public Schools has partnered with Pacific Education Institute (PEI) since 2018 to provide teachers with high-quality professional learning to advance science literacy and deepen student engagement by empowering educators to teach real-world science outdoors. The training started with fifth grade teachers, specifically for use at the annual outdoor education camp for fifth graders. The district has expanded the training to include teachers from grades K-12. The FieldSTEM training and commitment provided by PEI staff to teachers helped the district to understand the components that make systemic and sustainable FieldSTEM implementation in Pullman schools a reality. Pullman's staff and students understand the value of natural resources

and the ecosystem, and that the economic opportunity they provide are the foundation of the Pullman community.

In October of 2019 Pullman Public Schools offered multiple professional development opportunities for staff specific to STEM education. A 3-hour professional development session called "Connecting Classroom Content Experiences to Local Environment and Community Interests" was attended by 27 teachers in the district (27 total, between two sessions held).

Teachers participated in an interactive session modeling the concepts of exploring a locally relevant phenomenon with their students, and then guiding students through the process of developing a claim supported by evidence to make a reasonable, scientific inference.

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

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

Pullman Public Schools is fortunate to have a community that supports robust STEM offerings at all levels.

The district has two full time STEM specialist teachers in the district to serve four elementary schools. Elementary school students attend a STEM class once each week for half of the school year. This supplemental instruction was implemented at elementary schools in fall of 2016, and the program has had a positive impact. Students are introduced to the scientific method and STEM concepts very deliberately, early in their education, and, anecdotally, there has been an increased level of interest in STEM subjects as a result.

Lincoln Middle School offers STEM courses to students to encourage a passion for STEM. Two popular offerings include a Gateway to Technology class and an Electronics class. Many students continue to pursue STEM related courses and activities in high school as a result of their involvement in these classes at the middle school level.

PHS offers several unique STEM courses as a result of student and community expressed interest. Natural Resources is a science course open to juniors or seniors to, "Explore and investigate the interrelationships of the natural world, identify and analyze environmental problems, both natural and human-made, evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. Participate in hands-on, laboratory and field investigations to apply scientific principles, concepts and methodologies in order to better understand our natural systems and to critically think about environmental issues and potential solutions." Twenty or more students have taken the Natural Resources class each semester. Another new course at PHS is "Earth and Space Integrated Science" – designed for students to "achieve a deeper understanding of scientific principles and models, enhance mathematical reasoning, and strengthen content-based English Language Arts

skills.” PHS also offers Sports Medicine I and II, linking science and health education with career focused curriculum. These courses have all been well received and help PPS offer a broad spectrum of STEM courses for students, with the goal of offering “something for everyone.”

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

PHS has a robust CTE program to be proud of. A component of each of the PHS CTE classes is introducing students to related fields and future career opportunities that could further utilize the concepts and training that students receive in the course.

Plant Science I and II classes at PHS, “provide students with a practical understanding of plant morphology, anatomy, and growth of plant crops.” Students also experience greenhouse management on a small scale, through the hands-on classroom of the PHS greenhouse. In the second level of the Plant Science course students work in the PHS greenhouse and are introduced to additional career paths – floral design, golf and turf grass management, and landscaping.

Biology in Agriculture provides the opportunity for PHS students to participate in inquiry-based labs, exploring living systems and they impact they have on the environment. A component of the course is learning about careers that utilize these skills, many of which are environmental science careers.

Students in the PHS Natural Resources class spend time exploring ways of resolving or preventing environmental issues and learning about careers that focus on environmental protection and preservation.

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

**Describe students' civic and/or community engagement experiences integrating environmental and sustainability concepts, field studies, and community service at every grade level. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.**

Across the district, there is a wide variety of unique activities and experiences related to environmental and sustainability education. All six of the schools in Pullman have a green club! A sampling of the many ways Pullman students are learning to be responsible stewards of the environment:

Students and staff are utilizing a company called “Recycle Boise” to collect outdated or unused electronics. Rather than sending these items to the landfill, Recycle Boise refurbishes unused electronics for donations to students and schools that can benefit from them. This initiative is inspiring staff and students to consider both the environment and the needs of other students outside of the Pullman community.

In the Fall of 2019, the Jefferson Green Team helped create the Jefferson Elementary Outdoor Learning Lab and Garden in collaboration between Jefferson's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and Washington State University's Landscape Architecture Program. The OLL incorporates five learning zones, including a small amphitheater, an edible garden, nature journaling area and pollinator garden. Entire classes can be held in the space. Other classrooms can look out on the space. In an age when children are increasingly attached to screens, there is a growing and critical need to incorporate nature into the elementary learning experience. Research proves that daily access to nature improves kids' academic performance and helps with imagination, creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, and stress reduction. Additionally, students' overall sense of well-being is improved. It's important to have these sorts of resources at any grade level. The space is designed to benefit all students; the tactile learning environment would be especially beneficial to children with learning disabilities.

A Green Team club has already been established at the district's brand-new school, Kamiak Elementary! Among the initiatives they've undertaken is a unique plastic bag recycling program. Plastic bags from grocery stores, food products, and more, are often not accepted by conventional recycling centers, including the local recycling center in Pullman. The Kamiak Green Team identified a company that recycles plastic bags into composite decking and railings. The Green Team has placed collection bins around their school to gather these materials that usually end up in landfills.

A great example of both civic and environmental mindfulness, second graders in two classes at Franklin Elementary wrote and delivered letters to the Pullman School Board, urging the school district to plant more trees. Reasons cited by the second graders included enhancing the habitat for animals, and to add beauty to the school. Another reason given most often was to provide shade for students, on a playground that gets particularly hot without any current sources of shade. The district's Sustainability Committee is currently in the process of determining the best native trees for Franklin Elementary and will soon ask these second graders to help plant and water the trees at their school!

In spring of 2019, Lincoln Middle School students participated in an unprecedented Earth Day event. All 650+ students in the school spent a portion of their day caring for the earth! Groups of students traveled to various corners of the Pullman community to clean trash from streams, parks, trails, and more. Students had a hand in organizing this service day, leading to increased excitement and buy in. It is important to nurture the partnerships between Pullman schools and the Pullman community – civic engagement starts young!

In the fall of 2019, PHS students banded together to create an Environmental Club. In its early stages, the group has already received significant support and partnership offers from PHS staff, the PHS Student Ambassadors team, and the district Sustainability committee. An initial goal they've expressed is to eliminate all plastic ware from the high school cafeteria. The students also plan to create a composting program at Pullman High School.

END OF APPLICATION