U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

GreenRibbonSchools

School Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

The signatures of the school principal and district superintendent (or equivalents) on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. *In no case is a private school required to make any certification with regard to the public school district in which it is located.*

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades early learning to 12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. Neither the nominated public school nor its public school district is refusing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is not subject to the jurisdiction of OCR. The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.
4. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the public school district concluding that the nominated public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
5. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
6. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the public school or public school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or public school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
7. The school meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

X Public ___ Charter X Title I ___ Magnet ___ Private ___ Independent ___ Rural

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

Official School Name: **McDill Elementary School**
(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: 2516 School Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

County: Portage State School Code Number *:

Telephone: 715- 345-5420 Fax:

Web site/URL: https://www.pointschools.net/McDill E-mail: jkoepke@pointschools.net

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space*

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

Jeanne F Koepke Date: 2-7-20

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: Craig Gerlach, Ed.S.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

GreenRibbonSchools

District Name: Stevens Point Area Public School District

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

_____ Date: 2-7-20

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

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

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. The school meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**

Name of Nominating Authority: **Carolyn Stanford Taylor, State Superintendent**

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.

_____Date:2-14-20

(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 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
Summary of Achievements
for
McDill Elementary School

McDill Elementary School is a K-6 school serving 413 students in the Stevens Point Area Public School District in central Wisconsin. More than ten percent of students are English language learners. The school's accomplishments in reducing environmental impacts and costs, improving health and wellness, and increasing environmental literacy serve as a testimony to how parent and community engagement contributes to success.

Reducing Environmental Impact and Costs
We strive to conserve resources wherever possible. We have upgraded lighting, installed water-saving equipment, and reduced our transportation footprint. We work to protect the quality of our environment by integrating natural features on the school site, using bioswales, and directing runoff into a groundwater drain.

We have reduced our waste by implementing a milk carton and marker recycling program and have increased recycling in all classrooms and offices by using well-labeled bins and instituting recycling education. Students are deeply involved with these efforts and have diverted more than 4,551 markers, 300 lbs. of plastic bottle caps, and more than 185,165 milk cartons from the landfill. Our student ambassadors and adult composting team work to reduce our environmental footprint by continuing to find ways and refine processes to reduce waste in our cafeteria and kitchen. We prioritize scheduling lunchtime after the noon recess and while it does not work every year for us due to shared space and staffing issues, we strive for this configuration annually.

Improving Health & Wellness
Our PTO and staff believe that healthy movement and eating, along with learning about our daily environmental impacts, are important for our school community. We hold Walk/Bike to School Days, a Walk Across Wisconsin noon recess program, and discuss health-related issues in our physical education classes and in our regular education classes using a district created curriculum. In the spring of 2015, students walked 2,513.75 miles during their Walk Across Wisconsin day, which is the distance from Stevens Point, Wisconsin to San Diego, CA to Phoenix, AZ, plus some! Staff meetings often begin with Yoga poses and breathing techniques. The school installed two Gaga pits for students and families to use.

Fourteen of our teachers have received their *Green Classroom Professional Certificate* to ensure healthy learning environments. We also reduce our chemical use by examining alternatives to harsh chemicals, purchasing Green Seal certified products, and using Norwex cloths for classroom cleaning instead of Clorox wipes.

Increasing Environmental Literacy
Ample opportunities for teacher professional development, coupled with partnerships with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and parents, support implementation of environmental education at every grade level. We prioritize teaching about the environment outside, immersed in the environment and teachers are provided with "Outdoor Classroom Packs" to make it easy to take learning into one of the two outdoor classrooms. Our property is the location of a community garden, in which plots are rented out to community members. Our Farmshed in town provides grants for us to learn about local food

sources. We also had a local resident rent a plot for our school community so that our kindergarten and first grade students can plant and harvest crops as a part of coursework. Our property also has a 5-acre school forest with trails and two outdoor classrooms which are utilized by many classes. The school forest includes a storywalk with 20 story panels to increase environmental literacy. Our courtyard provides a quick and safe way to get students outside to read and write or study aquatic life—such as dragonfly nymphs—in the pond. We continue to add features to enhance the schoolyard such as a pollinator garden that was completed in the fall of 2018. Students can participate in STEM Club (grades 4-6), Junior STEM Club (grades 2-3), Green & Healthy Student Ambassadors, Fuel Up to Play 60, or Student Council.

McDill is recognized as a "Sugar Maple School" from Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin as well as by the National Wildlife Federation Eco-Schools USA and Project Learning Tree's *GreenSchools!* The school and/or staff are members is a member of the North American Association for Environmental Education.

McDill Elementary School is a beautiful school with a green campus and staff who are proud to be McDill Timberwolves. This school has a long history of utilizing outdoor spaces for learning and physical activity as well as environmental education. We celebrate our adult- and student-led environmental learning initiatives and share our school activities and achievements with the community through our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/mcdilltimberwolves. We have witnessed parents from other elementary schools open enroll students to McDill because of the green space and strong Green & Healthy Schools programming. We are proud to be part of the Whiting, Plover and Stevens Point communities and find we strengthen each other through our work. We also know our work is never done and are committed to continue growing greener and healthier in years to come.

About the Summary and Scoring:
The complete state application is too long to include in this nomination submission, so the applicant's information has been summarized in the following pages, aligned with the pillars and elements. Each application was ranked by teams of external reviewers and internal reviewers, each with different areas of expertise, using a common ranking tool. In addition, the slate of nominees was forwarded to related state and federal agencies to ensure there were no compliance or regulatory issues.

The summary of the nominee's achievements as reported in their application is presented in each pillar and element below. The focus area is in reference to Wisconsin's application structure.

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact

Element 1A: reduced or eliminated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

Focus Area: Energy

The school's buildings and grounds manager, a Certified Energy Manager (CEM), conducted an internal audit of energy use. The school has achieved a reduction of 8% over 10 years and implements the following energy efficiency practices and policies:

- Computer power management settings
- Thermostat temperature setpoints
- Hot water temperature setpoints
- Optimized programming of occupancy sensors (located in the office and most classrooms)
- Monitor energy usage by tracking monthly energy consumption and costs
- Guidelines for limiting personal appliances such as portable space heaters or mini-fridges
- Follow a schedule for regular maintenance of HVAC equipment
- Teachers can't operate their own thermostats; those are monitored at district level.

In the past ten years, the following upgrades have also contributed to their energy savings: energy efficient lighting (LED), occupancy sensors (adding more each year), ENERGY STAR water heaters (2013), energy efficient HVAC system (2016). The school also upgraded insulation and roofing in 2017 and windows on an as needed basis. In 2015, five classrooms and the teachers' lounge got new drop ceilings and LED lighting, reducing from 1160 watts per room to 480 watts and at the same time provided benefits of adequate lighting for student learning.

McDill will be getting a cafeteria built in the summer of 2021; currently, the gymnasium transforms into the cafeteria during the lunch period. We are encouraging the District to install solar on the south side of the building; this would be hugely visible to all and would be a great learning opportunity.

Students and staff help identify and/or implement behavioral changes to reduce energy consumption: There is a group of staff and family members who comprise the McDill Elementary School Outdoor Planning Team (MESOPT) who are working on alternative designs for outdoor spaces. Some of the changes we'd like to make include planting between the blacktop and the brick building to reduce some of the radiant heat off the blacktop back into the school. Other ideas that have been discussed are adding awnings over the south-facing windows to reduce the heat gain in the spring and summer months. These changes will continue to be discussed as planning continues for the new cafeteria, to be built in the summer of 2021.

Each time you go into McDill, you see new posters in the hallway encouraging people to turn off the lights to save energy. In every classroom, there is a student who is responsible for turning the lights off when the class leaves the room. This job changes weekly. Staff shut down computers and monitors at the end of each day. Staff utilize natural light instead of electricity during the day when appropriate. Staff turn lights off when they leave a room (i.e. teachers' lounge). Staff unplug electronics that are not being charged. Staff unplug appliances before extended breaks as part of their checklist. The custodian ensures air vents and thermostats are not blocked and the air conditioner is not run all summer unless staff are in the building and it is needed.

In the spring of 2019, students in 2nd, 4th, and 5th grade classrooms (4 classrooms total) played "Cool Choices in Green & Healthy Schools" game to learn about energy efficiency and conservation, reporting 251 actions. These actions led to the potential to save: $1,249 and

13,581 lbs of CO2
3,233 kWh of electricity
35 therms of natural gas
17,689 gallons of water
304 gallons of gasoline
966 lbs of waste

Students learn about energy conservation:

- 2nd graders have a Pioneer Day in which they dress like pioneers and also learn how people lived in the 1800's. Students participate in activities that shows the importance of electricity - they learned how to wash clothes using a washboard, didn't turn the lights on all day, wrote on chalk boards, had a zero technology day, etc.
- Energy concepts are integrated into science lessons and energy is a component in the Farm to School Program offerings provided to students in grades K, 2, 3, and 5.
- In May of 2017, students from the Point of Discovery School (PoDS) in Stevens Point visited McDill (and other schools in the District) to conduct mini energy audits of the buildings using energy audit tools from KEEP. These tools included watt meters, light meters, and infrared thermometers. They analyzed light levels, plug loads, and temperatures in various areas of the

school including classrooms, hallways, the gym, and office. The data was analyzed, and recommendations were provided for energy efficiency measures during a community event.
- The 2018 Science Fair kick-off focused on energy. McDill used the Pedal Power Energy Bike as their demonstration activity; all students saw the Pedal Power bike being used and had the opportunity to pedal the bike to learn about energy efficiency. The Pedal Power bike was also on display during the Science Fair; families were encouraged to pedal the bike to generate electricity and learn the difference between different types of bulbs as well as how to use energy more efficiently at home.

Jeff Chandonais, fourth grade teacher, has participated in three KEEP courses including: Doable Renewables-Renewable Energy Education in the Classroom (2012); Energy Education-Concepts and Practices (online course) (2014); and School Building Energy Efficiency Education (2009). He has also participated in the course offered at the Energy Fair in 2016 titled Exploring Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living at the Energy Fair.

Three McDill teachers participated in a workshop series in the spring of 2017 called *Place-Based Resources to Support Literacy in the Elementary Classroom*. At least two of the sessions focused on energy; one session took place at Farmshed in Stevens Point where teachers learned about the energy flow in food webs and how eating locally requires less energy through transportation, etc. Another session focused on the energy flow inside the school building. Teachers learned new vocabulary, wrote a story about how they used energy that day, and experimented with energy audit tools.

The *Green Classroom Professional Certificate* through the USGBC was added to the Stevens Point District's PD catalog as an approved professional development opportunity for staff. 14 teachers completed the training in the fall 2018. This certificate program provides educators and school staff with the knowledge to identify what supports or impedes healthy, resource-efficient and environmentally sustainable learning spaces. A group gathered to discuss key take-aways which included 1) how to stop idling of buses and vehicles dropping off and picking up students, 2) turning lights and other electronics off, 3) not covering vents and only opening windows during adequate outdoor temperatures, 4) reducing food waste, 5) recycling containers, and 6) how to reduce soap and paper towels consumption.

Element 1B: Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation

Focus Area: Water

The school's drinking water comes from a municipal water supply from groundwater source. Our school meters water use and documents water use to identify substantial changes in water use. Our school conducts annual audits of the facility and irrigation systems to ensure they are free of water leaks and to identify opportunities for savings. Our school educates students and staff on what should and should not go down the drains.

Our school has the following equipment to help conserve water:
- Low-flow toilets (1.6 gallon per flush (gpf))
- Low-flow shower heads (2.2 gpm) in locker rooms
- Air conditioning equipment does not utilize water
- Optimized water or steam-based heating systems to reduce blow-off.

In 2016, the school installed two water bottle refilling stations. The installation was made possible due to the Drive for Kids event that took place the previous year. The stations help us reduce the number of single-use plastic bottles used by staff and students.

Our school uses the following landscaping practices:

- use of mulch and native plants to reduce watering needs
- use of broom or blower to clean driveways and walkways
- careful application of fertilizers to reduce runoff impact

Our school has integrated natural features into the playground area, has a habitat garden, a 1200 sq. ft food garden, and a 5.2 acre wooded area that all help improve water quality. Both the habitat and food gardens are part of a large community gardens on the school grounds which started in 1974.

McDill was selected as a winner of the "Trees for Threes" sweepstakes presented by the American Transmission CO. and the Milwaukee Bucks in the spring of 2018 (and potentially 2019; awaiting results)! We will be receiving trees to plant on school grounds this spring.

In addition to natural features on our school grounds, we use the following runoff or stormwater practices:

- Mowing, leaf collection, and snow removal managed to keep removed materials off impermeable surfaces
- Use of leakproof lids on dumpsters or other outdoor waste collection bins
- Downspouts and roof drains go to groundwater drain

The one storm drain on the playground does not send water to the river; rather, this storm drain is a collection site for water which then seeps back into the groundwater. There are no parking lot drains so all water runoff is absorbed into the ground. There is a swale near the parking lot which holds water after snowmelt, heavy rains, etc. This is a proposed site for a rain garden.

Our school has the following deicing practices that help protect water resources:

- Snow & ice are removed with shovels, plows, or snowblowers before salt is applied
- Application charts are used
- Salt is only applied when temperature is above 15 degrees F
- Salt is stored in an enclosed location away from surface water bodies including wetlands

Our school has a program to control lead in drinking water (including voluntary testing and implementation of measures to reduce lead exposure) and taps, faucets, and fountains are cleaned at least twice annually to reduce contamination and screens and aerators are cleaned at least annually to remove particulate lead deposits. Our medication and chemical disposal policies help ensure water quality along with a grease trap or oil/water separator for the kitchen sanitary waste line.

McDill has Back Siphon Preventers on all of the outside lines. They prevent the water from getting back-siphoned and prevents the water from going back into the Whiting Water distribution pipes and back into the water system.

Students and staff are actively involved in planning and implementing water conservation and/or protection activities:
There is a team called the McDill Elementary School Outdoor Planning Team who are envisioning the future of the outdoor areas at McDill, which includes rain collection and controlling run- off. This plan will include the playground, soccer fields, and 5-acre school forest with trails. We want to conceptualize what it will become in the next 5-10 years so we can include more tree islands, gardens, and natural playscapes, instead of just replacing current playground equipment with new equipment when it is needed. We firmly believe in the importance of removing blacktop and not adding additional blacktop areas. This plan will also include rain gardens. University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Landscape Architect students came up with visual plans for our future outdoor spaces; and McDill students provided feedback as to the plans and what they'd like to see in their outdoor spaces.

Each time you go into McDill, you see new posters in the hallway encouraging people to save water. Student council uses profits from their candy cane sales to benefit a non-profit organization who make water filters for children in developing countries (as well as other beneficial contributions).

Students learn about water conservation:
All grade levels visit the Boston School Forest each year where they visit the pond and learn about aquatic ecosystems.

In second grade, students learn about the water cycle and how water moves on Earth. The students learn about the tools used to measure precipitation. They also learn about the different types of precipitation.

4th grade teaches water in both social studies and science units. In science, students explore the water cycle as well as the percentage of water on earth that is Ocean, polar caps/glaciers, lakes and rivers, and groundwater. We also hit on pollution and the food chain and how pollution of the ocean affects the food chain in the ocean. In our Maps and Globes unit we talk about the Great Lakes and Mississippi River being natural boundaries for our state. We spend a lot of time learning about the Great Lakes and the important rivers of Wisconsin. We teach our explorer unit and discuss the importance of waterways for the early explorers as a means of transportation. We teach a unit on Wisconsin Lumberjacks and also use a book as a resource called Wisconsin Waterways (this resource is used in several of our units) and talk about the rivers being a mode of transportation for moving logs during the lumberjack era and the importance of the rivers for paper mills and sawmills. We discuss the pollution of those rivers during the lumberjack era and how we have learned from our mistakes with dumping waste in water from that time in history. During this unit we talk about the importance of protecting our natural resources and how to keep our lakes and rivers clean. In our Statehood unit we talk about our State Seal and how sailors are part of our state seal because of the Great Lakes and the manufacturing that our state is a part of and how the Great Lakes were a mode of transportation to get goods to other places.

5th graders learn about water and our world. They invite a guest speaker in to talk about experiences abroad by engineering ways to provide water to people far away from cities, for example in Iraq. 5th graders recently studied about the water treatment plant and toured it in Plover, where we were also able to go into a water tower. Our 5th grade students attend a fieldtrip to our local water treatment plant every year.

A professional from Nalco Water (an Eco-Lab company), who is also a McDill dad, visited multiple classrooms in the fall of 2017 to engage students in hands-on water education. He did activities with the 5th grade (3 classes), 2nd grade (2 classes), and one Kindergarten classroom so far. The teachers are continuing to ask him to come into their classrooms. He provided lessons on personal hygiene and water conservation using Project WETs Clean and Conserve activity guide, and has provided information on careers in the water industry.

One teacher made a groundwater model that has aquifers in it which you add colored water to show how chemical spills contaminated groundwater. This teacher took their class to UWSP to a groundwater conference.

Element 1C: Reduced waste production

Focus Area: Recycling & Waste Management

Our school has a policy to minimize the generation of all waste types. We have placed clearly labeled recycling bins next to trash cans in all locations and recycle paper, glass, metals, plastics, ink cartridges,

milk and juice cartons, batteries, and cardboard. There are marker recycling boxes in the hallways. Blue recycle bins are in every classroom, the staff lounge, and main office. The lunchroom has the recycling bin for milk cartons. The District purchases green biodegradable trash bags for all garbage.

McDill began recycling milk cartons in the fall of 2015. By recycling ~1,500 milk cartons each week (from snack break only), the 5 yards of waste removed from the waste stream will save the school money, since trash costs are more than recycling costs. During the 2015/16 school year, 37,033 cartons were recycled and saved from being deposited into the landfill. Over the last five years, more than 185,165 cartons have been recycled.

McDill has participated in the Crayola Colorcycle program since the 2014/2015 school year and initially collected 180 markers. During the 2018/2019 school year we expanded the program and invited families to bring in markers from home to contribute to our collection. Our goals were to raise awareness about consumption/waste, divert markers from landfills and provide a Green & Healthy goal for the school community to rally around. We exceeded our goals and collected over 1500 markers during the 2018/2019 school year. Since the 2014/15 school year, 4,551 markers have been sent for recycling. Third grade students assist in collecting, counting and preparing the markers for shipment to Crayola.

During the spring of 2019, McDill had a competition to see how many plastic lids/caps could be collected. The grade level that collected the most per weight won a free recess. The students collected almost 300 lbs of plastic lids/caps. These were then sorted in the summer by a group of students, many of them student council members, to make sure they were the acceptable lids/caps needed, as they were to be used to make plastic benches through a company called Green Tree Plastics out of Evansville, Indiana and they only take a certain kind of lid/cap, and they require students to be the ones to collect and sort them. A parent then drove to Evansville in the fall of 2019 to deliver the caps and pick up three benches! Students can now see what their plastic caps can turn into - instead of throwing them away, they can be recycled with a little more effort. I think students really get the full impact of what recycling is when they see the products made out of their hard work! These benches will be installed on the school grounds in the spring; for now, they are in the library and entryway on display.

McDill has had a “share” table for years where students put unwanted fruit and unopened milk for others to take and will provide the uneaten food and unopened milk to after school clubs and students who need a healthy snack throughout the day (or as a way to provide nutrition for when they go home).

We haven’t started composting yet, but have been building partnerships to learn from others who do compost, have started sending teachers to professional development workshops related to composting, and have met with the school’s food service coordinator to explore composting pre-consumer waste on a small-scale basis. McDill registered in the SCrAP (School Cafeteria Discards Assessment Project) program coordinated through the Environmental Research & Education Foundation in the fall of 2017. UWSP Waste Education Center completed an audit of compostable items and provided this baseline data to help us determine how to move forward with composting on school grounds.

We currently have an 8-yard trash container picked up two times per week which equals 16 yards per week. As we recycle more milk cartons, the amount of trash will undoubtedly decrease. We may need to increase the amount of times the recycling dumpster is emptied (from once to twice a week). We estimated that we generate 1.49 cubic yards of refuse/person/year.

Our school or district has a policy on the proper storage, transportation, and disposal of regulated wastes that is actively enforced and followed at our facility. Our school disposes of unwanted computer and electronic products through an approved recycling facility or E-cycle Wisconsin program.

Students and staff identify and/or implement changes to encourage waste reduction, reuse, and recycling behaviors:
At a beginning of the 2017 school year, McDill sent out letters to each household notifying students who their teachers would be to help with back-to-school anxiety. When discussing how to send the letters out (i.e. one for each student, one per household), it was emphasized that because McDill is a Green & Healthy School, only one envelope would go to each household which saves on resources and mailing cost. Something as simple as this illustrates how being a Green & Healthy School is affecting decision-making.

Stevens Point Area Public School District launched a new electronic flyer communication tool called "Peachjar" in spring 2017. This "green" initiative will save Stevens Point schools tons of paper and reduce copy costs by thousands of dollars. On top of that, posting school flyers in this electronic backpack removes a significant administrative burden from teachers, office staff, and volunteers.

During the 2018/2019 school year we implemented a school-wide Recycling and Trash education effort. Teachers were surveyed to determine what classroom materials they had questions about in relation to recycling. Working with our local material recovery facility and Recycling Connections we created youth- friendly and school specific recycling and trash posters and placed them on every bin in the school. Educational materials about recycling were sent home to families to support classroom efforts and Green & Healthy coordinators met with every teacher to answer questions about recycling. An all-school assembly was held to kick off the effort and students were shown how to properly recycle common items such as juice boxes/straws, various types of paper products and plastics. Also emphasized was the importance of keeping the school grounds clean to support wildlife. Resources were also made available on the school website for staff and families to access. Our goal is for students to become proficient in classroom recycling (and staff in the lounge) so that we can expand our efforts to the cafeteria, a more challenging and less supervised location where students often struggle with waste reduction.

Second grade community curriculum covers community recycling and how communities should recycle. The 5th grade students at McDill visit the Portage County Materials Recovery Center each fall. They get to see the workers separating recyclables on conveyors and see where McDill's milk cartons and other recyclables go. They also learn about where the bales of recycled materials go after they leave Portage County and what those materials are made into.

Other actions that help reduce waste include controlled student printing, encouraging reuse of materials for art classes and projects, and hanging student-created posters that encourage waste reduction and recycling in the hallways.

Element 1C: Use of alternative transportation

Focus Area: Transportation

In 2016, the District's busing fleet was equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) capabilities which enabled the District to more efficiently route students to school, monitor idling costs, and monitor excessive idling (when parked and running). Idling is one area that can cost districts money and pollute the air with emissions. Four years after implementation of the routing software, the district is averaging 100,000 fewer miles per year, which reduces fuel costs and wear and tear of the vehicle. Drivers are informed of idling times. The district also bid on 10 propane buses to replace 10 diesel buses. These buses are much cleaner than diesel buses. The School Board approved the purchase of these buses at the meeting on 2/10/20; expected delivery is after 7/1/20.

The school conducted an internal transportation audit which showed approximately 24 percent of students walk or bike to school and 60% of students (250) bus to school on four buses. At the Meet the Teacher night/Back to School night each fall, the bus drivers and a bus is available for students to become familiar with their drivers and how to safely ride a bus.

Twice a year, students and staff are encouraged to participate in the national Walk and Bike to School days (once in the fall and once in the spring). Students take home information about the benefits of walking, biking, carpooling, and busing to school to share with their families. This information is also posted in the school newsletters which is sent via email to all families, posted on the school website, and on the school's Facebook page. When students arrive to school that day, there are refreshments available for them and they either get a small token of encouragement/appreciation or a ticket for a variety of drawing items (including a new bike and bike helmets!).

On the letter that goes to families to prepare for the Walk to School events, it does indicate that every school bus on the road eliminates the pollution emitted from approx. 36 cars, which provides cleaner air we all breathe.

Students who ride the bus are also recognized and celebrated as having taken sustainable transportation. In April/May of each year, students participate in Walk Across Wisconsin, an event that gets students active during lunchtime recess. Their mileage is accumulated at the end of a 1 or 2-week period. In 2015, students walked 2,513.75 miles in two weeks! This event prepares students for the Walk Wisconsin event that takes place on the Green Circle Trail in Stevens Point. McDill's event has evolved over the years and is now called Walk McDill or Walk for McDill. It is now a one-day event that raises funds for our playground. Before the event, students secure pledges from their community (X$ per lap). This event mimics Race for Education.

McDill has the second smallest transportation footprint in the district so should be one of the most walkable/bikeable distance-wise. We continue to encourage walking/biking to school and come up with solutions to the barriers. In the fall of 2015, families were encouraged to complete a neighborhood "Walkability Checklist" provided by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. This checklist was used to focus on the safety of neighborhood streets and paths that get students to friends' houses, school, etc. As students went through the checklist with their families, they learned about sustainable transportation options and the importance of using sustainable transportation.

Another audit that took place included Geodesign students from UW-Stevens Point. For the same week (Oct. 3-7), UWSP students positioned themselves in strategic locations around the school at busy intersections/crosswalks. They counted the number of students walking/biking to school and where those students were coming from. Because we cannot obtain this information from the district due to privacy concerns, the UWSP students recorded if McDill students were crossing busy roads so they can help us determine safe routes to school. The Geodesign team completed three sets of analytics regarding transportation within the McDill School district boundary. During their presentation to us, they provided:

- Bicycle and pedestrian counts during the week leading up to Walk or Bike to School Day.
- Inventory and analysis of sign infrastructure to foster informed/predictable transportation.
- Traffic counts of automobile traffic on streets within the McDill district boundary. This analysis has been animated with a time sequence to show traffic variability throughout the day.

The school offers:

- Bike racks, showers, lockers, and/or other bike amenities.
- Consistent, clear communications to families regarding transportation options and policies.

- Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.
- A plan to regularly review bus routing to optimize passenger/miles driven ratios
- School bus contracts include restricted idling and/or use of newer, retrofitted or alternative-fuel powered buses.

There are a core group of students each year who become cadets/crossing guards. They wear safety vests and have signs they put into the streets to caution drivers of students. They assist in stopping traffic and helping people to cross safely. They also have the ability to make note of issues and report them to the office/their cadet advisor who will take appropriate steps to rectify any safety situations.

The PE Teacher attended a Safe Communities workshop in the summer of 2016. She networked and collaborated with other Stevens Point and Plover community members to educate the McDill community on the quality of the walking and biking paths for our students. The PE Teacher and other McDill parents attended a township of Whiting meeting to advocate for restriping a road that runs right through the McDill School Zone to include a bike lane on each side. They also notified and encouraged parents to attend the Village of Whiting meeting when the topic of restriping was on the agenda. The restriping did not occur, however, a turning lane was added as well as a median on another key road and a crosswalk was added.

All 2nd graders get to go on a tour on board the city bus so they can become familiar with how to ride the city bus for future need.

Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness
Element 2A: Integrated school environmental health program

Focus Area: Environmental Health

The school has a formal health and safety program and takes action to improve contaminant control and ventilation including:

- preventing exposure to asthma triggers such as mold, dust, and pet dander
- an asthma management program that is consistent with the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program's (NAEPP) Asthma Friendly Schools Guidelines
- moisture resistant materials/ protective systems installed (i.e. flooring, tub/shower, backing, and piping),
- combustion appliances that are annually inspected to ensure they are not releasing carbon monoxide OR not applicable - the school does not have combustion appliances
- if needed, things are taken outside when necessary, such as spray painting, etc. Since we are an elementary school, we do not work with any caustic materials with students

McDill does have labs using chemicals and students and staff use engineering controls such as fume hoods and wear personal protective equipment as necessary. The science teachers are responsible for chemical management in the school and the school has a documented chemical hygiene plan. Prior to purchasing chemicals for any purpose, less hazardous alternatives are considered and we have a chemical purchasing policy that supports low or no-VOC products and substitution when less hazardous alternatives are available.

We select third-party certified green cleaning products and all cleaning supplies and chemicals are kept in a storage area not accessible to students. The district has not used bleach in about six years due to its corrosiveness and possible hazard to health. Instead, they use 3M Peroxide Cleaner for floors, toilets, tabletops, etc. This is a GreenSeal certified cleaner. The custodians use vinegar on entrance mats to extract salt, instead of a harsh chemical like Lime-Away. Currently, the school is removing all terrazo and

fritz tile (some of it original to the building) which requires a lot of maintenance such as stripping and waxing, which uses a lot of harsh chemicals (and takes a lot of time and money). They are replacing the old flooring with ceramic tile floors which doesn't need to be stripped and waxed. Although it was more in upfront costs, the district understands that the payback will be short without having to purchase all the chemicals (and time saved!).

According to the Environmental Working Group, a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting human health and the environment, Clorox Disinfecting Bleach Wipes are rated as a "D", which indicates likely hazards to health or the environment and may also have poor ingredient disclosure, so the majority of staff began using Norwex Antibacterial clothes. These cloths were purchased with PTO funds. This success was highlighted in the January 2016 Green & Healthy Schools newsletter. Unlike cotton cloths that will spread the dirt, grease and other particles around, Norwex Antibac Microfiber, when used wet, lifts these particles up into the cloth and away from the surface. Once inside the cloth, the micro silver in the cloth goes to work with self-purification properties against the mold, fungi and bacterial odor within 24 hours, so that it is ready to use again. All Norwex Microfiber is backed with an exceptional 2-year warranty. McDill staff and families felt like this was an opportunity to decrease exposure to possible toxic substances.

Wisconsin does not require radon testing. The Department of Health Services tested 341 homes in this area and the median radon level was 3.75 with more than 50% of the homes at or below 4 pCi/L.

The school contracts with a licensed pesticide applicator to deal with ants. Pesticides are only applied when students aren't present and posts a notice at the time of pesticide application and for at least 72 hours following application. Our school prohibits students from entering a treated area for at least 8 hours after the treatment or longer if required by the pesticide label. Our school makes available copies of pesticide labels, copies of notices, material safety data sheets (MSDS) and annual summaries of pesticide application in an accessible location.

Element 2B: Nutrition & Fitness

Focus Area: Health & Wellness

The school promotes nutrition, physical activity and overall school health:

- participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.
- all foods and beverages sold during the school day meet the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards and we have policy for healthy classroom snacks.
- participates in Farm to School activities, including local food procurement
- prohibits advertising and promotion of less nutritious foods and beverages on school property.
- has a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) or school wellness committee.
- has implemented a comprehensive school physical activity program (CDC) or implemented the DPI Active Schools: Core 4+.
- has a Fuel Up to Play 60 program (National Dairy Council and NFL).
- has on-site indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities available to students, staff, and the community.
- offers opportunities for students to be physically active outside of physical education classes (e.g., recess, open gym, before/after school programs, classroom activity breaks).
- has a Let's Move Active Schools program (SHAPE America and Alliance for a Healthier Generation.
- promotes or supports walking and bicycling to school.
- promotes hand washing for staff and students.

- has Physical Education curriculum based on state standards and grade-level outcomes for physical education.

McDill's Health and Wellness staff member who participates on the District's Health and Wellness Committee runs a wellness staff appreciation event which includes healthy food. There are wellness "challenges" which include healthy eating and forming better habits. Staff can get a salad every day. Periodically throughout the year, two massage therapists come to McDill in the morning and staff can sign up and pay for a 15-minute session before the work day. Incentives through insurance company to reduce cost of insurance—either a credit or deductions from premiums.

Classes are encouraged to have healthy snacks during their celebrations. McDill's PTO organized a Smart Snack Drive in the fall of 2016 to encourage families to bring in Smart Snacks to help restock classrooms who are running low. This also alleviates the pressure from families who cannot afford to purchase additional snacks throughout the year and/or provides healthier snacks than may normally be provided by families.

It is policy that 40% of the staff be trained in CPR/First Aid by the Red Cross. The school performs monthly drills for fire, tornado, etc.

McDill has a school nurse, social worker, and Psychologist. On-site mental health/behavior counseling is also provided by an outside agency through a memo-of-understanding (MOU).

Every class gets at least a 20-minute recess time to run and play during the day, but most days they have two recesses plus the morning/before school play time. Phy Ed has lessons on nutrition throughout the school year and spends many days outside. Students attending McDill engage in physical activity at least three times weekly under the direction of a licensed physical education teacher through diverse activities including 45-minute physical education classes, McDill Forest Outdoor Activities, Classroom Brain-Breaks, Coordinated All School Physical Fitness/Healthy Eating Opportunities and Family Activities. Physical Education teacher received Formal Educator of the Year from the Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education (WAEE) in 2017.

McDill has a 5-acre forest that has trails which are utilized for physical education. In the winter, students snowshoe and ski on the trails; in the fall and spring, they use the trails for walking/running. 5th and 6th Graders participate in a city-wide track and field meet every year. In the fall, students and staff participate in the Green Apple Day of Service, which gets people active by raking, weeding, and other activities to improve school grounds.

Staff coordinate a Student Running Club and lead students on walking field trips. If learning activities are within a certain mile range, they will walk there instead of taking the bus. Four staff were officially trained in Brain Gym which involves Smart Moves. This schoolyear (2019/20), four staff are participating in a movement break pilot funded by and involving UWSP Physical Education practicum students. These practicum students have set up classroom movement breaks for McDill students. Staff received training in RCPI (non-violent crisis prevention training) to de-escalate someone before they get to a violent/physical state.

Visits from Farm to School staff, local chefs, and the Spudmobile teach students about the importance of Wisconsin farmers and healthy local, sustainable food.

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

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

Focus Area: Environmental & Sustainability Education

Every student at McDill engages in indoor and outdoor environmental education throughout the year. McDill has a 5.2 acre forest on school grounds! There are trails through the forest and the community is encouraged to use the trails. There are two outdoor classrooms (one with picnic tables, a white board, and a podium and one with stump seating) for classes to utilize. Teachers use the centralized courtyard more often than the woods because of proximity. The courtyard has picnic tables, and water feature (pond/waterfall), and vegetation/trees. Teachers are encouraged to grab the Outdoor Classroom backpack from the office (which includes a first aid kit, clipboard, writing utensils, dry erase markers, eraser and eraser spray, magnets, and a class list for each teacher including emergency contact information) and head out whenever they are able to. All students regularly use the McDill school forest and trails during Physical Education classes for running/walking and snowshoeing and skiing and visit the Boston School Forest (in the school district) twice each year.

In the classroom, students are engaged through a variety of ways:
In Kindergarten, teachers model many sustainable behaviors as well as provide opportunities for students to explore their environment and their impact on their environment, including:

- Teach students about recycling and practice recycling every day (using well-labeled recycling bins in classrooms and lunch room)
- Provide Science Stations that include samples and opportunities to explore plants, animals, and other natural items found in the environment
- Go outside to explore the apple orchard (right outside the door!), butterfly garden, and school forest
- Provide lessons/units on planting, bird feeders/birds, animal habitats, and keeping our earth clean
- Turning lights off when we leave the classroom (modeling sustainable behaviors)
- Opening windows for fresh air
- Keeping classroom door closed to retain heat inside classroom
- Using natural light from the windows often instead of overhead lights
- Students plant sunflower and bean seeds in the community garden (pumpkins in the past)

Kindergarten students use the north side of the school for exploration and physical activity due to the proximity to their classrooms. This space features grass, apple trees, and a butterfly garden. In 2015, McDill was one of only two schools who registered for the WGBA 30x15 Challenge in 2015 with Mrs. Schoof's kindergarten class participating in the Tree Story activity for the Challenge.

In first grade, a continuation of modeling sustainable behaviors and emphasizing why we do certain things, continues from kindergarten. First graders harvest the sunflower seeds and beans that the kindergartners plant in the spring and use these natural items for sorting, categorizing, counting, etc. Other environmental education lessons and actions include:

- automatic/motion sensor lights
- modeling recycling, including paper, milk cartons, and markers, and emphasizing these lessons for Earth Day
- reusing glue bottles
- encouraging reusable water bottles (all students bring these as they are on our class materials list)
- have community members discuss environmental topics

In second grade, students learn about the water cycle and how water moves on Earth. In 2017, 2nd grade students performed a skit/play for the kindergartners about the water cycle. Second graders also used environment-related texts for their literacy lessons. Second graders plant and maintain butterfly and prairie gardens. In the fall of 2016, the second grade students formed a partnership with the Portage

County Master Gardeners; one master gardener came in and helped all second grade students plant milkweed in the butterfly garden. An ongoing relationship continues with the local chapter of Wild Ones which has enabled for Natural Resources Foundation to provide a field trip for their members to McDill to view our butterfly/pollinator gardens. In fall 2019, made posters for the Portage County Land and Water Conservation District focused bees and pollinators.

Each year, UWSP Environmental Education/Interpretation students visit classes at McDill and teach lessons ranging from wildlife to water to insects. Many of the classes visit the two outdoor classrooms in the school forest for their lessons. One lesson included making outdoor shelters in the woods as part of their survival lesson.

In fourth grade, students learn about Wisconsin's lumber industry and forests by a historical interpretation done by a retired history teacher. He is the culminating guest speaker and ties all that they've learned together by bringing in old tools, demonstrating the 2-person saw, and showing a slide show about the history of lumbering in Wisconsin. Fourth grade students take a field trip to Historic Point Basse where they learn about life in the 1800's - they make candles, play old games, and learn other skills that relate to living sustainably (then and now).

Fifth grade students all go on a field trip to the Portage County recycling facility to learn about waste management, and also visit the Plover water department. Fifth grade students also get to have an overnight experience at Boston School Forest. The fifth grade students are the only ones in the District who stay overnight at the school forest. They have a campfire and spend a lot of time on the ropes course.

In 6th grade, students visit Boston School Forest to learn about solar energy. Teachers have pre- activities they do before their trip to the School Forest which is at the end of March. We write persuasive papers later in the year which includes research on a topic of the students' choice. Some students choose a topic related to environmental issues (E.g. a few students last year wrote about why we shouldn't use plastic straws or plastic bags) which was the result of reading the book "Plastic Ahoy! Investigating the Great Pacific Garbage Patch" by Patricia Newman. We then complete research on how to solve the problem of plastic recyclables and their effects on the environment. Students brainstorm a list each year and many are environmental topics. Teachers are working on adding more non-fiction reading lessons, some articles will relate to environmental issues as we work on informational text. In science, students try to reuse materials whenever possible such as using recycled water bottles to make blood models recently. Students also dissect deer hearts which are gathered from local hunters. Last year, students reused paper towel tubes to make models of muscles. 6th graders are strict followers of the recycling plan that our school follows. The teachers also pick things out of the garbage and discuss the importance of having the correct "garbage" in the right containers. Usually by the middle of the year, students are picking recyclables out of the garbage and asking who threw the recycling in the garbage.

To celebrate Earth Day each year, the librarian actively communicates environmental literacy through various ways including a selection of environmental books showcased during the month of April. In 2016, the librarian received a $100 grant from the Bill Cook Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America to purchase books with a Conservation/Environmental theme. In addition, K-5 students are invited to design a bookmark on an environmental topic which can be entered into a bookmark contest between K-1, 2-3, and 4-5. Every student gets one of the winning bookmarks. Over 40 bookmark entries were received the first year (2017) and participation grows each year. The library also has hands-on exploratory stations/maker spaces for the students including one on Electric Circuits! This supports increasing environmental literacy during library time in more ways than just reading.

We announced McDill as a Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin "Sprout school" at a school wide assembly on Earth Day, April 22, 2015. Students were encouraged to wear green that day and a whole

school photo was taken. The GHS message was integrated into the main message of the assembly which was focused on PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports) and the word of the month: Self Control. Multiple skits were performed highlighting self-control and how controlling your actions were healthy behaviors, supporting the GHS initiative.

On Earth Day 2016, McDill hosted their first Candlelight Hike in the woods which was the official unveiling of the woods and new trail names. The students had suggested trail names for the McDill school woods and then voted on them as a student body on ballots (to mimic the real voting process) and the winning names were revealed at an all-school assembly. Technology Education students from the high school etched the winning trail names into Cedar board for the sign. All the partners—the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board (WEEB) who provided the grant, the Eagle Scout who made the display board and podium, the Plover-Whiting Lions Club who donated picnic tables, the District grounds staff who installed the posts, and the SPASH students and teacher were recognized for their contributions. Six UWSP students in the Environmental Education and Interpretation program helped at the Earth Day event by providing guided interpretive walks through the woods, playing prey/predator games, and doing nature-related crafts (i.e. pine cone bird feeders). There was also a Great Horned Owl at the event to teach people about raptors, and Green & Healthy School-related Science Fair projects were also on display.

For Earth Day 2017, UW-Stevens Point students coordinated an Owl Prowl for McDill families. This was prompted due to a Barred Owl sighting in the McDill School Forest in the winter of 2017. A local raptor center came with an educational Great Horned Owl and called in the resident Barred Owl. The UWSP students provided supplies to make owl masks. Approximately 30 students and 20 adults participated in this event. At least two other owl events were conducted in 2018 and 2019 due to the popularity of the live birds. One event featured live birds and the dissection of owl pellets.

In 2018, a project initiated by the school librarian created a permanent storywalk in the school forest. Three grants were acquired to purchase 20 metal posts and frames to hold the story pages as well as signage and tools to maintain the trails. Four times per year, the librarian places a new story in the panels and creates a grade specific learning guide for teachers to use with the storywalk. The physical education teacher creates physical action cards to accompany the story and places them on each panel to combine reading with movement and encourage cross-disciplinary learning. Students and volunteers created the path for the storywalk and resurface the trails annually. All classes are able to use the storywalk with classroom teachers, the librarian and the physical education teacher. Families and neighbors are encouraged to use the storywalk during special events at school and after school hours.

In 2019, as a response to teacher request, Leopold benches were installed in the McDill school forest to provide seating for even the largest of our school classes. The benches were funded by the PTO and built by Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts. Also in 2019 a new seating area with shade was donated by a school family for use in the courtyard area. Our 2019 Earth Day Family Event consisted of multiple bird-themed stations located throughout the McDill School Forest. Students could dissect owl pellets, learn to use binoculars in a bird identification seek and find, create paper bird art and interact with a live Barred Owl and Turkey Vulture.

Students at McDill engage in citizen science. The school has been hosting a SnapShot Wisconsin camera from the DNR for four years. Photos from the camera are shared with students and families via our school Facebook page and on a bulletin board in the school building. In 2019, six bluebird nesting boxes were installed on the school grounds. First grade students had weekly lessons about nesting birds and monitored the boxes to collected data as part of the annual Audubon Bluebird monitoring project. Weekly updates about nesting progress were shared with staff, students and families.

McDill hosts a variety of outdoor family education events to encourage families to explore outdoors with their children and showcase outdoor resources at our school with support from volunteers with expertise in various fields such as wildlife tracking, astronomy, maple syruping, owls and gardens. A large Earth Day celebration drew over 100 students and families to the school forest to participate in hands-on activities such as binocular bird identification and owl pellet dissection.

In addition to all the rich professional development previously described, eighteen McDill teachers participated in a LEAF and Project Learning Tree (PLT) workshop at the school to encourage the use of the school grounds including the woods and courtyard in all subject areas and grade levels and teachers have participated in workshops at the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair and from Green & Healthy Schools.

Element 3B: Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills

Focus Area: Environmental & Sustainability Education

Students can be involved in two after-school clubs that both have sustainability activities integrated: STEM Club (grades 4-6) and a Junior STEM Club (grades 2-3). They learn and implement different strategies for behavior, thinking and change and do many environmental-related projects, such as building ecosystems in a jar.

Annually, students participate in a science fair that integrates STEM thinking and sustainability:

- For the 2016 Science Fair, students received a kick-off presentation from Advanced Disposal staff (the school's waste and recycling hauler) who focused on recycling and waste management. Students had the option of having their Science Fair project relate to Green & Healthy Schools and 22 groups (some groups included 2-3 students) did! Projects focused on recycling, energy consumption at McDill and how many solar panels would be needed to offset energy consumption, magnetic levitation vehicles, healthy foods, etc. These groups received a Green & Healthy School ribbon to display on their project.
- For the 2017 Science Fair, UW-Stevens Point students presented on water quality and the importance of groundwater for the kick-off event. Again, students had the option of having their Science Fair project relate to Green & Healthy Schools and 25 groups (some groups included 2-3 students) did.
- For the 2018 Science Fair, Sara Windjue from the WCEE and two UWSP Env. Ed. students provided a demonstration and presentation about energy and sources of energy. It included the Pedal Power energy bike, which was also set-up as part of the community night science fair so students and their families could get onto the bike and learn about energy efficiency and conservation.
- 2019 Science Fair focused on composting and encouraged student projects related to composting.
- 2020 Science Fair will be focused on Citizen Science Monitoring. We will share the bluebird box project, as well as monarch tagging, and other ways students can collect data at school and at home.
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Element 3C: Development and application of civic knowledge and skills

Focus Area: Community Involvement

In the fall of 2017, we started a Green and Healthy Student ambassadors club for students grades 4-6, led by a UWSP Environmental Education/Interp student. They met once a week for 8 weeks. Each week they focused on something new. They learned about a new environmental concept, participated in physical activities to improve our school grounds, etc. During one of the meetings, they helped plant milkweed

around our school. This club continued in the spring 2018 semester, led by an Education major from UWSP. Grades K-3 are invited to join the last four weeks of the club and the older students will mentor the younger ones. Students can also be involved in the Student Council. There are approximately 50 students that get involved outside of the school day in environmentally focused activities.

McDill engages students at every grade level in service projects every year. Students design and hang posters around the school that encourage sustainable behaviors such as turning off the lights and water and recycling. Students provide services to individuals in a senior living facility. Students from each grade level visit the facility monthly to play games with the residents. They also make cards for the residents each year around the Thanksgiving holiday which brings smiles to these individuals' faces. Students also make door decorations for individual room doors and go caroling there during the holidays. Students walk to this facility when they can and bus when the weather isn't cooperative. This partnership provides students with an opportunity to give-back to their elders which increases students' self-worth. This activity, along with other community activities, makes the students feel good which directly relates to the health and wellness. It also increases the happiness of our larger community.

First grade students put together a "birthday-in-a-bag" for families at local domestic violence shelters who may not otherwise have the ability to purchase supplies for their children's birthday; these bags contain cake mix and frosting and a birthday banner. Second grade students visit the local animal shelter and learn about adopting animals; they then make "I'm an adopter" medallions that are given to families who adopt a pet. Third graders collect games and fund raise to develop activity packages for kids who have long-term stays at the Marshfield Clinic. Fifth grade students raise money for an honor flight and/or other needs/care packages to troops overseas. Students schoolwide make valentine cards on recycled paper.

McDill has been participating in the Green Apple Day of Service annually since 2015. Our first year, efforts were focused on raking, clearing, and lining trails with branches and small trees. In 2016, it became a whole-school effort and included various projects across the school grounds integrated in art class, Phy Ed, and all grade levels. Each year a team of volunteers works with students who come out with their teachers throughout the day to clear brush, edge trails and woodchip trails. The kindergarten and second grade students weeded gardens and prepared them for fall planting of native prairie plants including milk weed. Third graders worked in the courtyard and weeded and sanded the picnic tables to prepare the space for outdoor learning. Fifth grade students did chalk writing outside the school promoting Green Apple Day and Green & Healthy Schools. And sixth grade students weeded the wood chip areas around the school. From 2017-2019, the Phy Ed teacher and Librarian have partnered up to make sure that between their two classes, all students get into the forest to help on this day. Due to the addition of the Story Walk in 2018, the Librarian has a taken ownership of this new resource and has students help care for the story panels, the trails, and help change the story throughout the year.

Along with all the previously listed activities, staff participate in Operation Bootstrap, an all volunteer social service agency unique to Portage County that helps families with basic needs in crisis situations and offers assistance that is not available elsewhere in the community. Operation Bootstrap is the principle food bank for Portage County, providing food for approximately 500 people a day.

As needed, staff do what they can to assist families in need by providing donations and attending fundraisers and community events. McDill's Educational Assistants put together two baskets for families in need. Staff participate in various run/walks in the area as fundraisers for nonprofits and during the holidays can be found ringing bells for the local Salvation Army.

The PTO has a staff appreciation committee which caters lunches and provides snacks for the staff each month. There are also drawings that include donations from local businesses. All of these activities increase the moral of the staff and make McDill a happier and healthier place to be.

McDill has a strong Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) which provides many family-focused events throughout the year including movie night, bowling, skating, a scavenger hunt, etc. Each year, the PTO organizes education nights for families, such as the outdoor events described earlier and one specifically focused on how to read to and with a child. The PTO also coordinates a fall fundraiser which raises over $30,000 (gross) which allows us to engage with families in multiple activities. This organization has embraced the Green & Healthy Schools mentality and has added a line-item in their budget to support GHS initiatives and events, such as the Bike/Walk to School Day, Green Apple Day of Service, Walk McDill, Earth Day, Candlelight Hike, marker and milk carton recycling, and more! Without the PTO, there wouldn't be funds to support GHS projects. The PTO also coordinates the apparel order and added the GHS logo to one of the items available for purchase, to show that McDill is a GHS! Because of the strength of the PTO and the funds available for the school, students are able to participate in multiple field trips each year, many of them focused on the environment and sustainability.

McDill staff and parent/community partner attended the 2018 State Educational Convention in Milwaukee and exhibited in the Sustainable Schools Pavilion. Two students showcased health and wellness by inviting school board members and administrators to participate in yoga, GoNoodle, and other active brain break activities as well as shared how they use their school forest trails for skiing and snowshoeing. Two teachers and two students exhibited at the 2019 Energy Fair in the Educator Tent to showcase GHS efforts!

Another strong partnership is with multiple departments from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point referenced throughout this document, including the UWSP Mascot and student athletes from the athletic department, Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education and the College of Natural Resources, and the Music Dept. provides private encouragement lessons. This direct connection to UWSP gives students a broad view of the opportunities that exist at UWSP.

McDill has a strong connection with Advanced Disposal, the company who hauls the trash and recycling. In addition to the Advanced Disposal employees kicking off the Science Fair, they have provided posters and are in constant communication regarding the milk carton recycling program. Each year, the 5th grade classes visit the Materials Recovery Facility to learn where our recycled materials go and what happens to them after that.

The school also benefits from the partnership they have with the Woodlands Church. Each year, 30+ volunteers work at the school during their annual "Spring Into Action" clean-up day. This day may include painting the inside of the school, mulching plantings, digging a long-jump pit for Physical Education classes, and cleaning up the Courtyard (weeding and cleaning the water feature/pond). Each year, the work varies but there is always a large showing of volunteers.

We have many other community partnerships that support education of McDill students:

- Chess, Knitting and Math Clubs are run by community volunteers.
- Junior Achievement run by Portage County Business Council (Partners in Education - PIE)
- Community bankers visit to talk about finance
- Community members give talks on alcohol and drug abuse and about living healthy lifestyles.
- Local Whiting Fire Department visits to share fire safety (and general safety) practices.
- Local Red Cross - provides CPR/First Aid training to staff
- Worzella Publishing - We receive cast-off paper from end-rolls (unused product)-saves from the landfill