



District Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

CERTIFICATIONS

District's Certifications

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

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

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

Name of Superintendent:

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

District Name:

(As it should appear on an award)

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

Digitally signed by Dr. James Elsasser
DN: cn=Dr. James Elsasser, o=Claremont Unified School District,
ou=Superintendent of Schools, email=jelsasser@cusd.claremont.edu,
c=US
Date: 2023.12.08 10:17:14 -08'00'

Date:

(Superintendent's Signature)



Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the 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:

Name of Nominating Authority:

(Specify: Ms., 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Thurmond".

Date:

(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: October 31, 2026

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.



Claremont Unified School District

California District Nominee to
U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools



Prepared By:
California Department of Education
School Facilities and Transportation Services Division
[Green Ribbon Schools Award Program](#)
January 2024

PART II – SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Claremont Unified School District, Livermore, Calif.

Site Auditing, District Planning, and Strategic Community Partnerships Unite the District Around a Sustainable Mission

Claremont Unified School District (CUSD) has several board policies to guide the district's commitment to sustainability, environmental literacy, and school community wellness. In 2009, the district collaborated with a sustainability consulting company and hired a district energy manager to monitor energy use. With these two initiatives, the district changed the behavior of staff and students and reduced energy consumption by over 19% in six years. Most district schools feature programs that divert waste from landfills by recycling and composting. All CUSD schools have gardens and many feature outdoor learning environments. Schools focus on environmental learning, including studying the world's biomes, revitalizing green spaces, and honoring the local indigenous peoples' resourcefulness with natural resources. The district collaborates with the community organization Sustainable Claremont to consult on sustainable district initiatives and support the care of the gardens. Claremont High School offers four sections of Environmental Science and a list of environmental community projects. Fifth-grade students engage in a nine-week Leadership in Environmental Education Partnership project at neighboring Claremont College to learn from college students in outdoor labs and engage in real-time research.

PART III – DOCUMENTATION OF STATE EVALUATION OF DISTRICT NOMINEE

Pillar I: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

Element IA: Energy

- CUSD has board policies to manage business and noninstructional operations, including plans to make fiscally sound and environmentally friendly purchases and provide a high-quality school environment. The policies establish effective and sustainable resource practices, explore renewable and clean energy technologies, reduce energy and water consumption, minimize utility costs, reduce the amount of waste of consumable materials, encourage recycling practices, and promote conservation principles.
- CUSD has an agreement with a local organization, *Sustainable Claremont*, to find the most environmentally friendly approach to all projects in the district. In the 2023 – 2024 school year, *Sustainable Claremont* and CUSD's Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations Department collaborated to audit each school site's facilities to ensure the district is current in sustainable practices.
- From 2009 to 2015, CUSD partnered with sustainability consulting company Cenergistic and hired an energy manager to monitor energy usage at school sites. The collaborative effort reduced the district's energy usage by 19.42%, resulting in \$2,024,530 in savings. The collaboration also led to a 19% decrease in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, comparable to the environmental impact of abstaining from driving 347 cars for a year. This reduction is equivalent to planting 42,681 tree seedlings and letting them grow for ten years or removing 1,639 million metric tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
- In 2011, the district achieved an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR portfolio average energy performance score of 92 out of 100. The district currently

monitors data in-house to monitor energy conservation and make recommendations to school sites. Many policies and procedures developed during the collaboration with Cenergistic are still active today.

- In 2017, CUSD installed solar panels on each campus and the district office, covering roughly 75% of its energy use. As facility upgrades occur, the district's ability to cover closer to 100% of energy use with solar panels is increasing. Over 25 years, the project is expected to eliminate 23,000 tons of carbon emissions, saving \$6 million.
- According to reports from the solar company, from 2020 – 2023, CUSD's solar panels have produced over 11 million kilowatt hours. This is the equivalent of 1,079 passenger cars not driven for one year, 80,138 tree seedlings grown for ten years, or 4,847 metric tons of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere.
- Besides solar generation, CUSD acquires approximately 25% of its energy from the local utility SCE. Complying with statewide regulations, SCE will ensure that it will source 50% of its energy portfolio from renewable sources by 2030. As of 2022, SCE indicates that 48.7% of its energy is renewable.
- CUSD successfully passed a \$58 million local bond dedicated to upgrading facilities. Following board policies, all construction for facility upgrades prioritizes environmental sustainability to the highest fiscal extent possible. The district has taken significant steps to enhance energy efficiency and implement green building standards. These improvements include the replacement of outdated portable classrooms with new modular buildings, the refurbishment of pools at two schools for improved energy and water efficiency, the restoration of the gym at the Claremont High School (CHS), and the installation of upgraded Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems for increased efficiency. Moreover, roof restoration and replacement across all sites complied with California's Title 24 energy efficiency standards.
- All new modular classrooms in CUSD meet the requirements of the California Green Buildings Standards Code (CALGreen). Features of the classrooms included cool roofs, daylight sensors, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-sourced lumber, low or no-volatile organic compounds (VOCs) adhesives, sealants, paint, flooring, ceilings and wall coverings, and recycled materials for thermal insulation, ceiling systems, flooring systems, and structural steel.
- As future renovations occur on campuses, all new roofs on the 54 modular buildings at all seven elementary schools are California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) compliant to increase energy efficiency. The roofs also meet Cool Roof Rating Council requirements.
- CUSD used Proposition 39 (California Clean Energy Jobs Act) funding to replace every light fixture in every building with a light-emitting diode (LED) T8 light.
- Windows on school campuses and at the district office are energy-efficient and double-paned. Additionally, new modular classrooms have daylight sensors to conserve light energy.
- Mountain View Elementary School (Mountain View) and CHS have new HVAC units. School sites monitor HVAC units, setting temperatures according to energy efficiency markers.

Element IB: Water and Grounds

- CUSD meters water usage for indoor and outdoor water together. Between 2020 and 2022, CUSD reported an 11% decrease in water usage. In 2020, CUSD measured an

annual water usage of 102,525 centum cubic feet (CCF). In 2022, for the same yearly period, CUSD decreased the water usage to 91,514 CCF.

- CUSD, through bond projects, implemented various renovations to decrease water consumption, which include the following:
 - The district upgraded landscaping at all sites and replaced non-athletic grass areas with drought-tolerant landscaping at several sites.
 - CUSD reduces the amount of water wasted from evaporation by connecting all outdoor *Cyber Rain* irrigation controllers to the National Weather Service to monitor water needs.
 - All school sites have new energy-efficient drinking fountains. The new fountains reduce water usage by addressing water leaks from old fountains.
 - The district upgraded outdated, inefficient plumbing materials at all sites.
- Three elementary schools partner with the local water company, Golden State Water, and host water education assemblies for students to learn about conservation efforts. In these assemblies, each student leaves with a new low-flow showerhead to take home and install.
- Oakmont Outdoor School (Oakmont) and CHS have taken advantage of city rainwater capture bucket giveaways and collect rainwater to water plants at the site level.
- CUSD's landscape is an integral part of the community. Since 2014, the district has prioritized upgrading irrigation systems within its vast campus landscaping to reduce water usage.
- CUSD takes advantage of runoff and captures water to divert to plant beds.
- Bond construction has led to the replanting of campus landscapes, with 100% of new plantings prioritizing water efficiency, drought tolerance, and regional appropriateness.

Element IC: Waste

- CUSD contracts with WARE Disposal (WARE) for all trash pickups. WARE's policy is to collect all trash and sort recyclables at the disposal site. Certification from WARE states that the company recycles 70% of waste received at its site. Because of this policy, CUSD cannot calculate monthly recycling or monthly composting in cubic yards.
- Many schools separate recyclable items from their waste stream before sending them out for trash collection to raise money for site-wide ecological initiatives. Schools also choose to compost lunch waste at the site for school gardens. WARE works with the school to track the amount of waste they recycle for the district. According to WARE, CUSD generates 17.68 tons of recycled materials per month, which equals 212.16 tons annually.
- CUSD reduces service during summer, fall, spring, and winter breaks. Additionally, during the summer, operations are concentrated at four sites so the district can reduce the use of the other six sites.
- Three schools in CUSD are composting waste regularly. For example, Oakmont Outdoor School has a composting project with its primary classes in conjunction with its Discovery STEAM lab. The students in these classes work with the school to establish waste-sorting practices. The students and teachers maintain traditional compost bins and vermiculture bins. This school diverts all compostable food waste from school lunches to compost bins. The El Roble Intermediate School (El Roble) composts green waste produced in its garden to provide mulch for the garden itself. In addition, CHS

students partner with the non-profit organization Uncommon Good to maintain the school's garden and compost materials in that space.

- Four CUSD elementary schools participate in the *Grades of Green Trash Free Lunch Challenge*, which tracks the number of waste bags each site produces at lunch. The goal is to reduce lunch waste, and two of the four schools are becoming finalists in the program, with one school winning the Southern California competition for reducing daily lunch waste from 18 bags of trash per day to just two bags.
- CUSD properly disposes of batteries, electronics, and more. Third-party companies handle E-waste and hazardous materials, and schools dispose of science lab substances appropriately, with direct handling training for students and staff.
- CUSD orders certifiably sourced paper according to the *Sustainable Forestry Initiative*. The district also prioritizes recycled products when procuring materials for district schools and buildings when price, fitness, and quality are equal.
- CUSD's Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations (FMO) Department, including all maintenance and custodial staff, strives to purchase cleaning materials that are organic and environmentally friendly. All FMO employees receive training to use environmentally friendly products and work to ensure the least harm to people and the environment.
- As the district implements local bond-funded improvements, roofing upgrades incorporate materials validated by Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) Environment for recycled and bio-based content.

Element ID: Alternative Transportation

- Through student surveys and administrator observations at each school site, the district reports that 30% of their students carpool, 20% walk, 5% use the school bus, 3% use human-powered modes of transportation (i.e., bike, scooter, skateboard), and 2% use public transportation. Many students live outside of the school boundaries of Claremont Unified schools. Therefore, around 40% of the students not represented in these results receive rides from a family member without carpooling.
- CUSD campuses have bike racks and storage for skateboards and scooters. The City of Claremont also painted safe bike paths leading to the bike racks at individual school sites and is currently discussing ways to make Claremont even safer for bike riders.
- The district prioritizes the safety of students during their journey to and from school by employing multiple crossing guards at major intersections, a service funded by the City of Claremont. To further enhance safety measures, officers from the Claremont Police Department actively patrol school sites, sometimes taking on the role of additional crossing guards. The district also invests in installing traffic lights at intersections experiencing growing foot traffic, contributing to a comprehensive approach to safeguarding the well-being of students in the community.
- The Claremont Police Department comes to elementary schools yearly to provide safety assemblies for students, demonstrating the correct way to ride bikes and walk in the city.
- Chaparral Elementary School (Chaparral) has no idling signs at vehicle loading zones to remind community members to turn off their engines. Residents near school sites partner with the administration to ensure that 'no idling' policies are visibly posted and consistently referenced. The principal also mentions the idling policy in the school's newsletter.
- CUSD board policy mandates the reduction of exposure to diesel exhaust and other air contaminants by minimizing the unnecessary idling of school buses and other

commercial vehicles. Designated lots for school bus transportation are created with no community parking so buses have a safe space to pull in and turn off their engines. In addition, vehicle loading and unloading are at least 25 feet from building intakes, doors, and windows to ensure student safety and improve air quality.

- The district replaced 16 of the 21 district vehicles with leased vehicles to upgrade for energy and fuel efficiency. The district's new policy is to lease vehicles for five years and then replace the vehicle with a more efficient one, ensuring CUSD always has the most efficient vehicles.
- CUSD does not provide school bus transportation for its students, except for special education students receiving specialized transportation services. Otherwise, Claremont contracts with a local bus company for the remainder of student transportation services. The district's contracted bus company acquired two new electric buses and will add nine in the coming year.

Pillar II: Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

Element IIA: Environmental Health

- CUSD implements integrated pest management (IPM) by focusing on long-term prevention or suppression of pests through accurate identification, frequently monitoring for presence, applying appropriate action levels, and making the habitat less conducive to pests using sanitation, mechanical, and physical controls.
- The IPM coordinator and others make purchasing and IPM decisions while adhering to California's *Healthy Schools Act* requirements. The IPM coordinator monitors and inspects sites for pests and leading conditions. The district contracts an outside pest management service that conforms to the requirements of the *Healthy Schools Act*.
- Technicians document specific information about monitoring and inspecting for pests, such as locations, times, or techniques, in pesticide binders located in each school office. CUSD has an IPM plan made publicly available and reviewed annually.
- CUSD routinely uses non-chemical practices to prevent pests from reaching the action level. The district will consider pesticides only after non-chemical methods are ineffective and careful monitoring indicates they are needed. It will use pesticides that pose the least possible risk to people, pets, property, and the environment.
- CUSD prohibits smoking and vaping on all campuses. The district posts signs on every campus and employs a teacher to oversee the Tobacco-Use Prevention Education Program to ensure students understand the dangers of tobacco use.
- CUSD has a hazardous materials program. There are designated lockable metal cabinets labeled along with Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for gas, oil, and solvents. There is a shed where fertilizer and other organic landscaping treatments are housed separately from the main building as prescribed by Los Angeles County. The district contracts third-party companies for hazardous waste as needed.
- CUSD Board Policy mandates the safe handling of chemicals in CUSD schools, requiring labeling all containers with supplier information, including the substance's identity, hazard warning statements, and the chemical manufacturer's name and address. The new container must adhere to the same guidelines when transferring chemicals between containers.
- Most cleaning solutions are organic and green-certified, and CUSD prioritizes using these products whenever possible.

- Educational supplies such as art materials, science lab materials, and industrial supplies are properly stored, cleaned, and maintained. School custodian teams are instrumental in ensuring classroom environments are healthy.
- CUSD has a third-party company test whenever suspected lead or asbestos is present. The company takes care of removal and disposal if something is deemed hazardous. Additionally, the district reports directly to the local Air Quality Management District in case of asbestos removal per state mandates.
- During construction, remodeling, and routine maintenance, CUSD's FMO Department employees are diligently cautious of potential lead in paint and soil based on their knowledge of schools over 60 years old. District painters regularly respond to potential chipping paint on all campuses and maintain all paint throughout the year.
- CUSD kitchens use natural gas-burning stoves. All appliances are ENERGY STAR certified, and proper maintenance and ventilation protect staff members from carbon monoxide. Through the bond project, CUSD removed all aged playgrounds at every elementary site and replaced them with structures without wood.
- According to CUSD policy, district personnel routinely assess school facilities to identify and address environmental health risks. The district has a comprehensive plan to prevent and mitigate hazards, focusing on ensuring good indoor air quality. This plan involves effective maintenance operations to reduce dust, mold, mildew, and other contaminants. The district employs a dedicated team of custodians to maintain clean classrooms. Custodians receive regular training, and a trained team of substitutes is available when needed.
- The district uses special green equipment recommended by the California Department of Public Health's Asthma Safe Schools checklist, including the use of carpet extractors with dryers and fans, floor burnishers with HEPA filtration dust control, vacuum cleaners with HEPA filters, and walk-off mats to remove allergens and dust from shoes.
- School custodians vacuum classrooms at least every other day and clean daily with organic cleaning solutions to minimize the harmful effects of chemicals in classrooms. Teachers do not use over-the-counter cleaning supplies to keep air contaminants out of classrooms, and custodians only use green cleaning products. In addition, air fresheners and other air contaminants are not allowed in classrooms.
- CUSD's Facilities Maintenance and Operations Department provides routine maintenance and cleaning on all air filters. The use of organic cleaning products reduces asthma triggers in students and staff. CUSD ensures the purchase of these products whenever possible. Additionally, CUSD has installed *UV100E Ultraviolet Air Treatment Systems* in the HVAC systems at many locations, including the district office. These systems feature Ultraviolet-C light, which kills airborne and surface bacteria. The lamps continuously emit ultraviolet energy without producing ozone, ensuring the removal of 99.9% of contaminants.
- District classrooms have dampers and circulate fresh air regularly. All HVAC units also have high Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) ratings. The district services all CUSD exhaust systems regularly, and all filters are changed semi-annually for preventative maintenance. CUSD contracts with an outside company that manages and services all ventilation systems and HVAC units. The company responds immediately to all service needs at each school site.
- CUSD classrooms have 'window walls' that let in natural light with views that include nature. In 2005, researchers measured outdoor light and found that classrooms in Claremont were often filled with enough natural light to eliminate the need for classroom

light fixtures. When lights are needed, CUSD ensures the highest efficiency of light fixtures with LED lighting to meet the health needs of students.

- CUSD has upgraded all plumbing fixtures across the district to prevent leaks and mold exposure. Copper piping is now used in all new and upgraded construction projects, along with non-mold drywall. A full-time plumber and regular inspections by the FMO Department address potential leaks, prioritizing long-term solutions to prevent future issues.
- A team of school site staff, custodians, and district service providers maintain indoor classroom environmental quality using the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools Teacher Checklist.
- CUSD ensures that the water used in schools is contaminant-free. The district's water supplier, Golden State Water, has tested and confirmed no lead or other foreign contaminants are in the water. Additionally, CUSD has upgraded many drinking water fixtures over the last five years to ensure water safety.
- CUSD schools are beautiful campuses with shade trees placed strategically to cool classrooms. The district employs a certified arborist to monitor the health of all trees. As the district plants new trees on campuses, district personnel confirm they are drought-tolerant native species.

Element IIB: Nutrition and Fitness

- CUSD's Nutrition Services Department educates staff, students, and families on the importance of proper nutrition and increased physical activity. Every year, the nutrition department hosts a food fair to bring in new vendors and allow students to sample menu choices. Based on extensive feedback from the community, Nutrition Services adjusts the menu to ensure that students in CUSD enjoy the healthy lunches offered. The district enforces strict nutrition standards for each vendor, prioritizing fresh foods that vendors can deliver with minimal packaging.
- Nutrition Services has a farm-to-food program that stocks the salad bar at each school with fruits and vegetables daily. In the 2023 school year, the district added an advertised daily vegetarian option for students.
- CUSD prioritizes nutrition education in alignment with a board policy that states, "Nutrition education shall be provided as part of the health education program in kindergarten through twelfth grade and shall be integrated into core academic subjects and offered through before and after school programs."
- Nutrition Services offers educational material for students, teachers, and families and provides education on sports nutrition to ensure CUSD athletes care for their bodies. Additionally, CUSD partners with the Dairy Council and NFL Play 60 to provide information to families and incentives for students to eat healthy and stay active.
- All Claremont schools integrate school gardens, tailoring their use to specific site purposes. CHS opened the district's first garden in 2009. Then, in 2011, the Claremont Educational Foundation provided grants to each of the ten schools to update garden spaces with raised beds and irrigation.
- Facilities Maintenance and Operations, Nutritional Services, and the community organization *Sustainable Claremont* actively manage and care for the gardens in CUSD. These gardens serve as valuable classroom instruction resources and a dedicated space for students and families to cultivate food. Furthermore, several sites feature diverse elements, including fruit-producing orchards, vegetable gardens, outdoor

classrooms, biome gardens, and wildlife and native plant habitats. Some specialized examples include the following:

- Oakmont Outdoor School maintains a specialized biome garden for students to learn about their native habitat. The school's annual curriculum emphasizes outdoor education, and its grounds boast extensive biome gardens, orchards, and outdoor learning spaces.
- Condit Elementary School revitalized a green space on campus into a butterfly garden.
- Some schools organize Saturday produce days for families to collect fruits and vegetables, while others utilize school orchards and gardens for classroom instruction and providing food for in-class consumption. Schools also engage in community partnerships with organizations like Uncommon Good and Common Vision to connect education, the environment, and health. Elementary Green Teams, dedicated teachers, secondary environmental clubs, and science classes collaborate with the district to maintain the gardens. The FMO Department and groundskeepers actively provide necessary maintenance to school gardens.
- CUSD has a dedicated physical education (PE) teaching team for elementary school students. This full-time teaching team comprises two PE teachers and three paraeducators traveling to each school site. They provide sports units for all fourth through sixth-grade students.
- Secondary schools have sports programs that provide the students with additional PE. San Antonio High School (SAHS), the district's model continuation high school, started a sports league that now includes numerous alternative education sites from surrounding districts.
- There are many opportunities for CUSD students to engage in outdoor education, exercise, and recreation outside of formal physical education, including the following:
 - Many schools have mileage clubs allowing students to run outside to collect miles and earn t-shirts and prizes.
 - Schools also use physical activities as fundraisers, including events like the *Walk for Wellness* and the *Color Run*.
 - Schools have intramural sports activities led by student-leaders at lunch to give students additional physical activity.
 - San Antonio High School has a sports league that students in ASB started, including sports activities for many continuation schools in the surrounding areas.
 - Elementary sites collaborate with the Athlete Advisory Committee at Claremont McKenna College, where 20 team members from Claremont College sports teams work closely with teachers to provide weekly physical education for first through third-grade students.
 - CUSD hosts an annual district-wide elementary *Track Meet* where students demonstrate their physical abilities in several competitions.
 - CUSD expanded outdoor learning spaces with tracks, learning, and exercise stations. Teachers and students conduct classes in outdoor classrooms and gardens.
 - CUSD partnered with the Rotary Club of Claremont to install a rock-climbing wall at El Roble Intermediate School.
- All CUSD schools have wellness committees that meet regularly. Some schools have stand-alone committees, while others address wellness concerns and practices during

School Site Council meetings. All sites meet CUSD's board policy, stating that goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities promote student wellness through research-based approaches to fitness, nutrition, and education. The wellness policies at school sites and practices of wellness committees address environmental and health concerns at the sites.

- Each site's wellness policy incorporates crucial nutritional guidelines, restricting the consumption of sugary snacks during celebrations. This policy has fostered a cultural shift in schools, from focusing on parties with sweet celebrations to a model centered around collective student celebrations through curriculum initiatives.
- CUSD Board Policy limits outdoor activities when necessary due to poor air quality, including excessive smog, smoke, or ozone, or when ultraviolet radiation levels indicate a high risk of harm.
- Students are encouraged to bring and wear sunscreen on every field trip and in all outdoor activities. Teachers collect sunscreen from students, label it in the classroom, and apply it regularly when students are going to be outside for extended periods. This practice extends to the after-school care program as many students are on campus until 6:00 pm, which can remain hot and sunny in Southern California.
- CUSD supports staff well-being each year during the district's pre-service day. Teachers receive training in yoga, mindfulness, and self-care strategies and how to implement these practices to support their students effectively. Additionally, school sites facilitate staff well-being through year-round hiking clubs, nutrition competitions, yoga, and exercise classes.
- The district trains administrators and teachers in social-emotional learning and care. For the 2023 – 2024 school year, CUSD funded a Teacher on Special Assignment to support Social Emotional Learning.
- CUSD partners with Christy Jones, a mindfulness instructor, to teach lessons to staff and students. Additionally, the district has a mental health team that supports staff and students. CUSD celebrates *Mental Health Month* annually and provides additional support to all staff members through partnerships with local mental health agencies like Tri-City and Care Solace.
- CUSD provides comprehensive school health and nutrition education, physical education and activities beyond those mandated by the state's instructional minutes, school and community counseling and social services, healthy and safe school environments, and student, family, and community partnerships.
- CUSD has a comprehensive health support system, including a health management team, mental health team, and school psychologists. The health management team, led by a registered nurse and two nurse practitioners, ensures care for medically fragile students and provides prompt healthcare for others. Each site has a health assistant, and five schools have Vocational Nurses (LVN). The Mental Health team comprises a coordinator, three Marriage and Family Therapists, and an Elementary Counseling Coordinator, reflecting CUSD's commitment to comprehensive student well-being.
- Each school has a School Psychologist assigned to the site to support teachers, serve students, and work as a bridge between general and special education. At the secondary level, there are two counselors at the intermediate school, one counselor at the continuation school, and seven counselors at the comprehensive high school who serve as guidance counselors and work directly with the mental health team to support students. The comprehensive high school also has a student support center staffed with interns that students can access anytime during their school day.

- CUSD has established numerous partnerships to actively support the health and safety of both staff and students, including the following:
 - CUSD partners with Care Solace, a referral organization that anonymously connects students and staff with mental health services.
 - The district regularly employs local organizations such as Tri-City Health and Mental Health Services, and families utilize wrap-around support services that are coordinated at the school site and utilize community resources.
 - Other mental health partnerships include university interns from the University of La Verne and Azusa Pacific University. Graduate students needing intern hours work at CUSD schools and train with CUSD staff to serve students.
 - Through a City of Claremont partnership with the University of La Verne, psychological services provider *Youtherapy* is utilized to provide additional mental health services for secondary students.
 - The City of Claremont also partners with the school sites to provide activity centers on two secondary campuses. These centers provide safe after-school spaces for students to complete homework, build community, and have adult mentors available to support students.
 - CUSD actively collaborates with non-profit organizations, such as Shoes That Fit, to supply clothing for students in need.
 - The district partners with the Claremont Police Department to provide campus safety, build relationships between students and police, and develop a sense of community.
- CUSD School Mental Health programs address all aspects of school-age children's social-emotional development, including wellness, mental health concerns, and adverse childhood experiences. CUSD integrates a School Mental Health continuum throughout all schools in the district, including universal strategies to promote social and emotional well-being and development of all students, including *Green Ribbon Week*, mindfulness groups, kindergarten social skills, mental health awareness, school-based character education, PBIS, anti-bullying and internet safety programs, *Yellow Ribbon Program*, *Every 15 Minutes Program*, freshman wellness, and parenting classes such as *Active Parenting* and *Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)*.
- At the elementary level, teachers can refer students requiring early intervention to address social-emotional and behavioral concerns that impact the student's ability to learn in the school environment. The Elementary School Counseling program (ESC) provides counseling for students during school hours. Similarly, school counselors refer secondary students to receive short-term counseling through university partnerships.
- Students needing more intense support receive ongoing interventions under the Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) team. The CUSD Mental Health Team works with students, families, schools, and community resources to coordinate services and address barriers to learning as an essential part of school.
- CUSD has implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at all school sites. All ten campuses have earned Gold or Platinum Recognition from the State of California's PBIS organization as schools have demonstrated 70% implementation of effective PBIS-tiered practices.
- The Mental Health Team also implemented *Signs of Suicide*, a suicide prevention program at all three secondary schools. Additional training on suicide prevention is continuing. In the 2023 – 2024 school year, CUSD partnered with *Just Us 4 Youth* to support restorative practices at the district's secondary schools.

Pillar III: Provide Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element IIIA: Interdisciplinary Learning

- CUSD emphasizes environmental and civic learning through various board policies. One policy underscores that service-learning aligns with educational and civic objectives, meets academic standards, and addresses community needs. All CUSD schools engage in environmental service-learning projects. Another policy acknowledges the importance of citizen involvement in democratic government and aims to provide a comprehensive civic education program. The district fosters environmental citizenship through collaborations with the City of Claremont and *Sustainable Claremont*, involving students in city-wide sustainable practices. Furthermore, board policy connects science education and environmental literacy, emphasizing the interrelationship of science, mathematics, technology, and engineering, integrating California's Environmental Principles and Concepts.
- CUSD's purpose is "Igniting curiosity, strengthening resilience, and inspiring excellence to empower each student's academic journey." This purpose carries over to programs, grounds, and facilities where CUSD students learn. Students in CUSD schools learn environmental concepts in school garden programs, recycling and trash-free efforts at lunch, and multiple service-learning projects in school and the community. In addition, a district master plan is in place that aims to continue school gardens on every campus, extend green learning spaces, and create new green spaces.
- All CUSD schools integrate environmental literacy into academic learning. In addition to science, CUSD teachers integrate environmental and sustainability concepts in other classes. At the secondary level, schools in the district integrate sustainability concepts into all math classes as teachers work on an integrated approach to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. In addition, CHS provides and consistently fills four sections of the AP Environmental Science Elective. Elementary school teachers incorporate environmental concepts into reading and social science using supplementary non-fiction teaching materials and units on environmental literacy. Multiple teachers have been trained in the curriculum and use it to teach science, history, and social science standards. All these educational programs have assessments to ensure environmental learning is taking place.
- CUSD integrates the gardens into learning. For example, Oakmont Outdoor School is a school in the district that focuses on learning the world's biomes and has a student-designed and planted biome garden. Classes use the garden to investigate natural phenomena and learn about the environment. Another school, Chaparral Elementary School (Chaparral), built an art and science garden center with outdoor classroom space so students can investigate and create in real-time.
- CUSD provides professional development opportunities for all staff members in environmental practices. Many teachers continue their learning and take it upon themselves to lead that charge in innovative sustainability practices in and outside their classrooms. Some examples include native plant studies from the Rancho California Botanical Gardens, training in composting from local farms, and partnering with community experts in *Sustainable Claremont* to implement lessons in the classroom.
- All CUSD schools have *Green Teams* or student leadership committees that lead the charge to employ effective environmental and sustainability education. Green Teams at the elementary schools work on projects such as sorting lunchtime waste daily for composting and recycling in classrooms to raise money for school projects. At the secondary level, students participate in *the Interact Club*, sponsored by the Claremont

Rotary, or *Builders Club*, sponsored by the Claremont Kiwanis, and complete activities such as fundraising for and providing education on clean drinking water in third-world countries. *Interact*, *Builders*, and other clubs at the high school level do additional service-learning projects. CUSD has an *International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program* and diploma track, both of which require service-learning projects, many of which are environmentally based. Elementary students also do service-learning projects and incorporate sustainability into science nights, STEAM fairs, and other showcases.

- CUSD organizes field trips that center on environmental education, encompassing the following:
 - All transitional kindergarten through sixth-grade students visit the Los Angeles County Fair and head to the organic farm every year. Schools also visit and work with the Pomona College Organic Farm, within walking distance of many schools.
 - First through sixth-grade students at four of the district's seven elementary schools study birding and take field trips around their schools to study birding at Oak Park Cemetery through a bird-watching program sponsored by the City of Claremont.
 - CUSD students use the surrounding environment to learn about sustainability practices. Students at the elementary level from Oakmont Outdoor School, the elementary school in the district focused on learning in the world's biomes, attend learning activities at the Living Desert wildlife preserve, Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Islands, Sea World, the San Diego Zoo, and the Los Angeles Zoo.
 - Third through sixth-grade students at all elementary schools attend trips to the California Science Center, Natural History Museum, and sustainably focused art galleries each year.
 - Fifth-grade students have a nine-week learning project called *Leadership in Environmental Education Partnership* (LEEP). During this time, they travel to the Bernard Field Station, a natural habitat sponsored by the Robert Redford Conservatory. They learn about environmental science through a partnership with EnviroScience classes at the Claremont Colleges. College students provide laboratory lessons for CUSD students in an outdoor classroom. As a culminating event, students showcase their knowledge to parents at a field station field day.
 - Every sixth-grade student in the district attends outdoor science school for a week.
 - Secondary students travel across the county for ecological service-learning projects.

Element IIIB: STEM Content, Knowledge, and Skills

- Many CUSD schools use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. Examples across the district include:
 - Chaparral has an outdoor learning center incorporating the school garden with art and science. This area has a weather station, lab area, alternative seating for students to work, art easels, and gardens. Staff create lessons incorporating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEAM) to make this area a working STEAM lab. There are also areas to incorporate social and emotional learning exercises.

- Vista Elementary School (Vista) has a project-based learning practice in which fourth through sixth-grade students create resourceful items for the Earth for multiple weeks. Students practice engineering, math, and science as they create. At the annual *Science Night*, these students practice their public speaking and presentation skills as they share the resourceful items they created with the larger community.
- At Oakmont Outdoor School, elementary students have biome studies incorporated into all STEM disciplines through research, project work, experiments, and immersive field study. Lessons incorporate the concepts of environmental stewardship and *Leave No Trace* principles into every lesson, both inside the classroom and on outdoor excursions.
- CHS teachers connect STEM education in multiple disciplines, including participation in the annual robotics competition, Career Technology Education (CTE) pathways that highlight technical STEM training, and coordinated efforts between the math and science departments to implement new standards in engineering, modeling, critical thinking skills, and rigorous content knowledge. For example, in engineering class, students study responsible design to create projects considering sustainability and the community's environmental needs.
- Each year, CUSD hosts family STEAM nights at multiple sites. These events bring CUSD families together to engage in new learning, celebrate STEAM learning that has taken place throughout the school year, and build community around STEAM practices. The most recent *STEAM Night* was a family art night titled *Painters, Paintings, and Props*, where families studied the use of nature in art and used natural materials to create works of art.
- Green technologies and career pathways are a focus for CUSD. Five elementary schools are Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)-certified. With a focus on college and career readiness in AVID, schools have guest speakers and work with colleges and trade schools to inspire students early. Elementary students often hear from professionals in green technology fields and learn about potential pathways. For example, students at Oakmont Outdoor School have learned from three local college professors about bees, sea life, and archaeology. Students from Sycamore Elementary have learned from guest speakers from Streets for People about the importance of alternate modes of transportation, like bikes.
- During the 2023 *Career Day* at CHS, students heard speakers from an air quality and environmental justice organization and other speakers who addressed careers such as environmental consulting, environmental law, alternate transportation, and sustainable distribution and logistics. They also heard from an environmental science and policy professor.
- The *International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme* students in seventh through tenth grades at El Roble and CHS focus on globalization and the importance of global-minded citizens in the workforce. Students in this program participate in learning projects that build skills necessary for their future careers. In Chemistry, students study the impact of nuclear energy. In math, they analyze the statistical impact of climate change on communities. In English, they analyze congressional debates on sustainability.
- At Claremont High School, the AP Environmental Science classes planned and designed a project to remove a turf area on campus and replace it with drought-tolerant landscaping. The classes worked with a local landscaping company on the project. Each year, CHS also holds a career day presentation during which students hear from professionals in various career pathways.

Element IIIC: Civic Knowledge and Skills

- Student teams from each CUSD school represent their school and demonstrate the environmental efforts of their school site at an annual community Earth Day celebration. Past participation includes student-created, eco-friendly art and student outreach, informing community members about the sustainability efforts on each campus.
- Intermediate school students from the Rotary Clubs *Interact Club* create service-learning projects in the city, like raising funds to sponsor efforts to provide clean drinking water to other parts of the world.
- CHS students work as mentors with an organization called *Project ARTstART*, as they offer multi-visit arts appreciation lessons to elementary school students in the classrooms and local museums. The program teaches lessons about sustainability and uses upcycled materials in projects.
- The CUSD *International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme* requires students to complete a project at the end of their sophomore year. Some projects include civic engagement and sustainable practices. For example, sophomore students are building water filtration systems and studying the effects of nuclear energy in their chemistry class. In addition, students are studying congressional debates on sustainability issues in their English classes.
- At CHS, students can participate in the *California State Seal of Civic Engagement*, integrating civic learning and individual projects to earn recognition on their high school diploma. CHS utilizes the *State Seal of Civic Engagement Environmental Literacy Implementation Guide* to align environmental projects and emphasize the use of the environmental literacy lens.
- At CUSD elementary schools, students benefit from year-round walking field trip permission slips, enabling outdoor learning within the community during instructional periods. Students explore Oak Park Cemetery, utilizing a bird-watching field guide to track native bird species. They also visit botanical gardens to enhance their understanding of how Native American tribes once used the natural resources in Claremont.
- CUSD's continuation high school is developing an outdoor mental health space to serve students' social and emotional needs. This space will incorporate nature with mental health support to ensure students have a safe learning place. The school has secured grant funding, and students are developing plans with the teacher to gather plants for the area.
- Fifth-grade students collaborate with Claremont College students in a nine-week outdoor environmental literacy program at Bernard Field Station. Students engage in real-time research as they track animals that travel through the station and learn the importance of keeping the community safe for animal visitors.
- CUSD engages in *Living Schoolyard Month* activities throughout the year. CUSD prioritizes the design and construction of student-accessible green spaces on school campuses and integrates these spaces into teaching standards-based instruction. For example, students work in school gardens, complete artwork in the living schoolyards, and engage in outdoor learning during all months of the year. Each school site has a developed outdoor space to serve as a learning environment for students. In 2022, student focus groups at all grade levels stated that one of the things they enjoy most about their campuses is the ability to work outside and learn in green spaces.

- The district has an important relationship with the Claremont Educational Foundation. This organization provides funding for CUSD schools and essential grant money to teachers for innovative projects. The Foundation funds the following projects that support the three pillars: garden art, inquiry investigations on photosynthesis, global citizenship projects, conversations with industry professionals, ecological schoolyard outdoor lab, mindfulness toolbox training, and sensory awareness projects.
- Interact Club, sponsored by the Claremont Rotary, funds and educates students about the need for clean drinking water in third-world countries. Interact has partnered with the Department of Water and Power, City of Claremont Waste Management, The City of Claremont Green Crew tree planting team, and the Sanitation District of Los Angeles to implement sustainability practices and increase education surrounding environmental topics.
- CUSD schools also partner with *Sustainable Claremont*, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing sustainability practices in the city. *Sustainable Claremont* and CUSD support school sites and encourage participation in the Claremont Earth Day celebration.