



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.
8. The school or its district has in place and is willing to provide a link to or a 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

Name of Principal:

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

Official School Name:

(As it should appear on an award)

**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.

DocuSigned by:

Bryan Byerlee

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(Principal's Signature)

Date:

Name of Superintendent:

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



District Name:

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

DocuSigned by:
Jeanine Notkoff

(Superintendent's Signature)

Date:

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:

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.

DocuSigned by:
Lisa Odom-Villella

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

Date:

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.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award

Rhode Island Pre K-12 School Application
Cranston Public Schools - Garden City Elementary School

January 15, 2024

Project Team

Owner - Cranston Public Schools, Cranston RI
Owner's Project Manager - Jacobs
Architect - Fielding International
Construction Manager - Dimeo



Image Courtesy of Marissa Moss & Fielding International

Nominee Information

School, District, or Postsecondary Institution Name:		
Category of Nomination (Early Learning Center, School, District, or Postsecondary):		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Twitter:	Facebook:	

Top Official (School=Principal; District=Superintendent; IHE= President):

Title (Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr.):	First Name:	Last Name:
Position/Role (Principal/ Superintendent/ President):		
Email:	Phone:	

Lead Applicant (if different):

Title (Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr.):	First Name:	Last Name:
Position/Role (Teacher/ Sustainability Director/ Facilities Director):		
Email:	Phone:	

Check all that apply:

Early Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Four Year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Charter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community College	<input type="checkbox"/>
Middle	<input type="checkbox"/>	Magnet	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urban	<input type="checkbox"/>
High	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career and Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Two Year	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suburban	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provide Percentages, if any are relevant to your school, district or institution:

Pell Recipients:	<input type="text"/>	Limited English Proficient:	<input type="text"/>	Attendance Rate:	<input type="text"/>
Free and Reduced Price Lunch:	<input type="text"/>	Special Education:	<input type="text"/>		
Minority:	<input type="text"/>	Graduation Rate:	<input type="text"/>		

Provide the following, if relevant:

Total Enrolled:	<input type="text"/>	Number of Schools:	<input type="text"/>	Buildings:	<input type="text"/>	Campuses:	<input type="text"/>
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PROJECT SUMMARY

The new Garden City elementary school is one of 26 school buildings located in Cranston, Rhode Island; one of the city's more densely populated, urban, diverse neighborhoods. The newly constructed state-of-the-art school facility is an 86,000-sq. ft. building which hosts 575 students but provides the ability to expand its student population in the future. The new building replaced the 1950s, 33,000 sq. ft. building, allowing the district to consolidate its student population with a mission to provide every student with the highest quality 21st century education through project-based learning, in a safe, secure, positive, and innovative environment. The building took 24 months to build with a total project cost of \$54 million.



Image Courtesy of Marissa Moss & Fielding International

The new building consists of five (5) Learning Communities, one for each grade level. Within each Learning Community is a main Learning Commons surrounded by smaller Learning Studios, small group rooms, an active lab, and a Teacher Collaboration Workroom. Restrooms and building support spaces are included within each community. This approach allows students to learn in a flexible, yet strategically structured, collaborative environment. The "Social Heart" is the common connecting space that consists of the cafetorium with a cooking kitchen, an assembly stair, referred to as the "Kiva Stair" which allows for the cafetorium to serve as a larger assembly space for school gatherings. The school also has a library/media center, a makerspace, interactive hallway spaces, and outdoor learning spaces. The outdoor learning spaces are located all around the building with access to each learning community, providing all students with access to safe and secure outdoor learning opportunities. The gymnasium is a full-size, grade-appropriate, double-height structure adjacent to the building with a dedicated entrance available as an option for after school activities that allows visitors access to the gym without having to go through the entire school. The administrative suite is in front of the building so that the surrounding site, parking, and building entryway are all in clear view.

The entrance is a secure entrance with bullet resistant glazing and secure bullet resistant entrance system. The school's athletic program offers baseball fields with multiple play and outdoor areas, other field sports are offered offsite as part of the global Cranston Public Schools urban athletic program.

All building mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are high efficiency systems with fresh air supply and filtration systems that achieve above code performance and energy conservation. The building envelope is a mineral board cladding with high performing insulated materials that allow for the building to be as efficient as possible. The

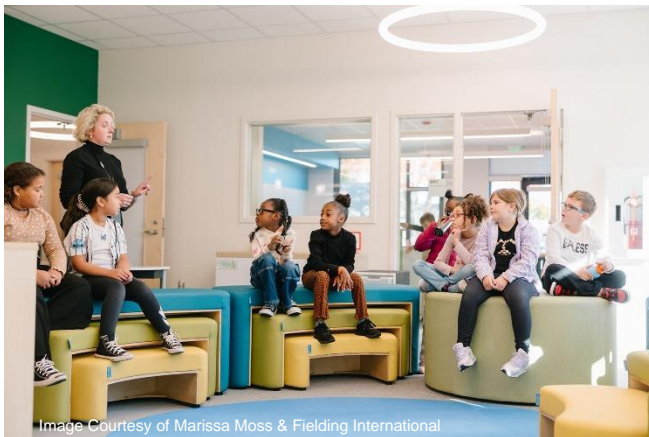


Image Courtesy of Marissa Moss & Fielding International

high performing insulated materials that allow for the building to be as efficient as possible. The

building was designed to last. All building materials, interior as well as envelope, were selected to optimize cost, performance, warranties with local sourcing, fabrication, and standard color choices.

The building offers unique high performing flexible furnishings that allow students and staff to be able to implement more agile learning practices that offer the 21st century learning means and methods. Improving student behavior and the ability to concentrate allows students to thrive and excel in learning.

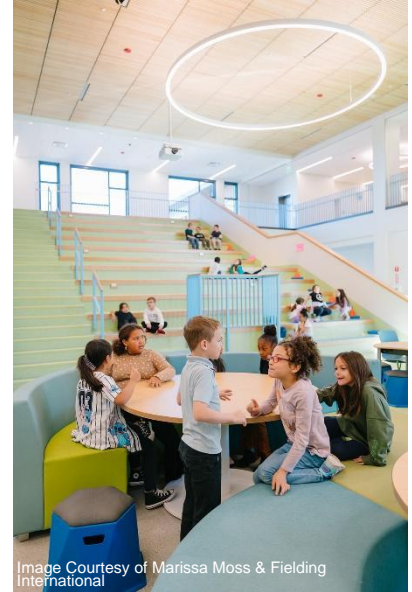


Image Courtesy of Marissa Moss & Fielding International



Image Courtesy of Marissa Moss & Fielding International

This project was designed and built-in accordance with the Northeast Collaborative for High Performance School (NE CHPS) version 3.1 and RI School Building Authority Construction Regulations as guides for sustainability strategies. The design team aimed to design this facility not to just stay above minimum requirements, but also to deal with the strict requirements of the budget constraints that made this public school facility a reality. This school was able to achieve over 180 NE CHPS points. Several of the implemented strategies include high performance operations, utilization of a computerized maintenance management system, enhanced filtration, and implementation of low emitting locally sourced materials. The site is designed to utilize rainwater with a landscape that has all native plantings with no irrigation system needs.



Image Courtesy of Marissa Moss & Fielding International

PILLAR 1: REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND COSTS

Element 1A: Reduced or Eliminated Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- *What is the school's plan to manage and reduce energy use? Describe an energy master plan, an energy conservation plan, an energy charter, an energy action plan, and/or energy conservation guidelines.*

The primary goal of Garden City Elementary School is to meet or exceed the requirements of the Rhode Island Adopted Edition of the International Energy Conservation Code. The school has developed a comprehensive Energy Master Plan to guide its long-term strategy for efficient energy use. This plan assesses current energy consumption, identifies areas for improvement, and establishes clear goals for sustainability. It encompasses initiatives related to building design, equipment upgrades, and the integration of renewable energy sources. The school's Energy Conservation Plan outlines specific measures and practices to reduce energy consumption across the campus. It provides guidelines for optimizing HVAC systems, upgrading lighting, implementing energy-efficient technologies, and fostering behavioral changes to promote energy conservation within the school community. Garden City Elementary School is committed to sustainability through its Energy Charter, which serves as a formal declaration of our dedication to responsible energy management. The charter outlines the school's objectives, principles, and commitments, involving stakeholders such as students, faculty, staff, and the local community in our pursuit of energy efficiency. To operationalize the Energy Master Plan, Garden City has implemented a dynamic Energy Action Plan. This plan includes specific steps and timelines for the implementation of energy-saving initiatives. It is regularly updated to adapt to changes in technology, regulations, and institutional priorities. The school's Energy Conservation Guidelines provide clear recommendations and best practices for the school community. These guidelines cover areas such as energy-efficient use of equipment, waste disposal, and the promotion of a sustainable culture. They engage students, faculty, and staff in adopting energy-saving habits both inside and outside the classroom.

- *How, and to what degree, does the school demonstrate a reduction in energy use and/or in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from an initial baseline? Include data if available on baseline and current energy usage (kBTU/student/year and/or kBTU/sq.ft./year), percentage reductions, and years.*

The installed design project at Garden City Elementary School has exceeded expectations in terms of energy efficiency when compared to a New Construction Baseline building. Anticipated savings are significant, with over 3500 kWh/student/year or 173 kWh/sq. ft./ year. This translates to a remarkable reduction in carbon dioxide CO₂ emissions, estimated at 1,209,096 lbs per year. These results not only underscore our commitment to sustainability but also showcase the tangible environmental impact of the energy efficiency measures implemented. Garden City Elementary School takes pride in actively contributing to a greener and more energy-efficient future.

- *How does the school track resource use in EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager or a similar tool and what results has the tracking shown? Include ENERGY STAR Rating if possible.*

The construction phase was completed in late August, and the "building flush out" and continuous commissioning procedures are currently ongoing. Consequently, the energy bills and building metering have not yet fully captured the expected energy savings or stabilized in normal operating modes. It's crucial to acknowledge that the present readings may not accurately portray the complete impact of the implemented energy-efficient measures. The ongoing efforts in building flush out and commissioning play a vital role in ensuring the optimal performance and efficiency of the newly constructed facility. With these processes advancing, we anticipate a more accurate reflection of the achieved energy savings and operational efficiency in the near future.

- ***How is the school's energy obtained from on-site renewable energy generation, purchased renewable energy, or other renewable/green energy sources? Include specific energy sources and percentages if possible.***

Although there are no renewable energy provisions on the school site, the Cranston School Department is able to utilize renewable energy from the City's solar farm. It is a great resource that helps the School Department keep energy costs down with increased efficiency of building systems.

- ***Was the school constructed or renovated in the past 10 years? If so, which portions of the school building(s) meet "CHPS" standard or have focused on improved energy conservation?***

Construction for the new Garden City Elementary School was completed August 2023, with the entire design meticulously crafted to meet NE-CHPS Standards and prioritize energy conservation optimization. The building was designed with energy efficient systems that allow fresh air and increased filtration which helps improve building occupant health and safety.

- ***Are there any other actions the school has taken to reduce or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions?***

The chiller in use employs the latest-generation refrigerant, R513a, known for its significantly reduced Global Warming Potential (GWP) of 573 and an Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP) of 0. Additionally, the boilers and domestic water heaters boast a minimum efficiency rating of 95%, featuring direct vent condensing technology with modulating gas valves.

Element 1B: Improved Water Quality, Efficiency, and Conservation

- ***How, and to what degree, can the school demonstrate a reduction in the total water consumption from an initial baseline? Include data if available on baseline and current water usage (gallons per occupant), percentage reductions, and years.***

The plumbing design implemented at Garden City School achieves an impressive 41% annual water savings, equating to over 305,000 gallons saved per year. Furthermore, the plumbing design surpasses NE-CHPS requirements for WE-1.0 by incorporating low-flow fixtures, as well as metered faucets and flush valves.

- ***What are the school's water-conserving efforts? Include fixtures and appliances (e.g., waterless urinals, dual flush toilets, etc.) and school cultural practices.***

The Plumbing design exceeds NE-CHPS requirements for WE-1.0 with the use of low-flow fixtures, and metered faucets and flush valves.

- ***Does the school have water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate plants and landscaping and/or use alternative water sources (e.g., non-potable water) for any irrigation needs?***

The landscape design for the school specifically uses "native" (i.e. regionally appropriate) plantings that are relatively drought-tolerant, such that no outdoor irrigation system was required for the school lawns and landscaping. Garden City Elementary School is committed to sustainable practices, including water conservation in all landscaping efforts. The school's landscaping strategy incorporates water-efficient and regionally appropriate plants that thrive in the local climate, minimizing the need for excessive watering. Additionally, the school embraces alternative water sources for their irrigation needs. By utilizing non-potable water, sourced through methods such as rainwater harvesting systems or recycled water, the school actively contributes to reducing environmental impact and promoting water conservation.

- ***How has the school reduced storm water runoff and/or reduced impermeable surfaces on school grounds?***

Stormwater runoff from the site has been reduced by the implementation of two (2) subsurface chamber sand filter systems. These systems capitalize on the favorable (relatively high) permeability of the in-situ underlying soils and receive stormwater runoff from the entirety of the school building and the majority of the impervious surfaces. Additionally, the on-site impervious surfaces (driveways, parking areas, walkways, hardscape play

areas) have been minimized to the extent practicable while still providing adequate access to and functionality for the school; notably, a zoning variance was requested and granted to allow for less than the required on-site parking, which reduced the amount of paved (impervious) parking that needed to be constructed. The new school has actively addressed stormwater runoff by incorporating permeable surfaces and sediment forebays in their design. These efforts are aimed at minimizing the environmental impact of stormwater runoff and enhancing the overall sustainability of the campus.

➤ **How does the school ensure that all school water sources are protected from potential contaminants, including lead?**

All plumbing components at Garden City School, including piping, solder, flux, pumps, meters, devices, water heaters, faucets, and valves, adhere to lead-free standards. Our commitment to water safety extends to our drinking water bottle fillers, which provide filtered water meeting NSF 42 & 53 certifications. Additionally, these fillers feature a silver ion antimicrobial coating on plastic parts, ensuring the highest standards of water quality and safety for our school community.

➤ **How has the school planned and/or developed the school grounds to be ecologically beneficial? For example, have rain gardens, wildlife and native plant habitat, and/or outdoor classrooms been created?**

The school and site design incorporates multiple ecologically beneficial elements, including multiple rain gardens (which also serve as stormwater pretreatment measures), plantings that include species attractive to pollinators and other local wildlife, and multiple open-air (outdoor) classrooms. At the newly constructed Garden City Elementary School, the design team has actively integrated outdoor classrooms into the school grounds as part of our commitment to providing dynamic and environmentally enriching learning spaces. These classrooms are thoughtfully designed to not only enhance the overall learning experience for our students but also to foster a deeper connection with nature. The outdoor classrooms contribute to a holistic educational environment, encouraging both academic engagement and a sense of appreciation for the natural world.

➤ **What percentage of school grounds are for school gardens, xeriscaping, etc.?**

Garden City Elementary School is proud to embrace sustainable landscaping through the implementation of xeriscaping across a significant portion of our grounds. This water-efficient approach incorporates native and drought-resistant plants, enhancing both the visual appeal and environmental sustainability of the campus. Approximately 40% of the school grounds are pervious/landscaped areas, and approximately 50% of that area (20% of the overall site) can be considered "xeriscaping," as the plantings are all drought-tolerant and do not require (or have) a dedicated irrigation system. The baseball field, which comprises about half of the overall pervious area, is irrigated, and therefore not considered xeriscaping.

➤ **Are there any other actions the school has taken to improve water quality, efficiency, and/or conservation?**

The Garden City School is the first school building in the City of Cranston building in the new millennia. It serves as a first step to improve efficiency and innovation, not just in this school but district wide. The staff and school administration are continuously working to improve all practices of the building functions, quality, and efficiency. As it relates to water conservation, ALL plumbing fixtures in the building were specified with water conservation in mind. For example, all faucets are touchless with conservatively adjusted sensors for the water to run only when needed and limit falls activations.

Element 1C: Reduced Waste Production

- *How, and to what degree, does the school implement a school-wide plan of waste reduction, recycling, and/or composting in order to divert significant solid waste from the landfill? Include data on baseline and current recycling and composting rates if available (e.g., cubic yards per year, monthly waste generated per person, monthly recycling/composting rates), percentage reductions, and years.*

Garden City Elementary School is dedicated to a comprehensive waste management strategy aimed at reducing, recycling, and diverting solid waste from landfills. The school-wide plan includes initiatives such as recycling and composting to minimize our environmental footprint. As of 2024, the school district has made substantial progress in waste reduction efforts compared to our baseline data. While specific figures may vary, the school's recycling and composting rates have shown a notable increase, contributing to a significant reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfills. The school has been implementing educational programs and awareness campaigns to engage the school community and promote responsible waste disposal practices.

- *How does the school nutrition staff minimize waste during food production and service? For example, are students included in menu planning to increase acceptability? Are staff trained on the required components of a meal? Is the Offer vs. Serve method of service utilized and/or the Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard guidelines employed to improve consumption of foods offered (such as slicing whole fruits and veggies)?*

Garden City school is equipped with a full cooking kitchen where the kitchen staff is trained to minimize food waste and prepare high nutrient meals, not just for Garden City but also for other schools in the district that do not have a cooking kitchen on site. This school was built to serve the entire district, not just the Garden City community. Garden City's nutrition staff employs various strategies to minimize food waste during production and service. The school staff actively involves students in menu planning to align offerings with their preferences, promoting acceptability and reducing waste. Staff receive training on meal components, emphasizing portion control for efficient preparation. Utilizing the Offer vs. Serve method allows students choice and reduces plate waste. These measures ensure that our meals are both nutritious and contribute to waste reduction.

- *How, and to what degree, does the school use office/classroom paper content that is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed and/or chlorine-free?*

Garden City Elementary School is dedicated to responsible paper usage within offices and classrooms. The school prioritizes the incorporation of post-consumer material in the paper content, ensuring a significant portion comes from recycled sources. Additionally, the district sources paper fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed to support sustainable forestry practices. Cranston Public Schools is actively transitioning towards a paperless environment. Teachers and staff submit electronic work orders, contributing to the school's efforts to minimize paper usage. These practices collectively contribute to the school district's goal of responsible and environmentally conscious paper usage throughout their schools.

- *What are the school's efforts in storing/maintaining an inventory of potentially hazardous materials used in various programs, if any (e.g., science, art, maintenance, cleaning, pest control, etc.)?*

Fireproof containers are used for the storage of all hazardous materials at the new Garden City Elementary School. The school district maintains monthly contracts with certified vendors and contractors to handle the proper removal and disposal of hazardous waste items, including batteries, electronics, technology products, bulbs, and more, in alignment with their commitment to sustainability.

- *How, and to what degree, has the school reduced/eliminated hazardous waste generation over a measurable baseline? Include specific waste such as batteries and CFL light bulbs.*

The new school has been designed to include entirely LED lighting, eliminating the need for the disposal of CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Lights). This shift to LED technology reduces the environmental impact associated with traditional lighting options. The School Department also implements a third party hazardous material disposal

service that allows for items such as electronics, batteries and other similar material to be disposed of safely. All custodial and teaching staff are trained on proper separation and disposal of qualifying items that are being collected and disposed of by the disposal vendor.

- **What are the school's green cleaning custodial practices including green cleaning products, services, advanced equipment, and/or policies?**

Cranston Public Schools utilizes plant based, environmentally positive, nontoxic cleaning products, including sanitizing products. The floor surfaces in the Garden City School do not require waxing, and can be washed as needed.

- **What is the school's plan to prepare for the Styrofoam waste ban (which will take effect on January 1st, 2025)?**

The staff at Garden City Elementary School has already begun prioritizing sustainability by avoiding Styrofoam trays in their food service. The school highly encourages the use of recyclable alternatives such as reusable trays, compostable trays, and food paper trays. This reflects the school's commitment to reducing waste and promoting environmentally friendly choices.

- **How do the school's purchasing practices specifically promote environmentally preferable purchasing/green purchasing, as applicable, for consumable products, furniture, and equipment for administration, instruction, and/or maintenance?**

Cranston Public Schools encourages and sources recycled paper as well as supplies made from recycled or renewable materials. The design team also designed the building with environmentally positive materials in mind. Garden City School is a project-based environment where students and staff learn hands-on about the importance of renewable and sustainable living.

- **How does the school comply with the School Waste Recycling and Refuse Disposal Law (R.I. Gen. Law § 16-111- 5)? This State Law went into effect in the 2022 School Year and requires schools to prevent food waste, recover edible food that would otherwise be wasted, divert food scraps and use share tables at all schools.**

Students at the Garden City Elementary School are currently working on a project to implement a food share table/bin to try to reduce food waste. They are currently in the data collection and prototype planning phase. They have reviewed the amount of food items that are disposed of by students and are designing their proposal for how to implement a food sharing system.

- **Will the school discontinue use of disposal food service containers (R.I. Gen. Law § 21-27.2-) such as Styrofoam food service cafeteria trays? If so, how?**

The school does not use any disposable trays. Washable trays are used for both breakfast and lunch.

- **Are there any other actions the school has taken to reduce waste production?**

Students at Garden City School are working on a reusable water bottle campaign in order to reduce the number of disposable water bottles that are discarded and also increase use of our water bottle filling stations.

Element 1D: Use of Alternative Transportation

- **How is the school reducing its transportation energy use through means such as: encouraging a) walking or bicycling to and from school; b) expanded school bus use: and/or c) EV charging stations? Include data and results of the efforts if available.**
- **Has the school implemented green transportation practices such as: a) efficient carpooling; b) no-idling loading areas; c) safe routes to school; and/or d) expanded bicycle storage?**
- **Are there any other actions the school has taken related to the use of alternative transportation?**

Garden City Elementary School is actively championing sustainable commuting and environmental responsibility. The Garden City School is equipped with bike racks and does not offer teacher parking on site, as it is a city school with street parking only. There are bus stations within a short distance from the school. The

school staff and the student population is encouraged to carpool, bike, bus, or use alternative means of transportation. The school implements fun activities such as bike to school days during the warmer months. For students' safety and security, all alternative transportation means are to be supervised by adults. Students who live within a 1.5-mile radius are encouraged to walk to school, with age-appropriate adult supervision, promoting physical activity and reducing reliance on motorized transportation. Convenient bike racks at the new Garden City Elementary School support eco-friendly commuting options, while a strict no-idling policy contributes to cleaner air on school grounds. The school actively encourages carpooling, fostering a sense of community and reducing individual carbon footprints. The annual Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day on November 14 engages the entire school community in a collective walk, promoting sustainable transportation. For those who prefer driving, Garden City Elementary School offers neighborhood parking options, ensuring convenience while still aligning with sustainable commuting practices. These initiatives collectively reflect the school's commitment to creating an environmentally conscious and sustainable school environment.

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

Element 2A: Integrated School Environmental Health Program

- *How is the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan being implemented at the school? Include: year of implementation; program responsibility/oversight; pest monitoring process; record keeping; notification practices; and efforts to reduce pesticide use.*

The School Department has a Pest Management plan in place. The new building was inspected for pests prior to opening and fully mitigated. The inspection plan is set to periodic checks for pests with all needed mitigation practices in place.

- *How, and to what degree, is the school minimizing and/or eliminating student and staff exposure to the potentially hazardous contaminants such as: cigarette smoke; mercury; carbon monoxide; fuel burning combustion appliances; airborne contaminate sources; asbestos; radon; chromated copper arsenate; and lead?*

Garden City Elementary School prioritizes the health and safety of its occupants through a comprehensive approach to environmental and indoor air quality management. The entire lighting system in the building has been upgraded to high-efficiency LED, eliminating the need for ballasts containing mercury and minimizing potential exposure risks. To address potential hazards associated with fuel-burning equipment, carbon monoxide sensors have been strategically installed in areas served by such equipment, ensuring early detection and enhanced safety measures. Furthermore, all fuel-burning combustion appliances are direct vent, significantly reducing the possibility of occupant exposure. Airborne contaminant sources are meticulously controlled by maintaining higher than code-required exhaust cubic feet per minute (CFM) in all ASHRAE Class 2 & 3 spaces, aligning with best practices for indoor air quality management. In adherence to stringent safety standards, the construction materials, insulating materials, and pipe gaskets used in the building envelope are entirely asbestos-free, contributing to a healthy and hazard-free environment. While the site has not tested positive for significant levels of Radon, proactive measures have been taken to address any potential future concerns. Sub-slab venting has been installed, with risers extending through the roof and power pre-wired at roof terminations, ready for the future installation of exhaust fans if Radon remediation becomes necessary. Ensuring safe drinking water is a top priority, with all plumbing components being lead-free. Drinking water bottle fillers go a step further by supplying filtered water adhering to NSF 42 & 53 certifications and featuring a silver ion antimicrobial coating on plastic parts, maintaining the highest standards of water quality. Additionally, the selection of construction, finishing, and furnishing materials prioritizes low or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs), minimizing the emission of potentially harmful substances and contributing to a healthier indoor environment. These comprehensive measures collectively reflect Garden City Elementary School's commitment to providing a safe, healthy, and environmentally responsible space for all occupants.

- **What is the plan and timetable for inspecting and maintaining the school's ventilation systems and all unit ventilators to ensure that the systems are clean and operating properly?**

The maintenance schedule at Garden City Elementary School includes quarterly inspection of air intakes and filters. Replacement of filters is scheduled based on service: recirculating systems with MERV-8 pre filter and MERV-15 final filter will only require the MERV-8 filter be replaced every 6-months; ERV units taking in 100% fresh air include MERV-8 pre-filters and MERV-13 final filters each equipped with a magnehelic gauge and DDC pressure differential sensor for monitoring the filter loading.

- **How, and to what degree, does the school ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation recommendations and standards?**

The approach to indoor air quality in this school is exceptional in a number of ways. As it was being designed during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, our primary focus was on air filtration, disinfection, and air changes per hour. The primary indoor air ventilation is provided by 100% outdoor air ERV's providing space providing fresh air to every space providing tempered dehumidified filtered air "MERV-13" final filters regulated and monitored with a VAV box in each student learning space at a rate of 10% to 20% greater than the ASHRAE minimum requirement. Within each classroom the fan coil units for room temperature maintenance recirculate between four and six air changes per hour through a return air plenum with either a MERV-14 filter or a combination MERV-8 pre-filter and MERV-15 final filter. The BMS programming includes a mode for a Purge (100% exhaust circulation) for flushing the building in cases of high rates of infectious illness.

- **What specific and comprehensive actions does the school take to prevent exposure to asthma triggers in and around the school?**

Low VOCs during construction, a post-construction/pre-occupancy flush-out, and high efficiency air-filters all contribute to the elimination of asthma triggers. In addition every fan coil unit and ERV includes a UV-C lamp to provide levels of air disinfection and control of bacteria growth in the drain pan inside air handling equipment.

- **What are the steps the school has taken to protect indoor environmental quality, such as implementing EPA "IAQ Tools for Schools" and/or conducting other periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to: a) identify environmental health and safety issues; and b) take corrective actions?**

The BMS programming includes a mode for a Purge (100% exhaust circulation) for flushing the building in cases of high rates of infectious illness. Every fan coil unit and ERV includes a UV-C lamp to provide levels of air disinfection and control of bacteria growth in the drain pan inside air handling equipment.

- **What is the school maintenance plan to manage and control student and staff exposure to chemicals that are used in the school (e.g., pesticides, cleaning supplies, fuel, paint)? How is it implemented and enforced?**

Airborne Contaminant Sources are controlled using higher than code minimum required exhaust CFM in all ASHRAE Class 2 & 3 spaces.

- **What are the routine inspections and actions that the school engages to: a) control moisture from leaks, condensation, and excess moisture; and b) clean up mold or remove moldy materials promptly when found?**

As a standard practice, the custodial staff inspects the building daily for leaks, moisture, and any issues. All clean up must take place promptly with measuring of moisture and any testing for mold. As this is a new construction that was only recently built, no moisture issues have been detected to date. Any post construction issues have been mitigated. Any wet materials are replaced right away. There is always an adequate stock of materials available in the event of water damage.

Element 2B: Nutrition and Fitness

- ***How does the school implement the following programs (or programs with similar intent) and what are the results and outcomes related to these targeted efforts?***

Nutrition and fitness recognition programs include the USDA's Healthier School Meals Recognition program, the MyPlate Ambassador program and/or the Governor's Nutrition and Physical Activity Awards Program, and the school ensures that its meal offerings align with the program's guidelines for healthier school meals. The school emphasizes nutrient-dense options, incorporating a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. This commitment reflects Garden City Elementary School's dedication to promoting health and nutrition among students.

- **Does the school utilize any values-based procurement practices to guide healthy and sustainable food purchases, such as the Good Food Purchasing Program?**
- **Does the school have an on-site garden that may supply food for students in the cafeteria or to the community, or be used to educate students about growing healthy local food?**

A farm to school program is in place with an established team including a school administrator, teacher, school food representative, and community member, parent, or wellness committee representative to lead efforts to incorporate farm to school programming in the three "C"s of Cafeteria, Community, Classroom.

- **How does the school promote UV protection and skin health? Does the school use the EPA's "Sunwise" Program?**
- **How does the school implement the district's wellness policy and create supportive school nutrition and physical activity environments to enhance health and learning outcomes for students?**

The school prioritizes the implementation of the district's wellness policy to foster a supportive environment for students' health and learning outcomes. The initiatives include comprehensive wellness programs, nutrient-rich school meals, physical activity opportunities, community engagement, and a commitment to turning wellness policies into practical, everyday practices.

- **What is the school's practice related to physical education and does it meet or exceed state guidelines and minimum requirements?**
- **What types of outdoor education, exercise, and recreation activities are available to students?**

In recognizing the importance of staff & student wellness, Garden City Elementary School has implemented initiatives to enhance nutrition and increase physical activity among staff members. This includes providing access to wellness programs, workshops on nutrition and fitness, and facilities for exercise during breaks. The school is committed to creating a supportive environment that prioritizes the well-being of its staff.

- **What are the school's efforts and progress to improve staff wellness in the areas of nutrition and increased physical activity?**

In addition to organized activities, the school has taken steps to promote nutrition and fitness on a broader scale. This encompasses maintaining a cafeteria with healthy food options, providing nutritional education for both students and staff, and creating a culture that emphasizes the importance of a balanced and active lifestyle. The school continuously explores innovative approaches to further enhance the overall health and wellness of its school community. These combined efforts underscore Garden City Elementary School's commitment to fostering a healthy and active learning environment for both students and staff, recognizing the integral role that nutrition and physical activity play in overall well-being.

- **Are there any other actions the school has taken related to nutrition and fitness?**

The newly constructed gymnasium at Garden City Elementary School is conducive to more active and developmentally appropriate physical education classes as opposed to the former cafeteria space.

Element 2C: Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety

- *How is the school implementing a range of partnership programs with the local health department, businesses, postsecondary institutions, and other members of the community to improve students' and school staff members' nutrition, fitness, and safety?*
- **What is the school's use of a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues? This could include comprehensive wellness policies and/or a health and wellness committee/team.**
- **What is the school's health professional services for student needs? Is there a full-time school nurse in the school and/or a school-based health center?**

The new Garden City Elementary School is equipped with a full-time school nurse who plays a crucial role in providing health professional services for the diverse needs of our students. The school nurse is a dedicated and qualified healthcare professional who oversees the well-being of students, addressing health concerns, administering medications, and coordinating with parents and healthcare providers. Having a full-time nurse contributes to the overall safety and health support system within the school, ensuring a prompt and effective response to any health-related needs that may arise during the school day.

- **How does the school address and implement comprehensive programs to support student mental health and positive school climate (e.g., anti-bullying programs, peer counseling, etc.)?**

In its commitment to fostering a positive school climate and supporting student mental health, Garden City Elementary School has implemented a range of comprehensive programs. Anti-bullying initiatives are actively employed with a focus on prevention and intervention to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Peer counseling plays a vital role, empowering students to provide support to their peers and building a strong sense of community within the school. Mental health education is seamlessly integrated into the curriculum, offering students valuable insights and tools for understanding and managing their mental well-being. The school recognizes the significance of professional counseling services and ensures that qualified professionals are available to address various concerns, be it academic, personal, or related to mental health. To reinforce positive behavior and cultivate a culture of respect and kindness, the school has implemented positive behavior support programs. These programs acknowledge and reward positive actions, contributing to an overall positive school climate. The school is also actively engaged with parents, guardians, and the broader community through workshops, seminars, and events to enhance awareness and understanding of mental health issues. Collectively, these initiatives aim to create an environment where students feel supported, valued, and equipped with the necessary tools for positive mental health and overall well-being.

- **Are there any other actions the school has taken (not covered above) to support school health, mental health, school climate, and safety?**

Many actions to promote healthy climate and safety are underway at the new Garden City School. The school has implemented a student driven campaign to address bullying. A student wrote the slogan, "No more, not here," which the school put on a banner and had all students sign. The student also designed wristbands for all students in the school. The school implemented a universal screener for social emotional learning to identify students in need of social emotional support and intervention. Also, the very nature of the learning community environment promotes a bigger circle of relationships/connections, wherein students are connected to a greater number of peers and teachers/staff throughout the day.

PILLAR 3: PROVIDING EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION

Element 3A: Shared Responsibility for Environmental Learning

- **What types of school-wide practices and programs, lesson planning, and/or curricula focus on environmental literacy?**
- **How, and to what degree, has the school integrated environmental and sustainability concepts throughout its instructional program and across subject areas and grade levels?**
- **Does the school utilize the school building and its sustainability features as a teaching tool? Is the school**
- **participating in the “School as a Tool” program through RIDE’s School Building Authority?**
- **How do educators use outdoor spaces around the school and in the community to enhance the curriculum?**

Educators at Garden City Elementary School maximize the use of outdoor spaces within and around the school to enrich the curriculum. Transforming designated areas into outdoor classrooms, teachers bring subjects like science and literature to life, fostering a deeper connection with nature. Field trips to local parks and community spaces provide hands-on learning experiences, while community partnerships with experts and organizations enhance the curriculum with real-world insights.

- **Does the school partner with community-based and nonprofit organizations to enhance the curriculum with environmental and sustainability education? Do these include such activities as field trips, guest presenters, after school programs, and more?**

Teachers at Garden City Elementary School have gone above and beyond to enrich student learning experiences through a variety of engaging activities. These include organizing field trips to locations such as the statehouse, welcoming guest presenters like firefighters, local engineers, and representatives from the Audubon Society. Additionally, teachers have facilitated visits to the recycling center, hosted state representatives, and invited local authors to share their insights. These diverse learning opportunities extend beyond the traditional classroom setting, providing students with firsthand exposure to real-world scenarios and diverse perspectives. Through these initiatives, Garden City Elementary School aims to inspire curiosity, broaden horizons, and foster a well-rounded educational experience for its students.

- **Do the school’s assessment materials across subject areas and grade levels have clear expectations and target proficiency levels for environmental and sustainability concepts? Include quantifiable measures, indicators, or benchmarks of progress toward environmental literacy and/or environmental proficiency where available.**
- **What types of professional development in environmental and sustainability education are encouraged or offered to teachers?**

At the new Garden City Elementary School, a proactive approach to environmental and sustainability education is embraced, extending beyond the classroom and into the professional development opportunities provided for our dedicated educators. Workshops and seminars, hosted by seasoned experts in environmental education, form a cornerstone of the school district’s professional development strategy. These sessions delve into the intricacies of seamlessly integrating sustainability into the curriculum, offering valuable insights into the latest advancements in environmental science, and equipping teachers with effective pedagogical approaches. The school district also supports educators in pursuing certifications and specialized training programs. These credentials not only enhance their proficiency but also contribute to the broader goal of creating environmentally conscious classrooms. Guest speakers and experts are invited to share their wisdom, providing a direct link to current practices and industry insights. Professional development days are dedicated to environmental and sustainability education, offering immersive training sessions and collaborative planning.

Element 3B: Use of the Environment and Sustainability to Develop STEM Content

- **How does the school use sustainability and the environment as a context or theme for connecting/learning STEM thinking skills and content knowledge?**

Garden City Elementary School employs a range of innovative strategies to connect STEM thinking skills with real-world applications. Project-based learning is a cornerstone, with students engaging in hands-on initiatives that tackle sustainability challenges. These projects, ranging from designing eco-friendly solutions to conducting environmental impact assessments, encourage critical thinking and problem-solving within the context of sustainability. Cross-curricular integration is emphasized, weaving sustainability themes into various STEM subjects. Outdoor and experiential learning activities take advantage of natural spaces, providing students with opportunities to connect classroom knowledge with real-world observations. Whether conducting field studies or outdoor experiments, students engage in experiential learning that enhances their STEM thinking skills. Technology plays a crucial role in exploring sustainability concepts, with students using digital tools for environmental data analysis, simulation of ecological systems, and creating digital presentations on sustainable practices.

- **Does the school use sustainability and the environment as a context for connecting and learning green technologies and career pathways?**
- **How does the school's environmental and sustainability focus support an age-appropriate understanding of natural systems?**

The school's curriculum is thoughtfully designed to progressively introduce and deepen students' comprehension of the intricate workings of the natural world as they advance through different grade levels. For younger learners, foundational concepts related to ecosystems, biodiversity, and conservation form the basis of their exploration. These fundamental principles are introduced through interactive and engaging activities that cater to their developmental stage, sparking curiosity about the environment around them. As students' progress, the curriculum evolves to encompass more complex topics aligned with their maturity and cognitive abilities. Older students delve into advanced concepts such as environmental impact assessments and sustainable practices. The curriculum ensures that each stage of learning builds upon the previous one, providing a seamless and comprehensive educational journey. Hands-on experiences are a crucial component of this approach. Whether it's younger students participating in nature walks and simple experiments or older students engaging in more sophisticated field studies, these experiential learning opportunities allow students to directly observe, explore, and comprehend the intricacies of natural systems. Learning communities in the school will be connecting with Central Nurseries to collaborate on a project regarding our landscaping and the sustainability of that.

Element 3C: Development and Application of Civic Knowledge and Skills

- *How does the school use outdoor learning as a tool to: a) teach an array of subjects in context; b) engage the broader community; and c) develop important civic skills?*
- *How, and to what degree, does the school promote and encourage students to conduct class or individual, age-appropriate, civic/community engagement projects? Include important outcomes that have been achieved (using data as appropriate).*

Teachers have been advised to conduct 3 Project Based Learning (PBL) units this school year. A core objective of a PBL is to both solve a local problem and connect with the community to reach a solution. Some projects thus far:

- Responses to natural disasters (in progress)
- Reducing waste in the community (in progress)
- Protecting natural animal habitats (in progress)
- Proposing new laws/guidelines to improve the surrounding community (completed)

Teachers have been advised to conduct 3 Project Based Learning (PBL) units this school year. These projects, designed to transcend classroom boundaries, aim to not only address local issues but also establish meaningful connections within the community. Currently, students are immersed in projects ranging from developing responses to natural disasters and reducing community waste to safeguarding natural animal habitats. These initiatives not only hone critical thinking and problem-solving skills but also instill a sense of environmental and civic responsibility. A recent project, where students proposed new laws and guidelines for community improvement, highlighted their understanding of civic engagement. Beyond textbooks, these PBL units at Garden City Elementary School actively engage students in creating positive change, fostering a holistic approach to education that emphasizes community impact.

- **Whats types of innovative practices and/or partnerships does the school promote and/or participate in to support environmental and sustainability education?**
- **How, and to what degree, has the school's environmental and sustainability education efforts shown growth in academic achievement among students over time? Include data as applicable.**
- **Are there any other actions the school has taken (not covered above) to develop and apply civic knowledge and skills?**

Because this is a newly built innovative facility, many programs and practices are still in development. One program in the works involves Learning Community's collaboration with local landscape and planning companies on outdoor gardening with learning on the positive impact of the vegetation and plantings on the environment, through project based and hands on technics. The school's administration is in process of developing this program with hopes to implement future. The School is collecting data that will be available as time lapses.