



## District Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

### CERTIFICATIONS

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#### District's Certifications

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

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

(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 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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Nominating Authority's Signature) Date:

## SUBMISSION

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

# ILLINOIS GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION



## School/District Applicant Information

- School Name (or District Name if submitting a district nomination):  
Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95

Street Address: 832 S Rand Road  
City: Lake Zurich; County: Lake  
Zip: 60047  
District Name/Number: Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95
- School or District Website: <https://www.lz95.org>
- Principal Name: N/A  
Principal Email Address: N/A  
Phone Number: N/A
- Lead Applicant Name (if different): Dr. Kelley Gallt, Superintendent  
Lead Applicant Email: [Kelley.gallt@lz95.org](mailto:Kelley.gallt@lz95.org)  
Phone Number: 847-540-4963 or 331-930-0035
- (Optional)  
Facebook page: LZDistrict95  
YouTube: N/A  
Instagram: LZDistrict95  
Twitter: @LZDistrict95

<b>Level</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK - 5 or 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School District	<b>School Type</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet	<b>How would you describe your school?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<b>Is your school in one of the largest 50 districts in the nation?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			<b>Total Enrolled: 5,686</b>  <b>Graduation rate: 96%</b> <b>Attendance rate: 93%</b>
		<b>% receiving FRPL: 16%</b> <b>% limited English proficient: 12%</b> <b>Other measures:</b> <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	

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## School Summary and Highlights:

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Use 1 to 2 pages to **provide a summary narrative** describing your school's efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health and wellness; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. This overarching summary should highlight the best of your work in every ED-GRS Pillar and Element.

You can view examples of summary narratives in past [Highlights Reports](#). The summary that you submit should be what you would like to see appear in a future Highlights Report, if your institution is selected. Be sure to include concrete sustainability achievements, supporting data, unique partnerships, program participation, awards, and certifications. It may be helpful to pull from your application materials to write the summary.

Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 located in Lake Zurich, Illinois, caters to a diverse and dynamic student population ranging from Pre-K to age 22. The district is steadfast in its mission to create a sustainable, healthy, and enriching learning environment, aligning with its mission of empowering every learner to achieve personal excellence and its Portrait of a Graduate vision that includes global citizenship demonstrated by environmental responsibility. This commitment is reflected in the district's multifaceted approach to sustainability, health, and environmental education, spanning across the three pillars of the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) program. The district has been proactive and continues to make steady progress in reducing its environmental impact and costs, particularly in energy management. By tracking energy usage through an internal Excel spreadsheet and collaborating with energy consultants, the district has made significant strides in energy conservation. The implementation of LED lighting, motion sensors, and retrofitting HVAC systems, adding an EV charging station, and installing geo-thermal fields at three of our schools are notable examples. The installation of solar panels at the largest elementary building, with plans for further expansion, underscores the district's commitment to renewable energy sources. A comprehensive Sustainability Audit currently in progress includes reviewing 36 months of utility bills, is a testament to the district's dedication to resource efficiency. Our District-wide Sustainability Committee, represented by a broad cross section of our stakeholder groups will focus our 23-24 school year efforts on environmental impact assessment results and identifying areas for improvement, going through a VALUES (Vision, Advocacy, Leadership, Understanding, Engagement) process led by DLR Group (consulting partner with sustainability expertise), strategic action planning around sustainability initiatives that align with the District 95 strategic plan- [Empower95](#), and supportive of enhancing a culture that contributes to a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future. Health and wellness are paramount in the district's agenda. The integrated pest management protocol minimizes pesticide use, ensuring a safe environment for students and staff. The installation of Merv13 filters in buildings and a rigorous preventative maintenance schedule for ventilation systems exemplify the district's efforts in maintaining air quality. The recognition of the Director of Safety and Security as the 2023 National Safety Director of the Year highlights the district's excellence in safety management. These initiatives collectively contribute to a healthy and secure learning atmosphere.

The district's commitment to environmental education is evident in its curriculum and student engagement activities. The outdoor learning areas, including butterfly gardens and native plant preservation sites, funded by the District 95 Educational Foundation, offer hands-on learning experiences. These spaces not only enhance students' understanding of environmental science but also foster a connection with nature. The district's involvement with the Ancient Oaks Foundation and the implementation of a Service Learning course focused on environmental conservation further demonstrate its dedication to experiential learning. Waste reduction and recycling are key components of the district's sustainability efforts. The establishment of compost stations in each building, driven by student-led initiatives, and the implementation of paper, cardboard, and plastic recycling programs reflect the district's commitment to reducing landfill waste. The textile recycling program led by the Lake Zurich High School EDvironment Club is a notable example of student leadership in sustainability. In conclusion, Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95's comprehensive approach to sustainability encompasses energy efficiency, health and wellness, environmental education, and waste management. The district's efforts are

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characterized by innovative practices, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to continuous improvement, all aimed at creating a sustainable and healthy learning environment for its diverse student community.

## Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

### A. Energy

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1. **Do you track energy use in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager<sup>®</sup>, or another way in your district?**

Yes  No

2. **If so, how have you tracked your resource usage, for how long, and how has your usage dropped over that time?** (*Data or graphs can be submitted as a separate supportive document if desired.*)

The tracking of resource usage is embedded into District 95 protocol and practice. We use an internal Excel spreadsheet to monitor each site separately. In addition, we take full advantage of Nania Energy, our energy consultant, ComEd directly for electricity, and Nicor for natural gas. These partnerships have strengthened our energy conservation efforts and allows us to spot inconsistencies in an extremely timely manner. We have also partnered with DLR Group to do a comprehensive Sustainability Audit of our entire District, and they are currently reviewing a 36-month usage of all water, power, and gas utility bills to assess resource use.

3. **Please describe the strategies you have implemented or planned to reduce your energy consumption.**

Multiple practices/strategies have been implemented and planned to reduce our energy consumption. All metal halide lights in each of our parking lots and building exteriors are being replaced with LED. It has become practice to install motion sensors and LED lights in each new build, remodel, or renovated space. We have participated in retro-commissioning of all of our HVAC systems and have installed full geothermal HVAC systems at three of our schools. We recently completed installing solar panels at our newest/largest elementary building with plans for solar installation at 3 additional schools.

4. **What percentage of your school's energy is obtained from:**

- a. **On-site renewable energy generation:** Newly installed, data pending.  
**Type:** Solar
- b. **Purchased renewable energy:** [Click here to enter text.](#)  
**Type:** [Click here to enter text.](#)
- c. **Participation in an energy cooperative, DOE Wind for Schools or other school energy program:** Gas and electric purchases are done through a bidding process. Pending Sustainability Audit recommendations, additional energy cooperatives may be considered.

5. **In what year was your school originally built?** Seth Paine-1967, Lake Zurich High School 1972, Former Administration Building 1974, Sarah Adams – 1981, Middle School South and Isaac Fox-1993, Administration Building – 1995, Middle School North and Spencer Loomis-2003, Rose Road (Facility Lease)-2004, and May Whitney 2020.

6. **What is the total building area of your school?** 1,127,777 total square footage in District.

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7. **Please describe any new construction or major renovations at your school in the past ten years, including the date, and the percentage of area renovated. Describe how you achieved green building or similar standards and any certifications earned.**

While we did not seek green building certification, repurposing and green initiatives were emphasized in all projects listed below: New Construction – May Whitney Elementary School (Pre-K – 5), STEAM additions to Middle School South and Middle School North, library renovations at all schools, air conditioning added to Seth Paine, Sarah Adams, Middle School South and Isaac Fox, STEAM renovation at Lake Zurich High School as well as full renovation of the front entrance for security purposes and addition to Seth Paine. Our former administration building, which had been sitting empty and for sale for years, is currently being repurposed to house our high school transitions program serving students from years 18 through 22. Expected to open in February of 2024, this fully refurbished Young Adult Center will allow for program expansion and authentic learning experiences in life skills for one of our most at risk populations.

8. **Please describe your sustainability policy and practice for new or renovated construction materials and building maintenance.**

Green initiatives were emphasized in all project plans. Geo-thermal fields were installed at Sarah Adams, May Whitney, and Seth Paine resulting in substantial natural gas energy savings (while still being monitored, early estimates appear to far exceed 60%). It has become our common practice during any new construction, repurpose, or remodel to only consider flooring options that do not require waxing thus reducing waste.

## B. Water and Grounds

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9. **Can you demonstrate a reduction in your school's total water consumption from an initial baseline or describe your best practices to limit water usage? For example, calculate your change in water usage (in gallons per occupant) over a specified period of time, or a reduction in water used for irrigation.**

As part of our Sustainability Audit, DLR group is conducting a comprehensive study of our water usage over the last 36 months. To date, some of our best practices include low flow toilets and urinals in all district buildings along with automatic flush valves and low flow faucets/sprayers and showerheads.

10. **What percentage of your landscaping is considered water-efficient and/or dedicated to ecological or instructional use? Describe the kinds of plants used and locations:**

All of our schools have designated outdoor learning areas that were funded by our District 95 Educational Foundation. Multiple schools have butterfly gardens, and native plant preservation. In Summer of 2023, an elective summer semester course centered around Service Learning resulted in the class partnering with the Ancient Oaks Foundation, a local community conservation group, to learn about native plants, milkweed, and the effect of buckthorn on natural habitats. As a result of these authentic learning experiences, students were able to complete projects centered around building pollinator gardens, bee houses, and small sustainable “farming” gardens. Artificial turf covers our largest outdoor sport fields providing us with two full size football and soccer fields that host football, soccer, and lacrosse games eliminating extensive field prep using water resources.

11. **Describe the water sources used for irrigation, including any cisterns or rain barrels.**

City water and rain barrels provide us with our irrigation sources.

12. **Describe any efforts to reduce storm water runoff (e.g., rain gardens) and/or reduce impermeable surfaces.**

Elementary playgrounds are now soft-scape and/or covered in recyclable material which has significantly

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reduced/eliminated storm water run-off issues. As an added effort, our District has increased water retention areas and created rain gardens to further reduce run-off.

## C. Waste and Chemicals Management

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- 13. Describe the strategies you use to divert solid waste (e.g., trash, cafeteria waste, paper, or landscape waste) from landfills due to reduction, recycling and/or composting. Complete the calculations below or provide reduction rates:**

As a direct result of a student led initiative, each of our buildings has a compost station. Our students applied for a grant from our District 95 Educational Foundation to supply a composter to each school. In fact, school composting was recently the focus of one of our high school students' AP research projects! We have paper, cardboard, and plastic recycling in all our buildings with students participating/leading in the collection efforts. Our Lake Zurich High School EDvironment Club recently presented to our school board their plans for a textile recycling program at the high school with the intent to expand to all other schools. The program is supporting a decrease amount of items going into landfills and incinerators, reducing greenhouse emissions, saving natural resources like water and petroleum, and reducing toxins from pesticides herbicides, dyes, and other harsh chemicals used in textile production. We are incredibly proud of their initiative, drive, and enthusiastic leadership in green initiatives and education. District 95 recycles metals with the support of a local community recycler. A recently submitted Request for Proposal through our Food Service has resulted in the inclusion of further developing and expanding the food composting program started at each school.

- 14. What percentage of your school's total office and classroom paper content is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed and/or chlorine-free?**

We meet/exceed all state standards for paper towels and toilet paper. While all schools order their own copy paper supply, a survey has assured us that, when at all possible, they are indicating that they seek to secure paper with high post-consumer recycled content. It is our conservative estimate that this is occurring 60% of the time. The District is also investigating the possibility of switching to bulk buy and storage of recycled content paper products. We anticipate the Sustainability Audit, in early 2024, will provide us the necessary information to impact decision-making for building our sustainability priorities.

- 15. List the types and estimated quantities of chemicals (e.g., laboratory materials, cleaning products, pesticides) managed at your school, and how they are stored, disposed of, and minimized:**

All motor oil is recycled. Pesticides are not common practice or stored on-site, and in the rare event that an outside contractor must resort to rare usage, we require advance public notification. Specialty chemicals needed for advanced science programming are responsibly stored in small quantities as needed for instructional purposes in locked science lab closets.

- 16. Describe how your school purchases environmentally preferable products for use by students and staff:**

All products must meet the Green Standards criteria and are typically purchased through major vendors agreeing to our specifications.

## D. Alternative Transportation

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- 17. What percentages of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 or more students in the car) to and from school? Please explain how these numbers are obtained and**

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**calculated, and describe any improvement in this area over time.**

Seven of our eight school buildings are primarily bus or carpool designated due to their location. One of our schools is only served by one bus and is in the center of a neighborhood allowing for an overwhelming percentage of their students to be walkers, bike riders, or car poolers. When safe routes are available, schools do participate in the national ride your bike to school day.

**18. Describe the plans or strategies to increase the number of students walking and biking to school.**

We partner with our village to ensure safe access to crosswalk zones for our schools. This fall our neighborhood walking school was selected by the Village of Lake Zurich to receive a crosswalk mural. These colorful themed murals have been credited with calling extra attention to the crosswalk area which results in better attention and lower speeds by the driver.

**19. Has your school implemented any of the following? Check all that apply.**

- Designated carpool parking stalls.
- A well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses).
- Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.
- Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School.

Describe activities in your safe routes program: Safe school routes are vetted by our Director of Safety and local police departments.

**20. Describe how your school transportation is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact:**

Our in-house transportation department uses a decision-making matrix with safety factors to identify students eligible for bus transportation. Once riders are identified, a sophisticated software program creates the safest and most efficient routes throughout the District. Since simultaneously applying these two measures early last year, we have been able to effectively decrease our daily fleet by 5 busses.

**21. Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships:**

Annual combustion boiler tests for efficiency of burning fuel are conducted. Alternate fuel and/or adding electric busses to part of fleet replacement cycle are currently in the investigative phase.

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

### A. Environmental Health

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**1. Describe your school's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, including any certifications earned, routine inspections, pest identification, monitoring, record-keeping, and pest prevention activities.**

There is an integrated pest management written protocol followed by District custodial/maintenance staff. Orkin provides written records monthly of activity and control measures taken in addition to regular maintenance. Staff has been appropriately briefed regarding proper food storage as a deterrent to invasive pests.



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**2. Describe the efforts or practices you have in place to minimize or eliminate the use of pesticides, both indoors and outdoors.**

As part of the expected protocol/procedure by site-based custodial staff, scheduled building sweeps are routinely performed focusing on outside entry points which has greatly reduced/eliminated pesticide use both indoors and outdoors. In the rare event where a pesticide is the last resort, only eco-friendly pesticides are used. Landscaping is pesticide free.

**3. Describe the actions taken or the practices your school employs to minimize or eliminate exposure to the following specific hazardous contaminants (if applicable):**

- a. Elemental Mercury**
- b. Carbon Monoxide from fuel burning equipment or appliances**
- c. Radon**
- d. Chromated Copper Arsenate in wooden playground equipment**
- e. Others (e.g., Lead, Asbestos or PCBs)**

Combustion analysis, checking for exhaust leaks, check of overhead exhaust fans, and radon are monitored/tested on a regularly scheduled maintenance timetable. District 95 has a fully managed lead, asbestos and PCB program. All environmental inspection reports are available upon request. All playgrounds have been updated to modern standards and contain no wood structures.

**4. Describe policies and practices in place to promote security and life safety.**

District 95 has outstanding security and life safety management protocol/practices deeply embedded throughout our system as evidenced by Board of Education policies [4:150 - Facility Management and Building Programs](#), [4:170 - Safety](#), [4:190 - Targeted School Violence Prevention Program](#) and [6:50 - School Wellness](#). Shortly after the addition of a full time Director of Safety and Security position was added to the District several years ago, a full safety audit was commissioned. We have committed significant resources to ensuring that we have addressed all audit areas. Multiple additional security cameras were added at key recommended positions across all locations. The [I Love You Guys](#) safety/emergency protocol was put into place fall of 2022 and included extensive employee training, student drills, and public awareness forums. Ongoing District Safety Committee meetings are held on a regular basis as well as Inter-Agency Collaboration Meetings with local governments, police, and fire departments to ensure coordination/implementation of all required protocols/practices. All safety drill requirements are exceeded and allow for feedback and reflection for improvement purposes. A great deal of attention, time, collaborative, and thoughtful efforts went in to ensuring the safety of all. All schools have secured entrances with a vestibule in the middle. A Student Resource Officer and full security staff are employed at the high school. All visitors must screen through our Raptor system before admittance to the buildings. Window security film (8 Mil or higher) was installed in key locations. District 95 is extremely proud to share that due to this massive collective effort in improving security and life safety throughout all of our facilities, our Director of Safety and Security was named the 2023 National Safety Director of the Year through Campus Safety Magazine.

**5. Describe actions your school takes to prevent exposure to asthma triggers in and around the school, such as animals in the classroom, sanitation, or other airborne contaminants.**

District 95 is extremely proactive in preventing exposure to asthma triggers in and around all of our buildings. Board of Education policies [6:100 - Using Animals in the Educational Program](#), [7:285 - Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program](#) address this area specifically. In addition, an extensive air quality testing program is fully implemented in each District building with air quality testing occurring multiple times each year. Results from each of these tests are shared in face-to-face meetings with each building's staff upon completion of every test. A full accounting of

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prevention/protocol/procedure can be found at [Health Services Page](#) and/or [Facilities Page](#). Any/all ADA accommodations are provided to staff as requested, documented, and approved.

6. **Describe actions your school takes to control and prevent leaks, moisture, condensation, and excess humidity; and to promptly cleanup mold or remove moldy materials when it is found.**

We have installed building wide exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources in each facility (Merv13 filters). There is an aggressive preventative maintenance schedule for all ventilation systems throughout the District (including individual unit ventilators) to ensure cleanliness and proper operation. Inspection, cleaning, filter replacement for all HVAC systems occurs quarterly. Outside experts are brought in for any mold clean-up or removal.

7. **Our school has installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources.**  Yes  No

*If Yes, list the rooms with these features and their uses:*

Gyms, science classrooms, art rooms, our newly constructed elementary school and major renovated spaces previously described all include some local exhaust systems all with Merv13 filters.

8. **Describe your school's preventive maintenance program for the building's ventilation system, including unit ventilators to ensure it is clean and operating properly:**

There is a preventative maintenance schedule for all ventilation systems throughout the District (including individual unit ventilators) to ensure cleanliness and proper operation. Inspection, cleaning, filter replacement for all HVAC systems occurs quarterly. Outside experts are brought in for any mold clean-up or removal.

9. **Describe actions your school takes to ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation standards, including any periodic measurements and record keeping:**

District 95 uses two systems (Syserco and Johnson Controls) to constantly monitor air flow, temperature, humidity etc., while allowing for reducing energy usage when facilities are not in use.

10. **Describe other steps your school takes 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 identify environmental health and safety issues and take corrective action:**

EPA IAQ inspections are conducted in all buildings in every occupied space twice per year. This trend analysis, along with other scheduled inspections allows issues to be identified and scheduled for immediate corrective action. All results are shared on-site in face-to-face meetings with all staff of each facility tested invited to be present to discuss results. An overview of our complete testing programs to support environmental health/safety issues can be found on our [Facilities Page](#).

11. **Describe your green cleaning policies, equipment, products and practices, and green cleaning certifications or awards:**

All of our cleaning policies, equipment, products and practices meet green quality standards and are green guard certified.

## B. Nutrition and Fitness

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## 12. Does your school employ the programs below to promote nutrition, physical activity, and overall school health?

- Participates in a Farm to School program or similar local food program.
- Our school has an on-site garden.
- Our cafeteria provides fresh meals daily with healthy choices for students.
- At least 50% of our students' annual physical education takes place outdoors.
- Health measures are integrated into assessments.

Give details about programs and successes: Student fitness testing and goal-setting, several schools have on-site gardens cared for by either individual classes, clubs, or grade levels. Additional supporting information can be found in 13 and 14 below.

## 13. Provide specific examples of actions taken which are innovative or unique practices and partnerships:

We foster collaboration between our culinary arts and healthy lunch programs. A nutritious sandwich created by a culinary arts student is now a staple on our high school menu, enhancing students' awareness of the nutritional value and taste in healthy eating. Furthermore, our food service provider partners with young chefs for annual competitions and education on healthy food preparation and consumption.

## 14. Describe how outdoor education, exercise and recreation are promoted within the curriculum and outside the classroom.

In our pursuit of empowering every learner to achieve personal excellence, our school district places a strong emphasis on the holistic development of students, encompassing both physical and emotional well-being. This commitment is evident in our curriculum, where outdoor education, exercise, and recreation are seamlessly integrated into the daily lives of our students. Physical education classes play a pivotal role in shaping the total development of our students. Beyond the conventional focus on physical fitness, these classes aim to nurture emotional well-being and instill lifelong habits of healthy living. Students are not only engaged in various physical activities but also encouraged to understand the correlation between exercise, recreational habits, and a healthy heart. To enhance the authenticity of the learning experience, students in grades 6-12 utilize heart monitors during their daily physical education sessions. This technology enables them to set personalized goals, providing valuable insights into the impact of exercise and recreational habits on their cardiovascular health. This personalized approach not only fosters a deeper understanding but also motivates students to take ownership of their well-being. Recognizing the importance of unstructured playtime, elementary students benefit from an additional 30-minute free play recess each day. This time allows them to engage in outdoor activities, promoting social interaction, creativity, and the joy of movement. The emphasis on both structured physical education classes and unstructured playtime reflects our commitment to fostering a balanced and comprehensive approach to physical development. The district offers competitive sports for students to participate in, allowing them to explore their interests/talents. Engaging in team sports not only promotes physical fitness but also instills essential life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and sportsmanship. Our commitment to outdoor education extends beyond the traditional classroom setting. Younger students embark on field trips to nature preserves, connecting them with the environment and instilling a sense of appreciation for nature. Older students, through extracurricular clubs and advanced classes like AP Biology, collaborate with local community partners on projects that promote outdoor education while contributing to environmental conservation. In aligning our curriculum with the district mission, we strive to create a learning environment that goes beyond academic achievements. By integrating outdoor education, exercise, and recreation, we aim to nurture well-rounded individuals who not only excel academically but also embrace a healthy and active lifestyle.

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## 15. Describe efforts to improve nutrition, health, fitness of students and staff, highlighting innovative practices and partnerships:

Efforts to improve nutrition, health, and fitness in schools involve a multi-faceted approach, integrating innovative practices and forming partnerships with reputable organizations. Here's a detailed description of the initiatives such as a comprehensive health curriculum is integrated into the academic program at every grade level. This ensures that students receive age-appropriate education on topics such as nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and overall well-being. Most of our schools have established a valuable partnership with the American Heart Association. Through the Kids Heart Challenge, students are engaged in fun and educational activities that promote heart-healthy habits. This partnership provides resources and support to enhance the school's cardiovascular health initiatives. Recognizing the need for skilled sports officials, the school has developed a specialized course at Lake Zurich High School to teach sports officiating. This initiative not only enriches the students' educational experience but also addresses job shortages in this particular field, contributing to both education and workforce development. The District prioritizes the health of students by organizing regular vision and hearing testing. Early detection of issues ensures prompt intervention and contributes to the overall well-being and academic success of the students. Collaborating with the school's food service provider, Sodexo, the institution organizes cooking competitions for "young chefs." This not only promotes healthy eating but also encourages creativity in the kitchen. Students can develop nutritious and delicious menu selections, fostering a positive attitude toward healthy food choices. Recognizing the importance of staff well-being, the school invests in professional development programs that focus on self-care. Workshops and resources are provided to help staff manage stress, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and prioritize their mental and physical health. District 95 offers insurance incentives and wellness programs for employees to encourage a healthier lifestyle. These initiatives may include discounted gym memberships, health screenings, and other activities that promote physical and mental well-being.

## C. Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety

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### 16. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues? Yes No

If yes, describe the health-related initiatives or approaches used by the school:

The District has implemented a comprehensive Coordinated School Health approach, integrating various health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues. The District is committed to serving healthy and nutritious meals in school cafeterias. This includes a phased-in approach to offering breakfast, ensuring that students have access to a balanced and nourishing diet to support their overall health and academic performance. The District has established a strong Multi-Tier System of Support to identify and address the needs of students at risk academically, emotionally, socially, or behaviorally. This tiered approach allows for early intervention and targeted support to help students succeed. The use of the DESSA screener is a proactive measure to identify students who may benefit from immediate and actionable support in strengthening their social and emotional skills. This tool assists educators in tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of each student. All schools in the District have psychologists, social workers, and nurses on staff to provide comprehensive support for students' mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Additional counselors are available in grades 6-12 to address the unique needs of older students. The District has implemented suicide prevention programs for students and information nights for parents. These programs aim to raise awareness, provide resources, and create a supportive environment to address mental health concerns. High school staff members offer office hours within the school day to provide additional support to students. This proactive approach ensures that students have access to assistance and guidance when needed, contributing to a positive and supportive learning environment. Extensive efforts have been made to embed social-emotional learning (SEL) across the curriculum. Daily Morning Meetings at the elementary level set a positive tone for the day, fostering a sense of community and belonging among students. The District was a leader in the county in establishing

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vaccine clinics during the pandemic. This proactive response demonstrates a commitment to the health and safety of the greater school community. The District encourages and supports district-wide initiatives, such as the 12 Days of Giving, organized by Lake Zurich High School Student Council. This program involves all eight schools and supports various charities, including this year's recipients Saving Tiny Hearts Society, Joanie's Closet, local food pantries, and Toys for Tots. It promotes a culture of giving and community involvement among students and staff.

**17. Does your school partner with any outside institutions, businesses, clubs, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and safety?**

Yes  No

If yes, describe these partnerships:

Collaborating with the YMCA enables the District to provide before and after-school programs, contributing to the overall well-being of students by offering a safe and enriching environment beyond regular school hours. The partnership with the American Heart Association not only supports fundraising initiatives but also promotes awareness of heart health among students. This collaboration aligns with the District's commitment to holistic health education. Partnering with Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs) both within schools and with external groups enhances the range of student-centered programs. Initiatives like Sticky Fingers, which teaches students to cook, not only contribute to practical life skills but also promote healthy living. Establishing partnerships with mental health organizations such as Cherry Hill Counseling, Center for Emotional Wellness, and Neuropsych demonstrates a commitment to supporting the mental health needs of students and families. This is particularly crucial for those facing challenges in accessing mental health services through personal providers. Integrating social-emotional goals into School Improvement Plans across all schools underscores the District's dedication to fostering emotional well-being. This ensures a systematic and strategic approach to addressing the social and emotional needs of students. The collaboration with local Police and Fire Departments as part of an integrated planning team focused on safety and security indicates a comprehensive approach to ensuring the well-being of students and staff, with an emphasis on emergency preparedness. The District 95 Education Foundation's support in the form of grant funding for health and wellness initiatives further enhances the resources available to the schools. This collaboration contributes to the implementation of innovative programs that promote overall health. The partnership with Joanie's Closet, which provides funds, services, clothing, shelter, and furniture for students and families in need, reflects a commitment to addressing the broader well-being of the community. This initiative ensures that students facing challenges outside the classroom receive the support they require. By fostering such a network of partnerships with diverse institutions and organizations, our District is creating a holistic support system that goes beyond traditional educational boundaries, addressing the comprehensive well-being of students and their families and creating and providing a positive and nurturing educational environment.

**18. Describe your school's curriculum content for student health and fitness as well as its applied learning:**

District 95 mission, empower every learner to achieve personal excellence, focuses on the whole child with emphasis on academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development by providing an integrated curriculum that includes fostering healthy attitudes for positive life-style choices and life-long learning. A well-rounded education is the cornerstone of a student's development, encompassing not only academic knowledge but also crucial life skills. One often underestimated aspect of education is its impact on student health and fitness. The school curriculum plays a pivotal role in shaping a student's overall well-being, and applied learning within this framework is key to promoting a healthy lifestyle. Body: The school curriculum is designed not only to impart academic knowledge but also to contribute to the holistic development of students. Incorporating health and fitness elements into the curriculum ensures that students receive a comprehensive education that addresses both their mental and physical well-being. Physical education is an integral component of the school curriculum that emphasizes applied learning in the realm of health and fitness. It goes beyond theoretical knowledge, encouraging students to actively participate in physical activities, sports, and exercises. This hands-on approach fosters a deeper

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understanding of the importance of regular physical activity for maintaining good health. A well-balanced curriculum includes elements of nutrition education, teaching students about the importance of making healthy food choices. Applied learning in this context involves practical lessons on meal planning, understanding nutritional labels, and cooking, empowering students to make informed decisions about their diet. Beyond traditional subjects, the curriculum incorporates life skills education that includes topics like time management, stress reduction, and the importance of adequate sleep. These skills contribute to the overall well-being of students and establish habits that can positively impact their health and fitness throughout their lives. Applied learning in health and fitness extends beyond the classroom, providing students with opportunities to apply their knowledge in real-world settings. Field trips to local fitness facilities, community health programs, or even collaboration with health professionals enhance students' understanding of how health and fitness principles are applied outside the academic environment. By integrating health and fitness into the curriculum, our schools instill in students the value of maintaining a healthy lifestyle throughout their lives. This goes beyond the classroom and exams, fostering a commitment to regular exercise, nutritious eating, and overall well-being.

## Pillar 3: Effective Environmental Literacy

### A. School Culture of Sustainability

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**1. Describe what *sustainability* means to your school or district in particular. How is sustainability included in your mission to educate students?**

Our newly developed District Strategic Plan, Empower95, includes a vision statement entitled Portrait of a Graduate which lists the characteristics of a District 95 graduate further clarified by demonstrated actions. Of special note within the five characteristics listed, is that of being a Global Citizen, demonstrated by global and local community contributions, cultural competence, environmental responsibility, ability to find common ground, and self-accountability. Over the past several years, District 95 has demonstrated a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, sustainable practices, and community betterment, and we are ready to take our next steps. Our primary aim, simply put, is to establish a culture of sustainability throughout the district and actively contribute to a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future with a vision to engage educators, staff, students, and community members. We also understand that sustainability is an evolving conversation that has moved beyond resource conservation to include climate change, human health and wellness, community and economic health, resiliency, regeneration, behavior awareness, and eco-system integrity. We are striving to build upon our strong foundation described throughout this application. District 95 has engaged a prominent consulting partner, DLR, to collaborate with us in this endeavor. DLR's expertise in sustainability is well-documented, and they bring a wealth of experience in the field. Their VALUES approach, which underlines Vision, Advocacy, Leadership, Understanding, Engagement, and Systems Thinking, will be instrumental in guiding our initial work. A District-wide Sustainability Committee has been established and is representative of a broad spectrum of voices from diverse stakeholder groups throughout our schools and community inclusive of students, parents, staff, administrators and community partners. Our focus during school year 23-24 will focus on establishing a comprehensive Sustainability Baseline, participating in the VALUES program to establish the District's Future Vision and identified priorities for Sustainability. Future work will include implementation strategies and specific performance goals.

**2. What role has the administration played in the culture of sustainability at your school?**

District 95 administration has been proactive in incorporating sustainability initiatives through example, education, action, and resource allocation. The administration, at the District level and site-based level, encourage students and staff to engage in environmental sustainability initiatives. By providing voice to our students through opportunities such as the Superintendent's Advisory Council, where several student-driven sustainability initiatives were launched, the administration has removed barriers, provided guidance and funding, and opened up engagement opportunities for students and staff.

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3. **What practices, working groups, or committees does your school employ to help ensure effective environmental and sustainability education? Provide specific examples of actions taken.**

There are several committees conducting work related to supporting effective environmental and sustainability education. The student EDvironment Committee is focused on improving efforts across our system including student created and aligned lessons spanning K-12 grades, taught yearly. This team is meeting with local legislators in hopes of creating legislation mandating learning for all in Illinois. The Student Safety ensuring ongoing safety and security efforts collaboratively so that all stakeholders are trained and understand safety expectations, such as our standard response protocol: hold, secure, lockdown, evacuate, and shelter. Common language is critical to understanding our response to safety concerns. Our Student Success Committee has focused its efforts on belongingness and inclusive practices, which has led to refurbishing identified bathrooms and locker rooms to support all students regardless of gender.

4. **Does your school have a green team, garden club, or a community green committee on sustainability? Who participates? What kinds of project or activities do they undertake? What roles do they play in the school?**

In addition to the District-wide Sustainability Committee described in Question 1, multiple schools have clubs such as EDvironment (Lake Zurich High School) which is a student run initiative with goals of fostering a better environmental awareness curriculum across Illinois, a more environmentally conscious community, developing presentations and activities for K-12 students, and lobbying for passing state standards for environmental awareness. React Club (Lake Zurich High School) plans activities and advocates for an environmentally school and community. Recycling Club (Middle School North) focuses on compost waste during the lunch periods. Recycle Club (Middle School South) responsible for collecting all recycled materials from classrooms daily. Local Scout Troops (various elementary buildings) provide planting, gardening, clean-up of designated school grounds. Sarah Adams PTO hosts a yearly Earth Day event where they partner with local wildlife experts and nurseries to give away trees to plant. Seth Paine PTO has a Beautification Committee that focuses on enhancing school grounds and keeping up the outdoor learning space with the help of the school's scout troops. A Seth Paine staff member has lovingly and diligently planted many flowers in the school's courtyard and maintains them year-round. Isaac Fox's Green Team has learned about composting, planting and plated, and experienced growing micro greens. They also have a PTO Beautification Committee and various school based scouting groups attend to the garden beds.

5. **Describe other ways your school integrates sustainability into daily habits and culture of the school's staff, volunteers, students and community (e.g., recycling days, no bottled water, murals, themed events, virtual backpacks, etc):**

The District recently completed a survey of all employees as part of our Sustainability Audit to identify daily sustainability habits embedded in culture of our schools/buildings. Top identified sustainable initiatives/practices that schools/buildings are involved in now included use of recycling bins, use of light sensors, use of blinds/shades to control heat or air conditioning loss/usage, reusable water bottles and use of water bottle refilling stations, use of electric hand dryers, and support of student sustainability related clubs. When asked to identify existing initiatives and practices embedded under Health and Wellness throughout our schools, our staff identified use of sensory rooms and sensory stress relief areas, out learning spaces, view to outside nature from staff and student spaces, natural daylight in student and staff spaces, adequate lighting levels and controls, adequate ventilation of all learning spaces, access to room temperature control, adequate drinking water quality, accessibility and access to spaces for all occupants, flexible and adjustable furniture, display of artwork, graphics and cultural identity. Reusable water bottles were supplied to all students from our District 95 Educational Foundation, and the entire District uses virtual backpacks for communication and connection purposes. All school buildings and newly renovated spaces have beautiful, themed murals.

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## 6. Any other school practices, visions, projects, plans or information you want to include to showcase the environmental work your school has achieved?

Our Executive Director of Facilities and Grounds provides authentic learning experiences to our fourth graders at the schools with geo-thermal fields. His presentation captivates the student’s attention and leaves them with the desire to learn more about sustainability. The District has installed its first EV charging station at May Whitney School, and has laid the infrastructure for adding charging stations at two additional sites. The EDvironment Club at the high school has developed a district-wide Earth Day initiative, now in its third year. Driven by one of their goals to influence state legislators to adopt environmental learning standards, they met with Superintendent Gallt and our Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction to share a vision of all District students receiving student developed environmental focused themed curricular lessons on Earth Day each year. Now in its third year, these lessons and presentation materials are completely developed by our EDvironment Club, vetted by our principals and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and delivered by all our teaching staff to reach each of our 5,686 students on the same day. Designed to educate and influence, these lessons seek to engage students in authentic learning experiences regarding sustainability and support our vision of producing global citizens demonstrating self-accountability in environmental responsibility. It is powerful to see these engaging lessons come to life within all our classrooms because of a student-led initiative. In addition to their outdoor classroom, Lake Zurich High School has their own Greenhouse that is used as a alternate learning/work station to support student initiatives in seed cultivation, growing and selling plants, studying greenhouse gasses and Earth’s feedback loops as well as supporting the curriculum of the science courses such as physical sciences, dual credit environmental studies, biology classes, and AP environmental course sequences. At the heart of the Greenhouse use is its direct tie to our Transitional students. Through the LZ Greenhouse, all students in the Life Skills High School Class at Lake Zurich High School and Transitional Program (ages 18-22) can develop valuable learning skills that adhere to the everyday demands of adult, independent living. The students do everything from planting vegetables, drying herbs, and cooking the fully grown vegetables in the classroom to learn general vocational and leisure skills that will be useful in the years to come. Every May, the Greenhouse hosts an organized plant sale where the students sell plants to staff and parents—an event that fosters a lot of excitement and preparation. The big annual plant sale has been immensely successful in the past few years as they ultimately earn an average of \$1,000 that is used to purchase more supplies to support the Greenhouse. By getting experience from the plant sale revolving around advertising and selling, the event provides a beneficial experience to the students while promoting the Greenhouse simultaneously.

## B. Curriculum and Pedagogy

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### 7. Does your school have a written definition and requirement for environmental literacy? Is there an assessment required?

Our K-12 science curriculum defines requirements for expected mastery of environmental literacy at each of our grade levels. This curriculum, currently under committee study for revision, is poised to better align our K-12 initiatives in this area to reflect current practices and future goals and standards. Environmental literacy assessment items may be included within science assessments reflecting lessons taught throughout designated units of study at multiple grade levels.

### 8. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning STEM? How is sustainability and the environment incorporated into the curriculum in all areas?

While all students Pre-K – 22 have shared authentic learning experiences – with STEM inclusive of a sustainability lens, full units of study include third grade students experiencing an Environments and Survival unit, fourth grade students studying Natural Resources in the United States, fifth grade students studying Ecosystem Restoration, middle school students opting to choose Project Lead the Way Green Architecture as an elective, and multiple opportunities for high school students to engage in environmental science, biology courses, physical science



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courses and AP Environmental Science which breeds understanding that human survival depends on developing practices that will achieve sustainable systems.

## 9. How does your school use sustainability as a context for learning green technologies and/or career pathways?

Elementary students are introduced through hands on stem activities in both science and Fresh Inc. Project Lead The Ways Green Architecture, offered at the Middle School level, serves as a lead in to future PLTW progressive study options. The District has been named as one of Illinois' leaders in career pathways designations. Work continues to expand the number of career pathways offered. The District also offers high school students the option of doing an internship in a selected field of interest with a potential to match a student at the Smart Farm.

## 10. Describe students' outdoor learning experiences at multiple grade levels. How do they support curriculum content?

The District 95 Educational Foundation provided grant funding to support every school in their development of an outdoor classroom. The incorporation of outdoor classrooms into educational settings has proven to be a transformative and enriching experience for students across multiple grade levels. The connection with nature, experiential learning, physical activity, and curriculum integration collectively contribute to a holistic educational journey. These outdoor learning environments provide a unique and dynamic setting that enhances traditional classroom education by fostering a connection with nature, promoting physical activity, and supporting various curriculum content. One of the primary benefits of outdoor classrooms is the opportunity for students to connect with the natural world. Studies have shown that exposure to nature positively influences cognitive development, reduces stress levels, and enhances overall well-being. Regardless of grade level, students benefit from the sensory experiences offered by outdoor settings, including the sights, sounds, and textures of nature. This connection not only stimulates curiosity but also instills a sense of environmental stewardship, encouraging students to appreciate and care for the world around them. Our outdoor classrooms offer a hands-on, experiential approach to learning that complements traditional classroom instruction. Students of all ages engage in practical, real-world applications of academic concepts, reinforcing their understanding of various subjects. Biology classes can explore ecosystems firsthand, conducting experiments and observing plant and animal life in their natural habitats. This experiential learning fosters a deeper understanding of complex concepts, encourages critical thinking, and nurtures a lifelong love for learning. Outdoor classrooms provide an active and dynamic learning environment that promotes physical activity and overall well-being. Incorporating movement into the learning process has been linked to improved concentration, increased engagement, and enhanced academic performance. From pre-k to high school, students participate in activities that align with the curriculum while encouraging them to move, interact, and collaborate. This holistic approach to education not only supports academic achievement but also contributes to the development of healthy lifestyle habits. The use of outdoor classrooms seamlessly integrates with various academic disciplines, enhancing the curriculum content across grade levels. Science classes can explore natural phenomena, mathematics can be taught through measurements and observations, and language arts can find inspiration in the surrounding environment. The outdoors become a living textbook, offering a diverse range of educational opportunities that cater to different learning styles and preferences. This integration not only reinforces academic content but also allows students to see the interconnectedness of subjects in the real world. An extensive outdoor classroom is planned for our newest facility for our special needs 18-22 year olds (opening February 2024).

## 11. If applicable, describe how the school grounds are devoted to environmental education uses:

School grounds devoted to environmental education offer multifaceted opportunities for students to connect with nature, learn about ecological principles, and develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment. Staff across the District have shared that these spaces serve as living classrooms that inspire a lifelong commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. Native plant gardens on school grounds provides an opportunity for students to learn about local flora and fauna. These gardens can serve as living

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laboratories where students study plant life cycles, observe insect interactions, and explore the importance of biodiversity. Additionally, students may be involved in the planning, planting, and maintenance of these gardens, promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility. Creating wildlife habitats on school grounds, such as bird-friendly areas, butterfly gardens, or insect habitats, offers students the chance to observe and interact with local wildlife. This not only enhances their understanding of ecosystems but also instills a sense of appreciation and empathy for the natural world. Integrating composting and recycling stations on school grounds provides practical lessons in waste reduction and sustainability. Students can actively participate in composting organic waste and recycling materials, gaining firsthand experience in environmental conservation practices. Students can collect data on temperature, precipitation, wind speed, and other meteorological factors, linking their observations to broader discussions about climate change and the impact of weather on ecosystems. Students can study the importance of water in sustaining life and explore human impacts on water quality. Establishing community gardens on school grounds encourages students to engage in sustainable agriculture practices. Students can learn about the food production process, the importance of soil health, and the benefits of locally sourced produce. Supporting student-led environmental clubs and projects encourages active participation in eco-friendly initiatives. These clubs can take on projects such as tree planting, habitat restoration, or organizing environmental awareness campaigns within the school community.

## C. Community Involvement

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### 12. Describe how your school promotes student and teacher engagement with the community and civic involvement outside the school? Have there been green themes to their work?

Both students and staff have partnered on various occasions with our local Ancient Oaks Foundation who is dedicated to preserving the natural areas around Ela Township through education, volunteerism, long term planning and supportive funding. Students and staff have supported greater recycling initiatives throughout the community and with such partners as Ela Township Library and SWALCO. Many of our student clubs and environmental focused science classes volunteer in area clean-up and preservation initiatives.

### 13. Describe your partnerships to help your school and other schools achieve in the 3 Pillars. Include both the scope and impact of these partnerships:

Partnerships have proved invaluable to us in supporting school achievement in the 3 Pillars. Collaboration with energy companies and local utilities to implement energy-efficient technologies, such as solar panels, LED lighting, and energy-efficient HVAC systems. Engagement with DLR to provide comprehensive energy audits and assessments to identify areas where schools can reduce energy consumption and costs. Partnering with waste management companies to establish effective recycling and waste reduction programs led out by our compost champion at each of our schools. Closely working with our architectural firm to ensure all new design and renovations include green building practices to design and construct environmentally friendly school buildings. Our facilities department collaborates with organizations/vendors that provide expertise in sustainable building materials and construction techniques. Collaboration with health organizations to provide wellness programs, nutritional education, and fitness activities for students and staff. Form partnerships with local nature reserves, environmental centers, or botanical gardens to enhance students' environmental education through field trips and hands-on experiences. Collaboration with environmental experts to organize workshops, seminars, and guest lectures for students and educators. Work with non-profit organizations focused on environmental education to access resources, educational materials, and professional development opportunities for teachers. These collaborations leverage the strengths of various stakeholders, creating a more resilient and effective framework for achieving sustainability goals within the education system.

### 14. Describe how your school shares environmental education or sustainability events with other schools or organizations?

Our District is proud to share our environmental education and sustainability events with other schools,

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organizations, and our community through press releases, Superintendent’s Monthly Newsletter, Principal communications, Bear Facts (High School Student Newspaper). Our talented Communications Department is well connected and proactively highlights our efforts and events using social media.

## D. Professional Development

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**15. In your required staff professional development for all teachers, is sustainability education or environmental education training included? If so, please describe what this entails.**

Our staff professional development includes specialized training for teachers in areas such as FreshINC, Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Green Architecture, AP Environmental Science, Biology, and other environmentally-focused subjects. Teachers of these courses undergo specific training to effectively deliver these curricula, which encompasses understanding sustainable practices, environmental science principles, and innovative teaching methodologies. Additionally, all staff, including educators and custodial personnel, receive professional learning in health, wellness, and safety. This includes training for custodial staff on the proper mixture and labeling of Cleaning Pro. Our approach ensures that all staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote environmental stewardship, health, and safety within our educational environment.

**16. What workshops or professional development events have your teachers attended themed around environmental topics?**

Our AP Environmental Science teachers undergo specialized training that encompasses a deep understanding of biosystems, the impact of human activities on the environment, and sustainable practices. This training includes mastering the AP curriculum and pedagogy, focusing on engaging teaching methods and critical thinking. It also emphasizes hands-on learning through fieldwork and practical applications, integrating real-world case studies to make the subject matter tangible for students. Our elementary teaching staff has received multiple levels of professional development opportunities to implement the Amplify science curricular resource with specific units connected to sustainability and our environment. Additionally, our educators are committed to continual professional development to stay abreast of the latest in environmental science research and educational strategies, ensuring they are not only subject matter experts but also effective facilitators of student learning and environmental stewardship.

**17. Have your teachers or staff earned any certifications in environmental education? What kind have they earned?**

The AP Environmental Science teacher has undergone specialized training for teaching AP Environmental Science. This training is a form of certification that equips the teacher with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver the AP Environmental Science curriculum.

**18. Have any of your teachers or staff received any awards related to environmental education?**

While no specific awards in environmental education have been received by our staff to date, our commitment extends beyond environmental stewardship to encompass health and wellness. We encourage and support our educators in their continuous pursuit of excellence in these interconnected fields and look forward to recognizing their future achievements. The AP Environmental Science teacher has undergone specialized training for teaching AP Environmental Science. This training is a form of certification that equips the teacher with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver the AP Environmental Science curriculum. Additionally, we are proud to serve the Hawthorn Woods community who has won the America in Bloom award – 2023 overall national champion, as this award as well as many others signifies our communities’ efforts in sustainability.

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19. Do any of your teachers or staff hold environmental education related volunteer positions or memberships?

- Environmental Education Association of Illinois
- North American Association of Environmental Education
- Children and Nature Network
- Northern Illinois Nature Preschool Association
- Chicago Wilderness
- Local environmental related clubs

### Supporting Materials

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Attach a **minimum of three photos** and a **maximum of five photos** with your application (photo size limit 5 MB). Please save your photos using descriptive language. For example, “Students conduct water quality tests in outdoor classroom with science majors from nearby university x” would be more helpful than “Photo 1.” **Photos should be action shots, not posed.** By sending these photos, you are giving Illinois Green Alliance, the Illinois State Board of Education, and the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them.

Please provide a brief description (300 characters) for each:

**Image 1: High school interns supporting learning service course**

**Image 2: Isaac Fox students were partnered with Ancient Oaks Foundation to learn about native plants**

**Image 3: Student groups from multiple schools tend to garden beds**

**Image 4: High School Honors Physical Science students use their green house to study green house gases and earth’s feedback loops**

**Image 5: Lyle Erstad, Director of Facilities and Grounds, provides authentic learning opportunities to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students about geothermal fields**

### Submit Your Application

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**Applications must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, December 22, 2023.** Applications are being collected by the Illinois Green Alliance on behalf of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). *Applications should be no longer than 18 pages.*

For an application to be considered, it must be **submitted via email** to [greenribbon@isbe.net](mailto:greenribbon@isbe.net). Submittals via other methods will not be accepted.

**Questions?** Contact [greenribbon@isbe.net](mailto:greenribbon@isbe.net).