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

Official School Name: Palmer Trinity School
(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.

[Signature]
(Principal’s Signature)

Date: 01/20/2023

Name of Superintendent: [Name]
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)
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 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: Florida Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: David Thayer  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)  

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

Date: Feb 17, 2023  

(Nominating Authority’s Signature)  

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509  
Expiration Date: December 31, 2023

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.
2022-2023 Florida Green Ribbon Schools Application

Nominee Information

School Name: Palmer Trinity School
Address: 7900 SW 176th Street    City: Miami    State: FL    Zip: 33157
Twitter: https://twitter.com/palmertrinity?lang=en
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/PalmerTrinitySchool/

Principal: Mr. Patrick Roberts    Email: proberts@palmertrinity.org    Phone: (305) 251-2230

Lead Applicant: Dr. Leopoldo Llinas
Position/Role: Teacher/ Sustainability Director
Email: lllinas@palmertrinity.org    Phone: (305) 251-2230 x157

School Type and grade levels served:
Independent School, grades 6-12

Provide percentages, if any are relevant to your school:
Free and Reduced Price Lunch: N/A    Special Education: N/A
Minority:    Graduation Rate: 100%
Limited English Proficient: N/A    Attendance Rate:

Provide the following:
Total Enrolled: 780
Documentation of Sustainability Achievement

Summary Narrative: An Overview of Work Encompassing All Three Pillars

Palmer Trinity School is located on almost 60 acres of tranquil, beautiful open space in Palmetto Bay, Florida, an area south of Miami. The campus forms part of an environment that promotes the enrichment of the whole person, as reflected in our motto, “Virtus, Humanitas, et Spiritus.” Recognizing the importance of balancing mind, body, and spirit, we aim to foster growth through academic, spiritual, and personal development. Palmer Trinity students are encouraged not only to attain individual success but to use their unique gifts for the service of others. Through an extensive academic program and stimulating extracurricular activities, students are nurtured to develop character, global awareness, environmental stewardship, and critical thinking.

In 2007, Palmer Trinity School established a Sustainability Coordinator position that works collaboratively with administration, faculty, staff, and students to develop, coordinate, and promote effective sustainability initiatives to reduce the School’s impact on the environment. In 2014, the position evolved into Director of Environmental Stewardship with the goal of overseeing all aspects of development for the environmental sustainability and outdoor education curriculum, including co-curricular activities.

In 2017, Palmer Trinity School established a Sustainability Plan (click to view 2017 PTS Sustainability Plan). The Palmer Trinity Sustainability Plan is the school’s roadmap for building and operating a healthier, more sustainable campus community. The Palmer Trinity Sustainability Plan is organized around the five core topics of Emissions and Energy, Campus Operations, Nature and Ecosystems, Health and Well-Being, and Culture and Learning. Each topic includes areas of focus with specific actions that are organized within three categories:

1. GOAL | School-wide goals with a specific target within a set timeframe.
2. COMMITMENT | A statement of commitment in specific areas.
3. INITIATIVES | Steps to achieve the goal.

Today, the Environmental Stewardship Program at Palmer Trinity includes

- 22 environmental initiatives,
- 4 experiential education travel experiences,
- 4 dedicated spaces for environmental education and STEM,
- 2 Environmental Action Clubs (Middle School and Upper School), and
- 1 Sustainability Task Force.
The dedicated spaces include the Aqua Lab, Living Garden, Pine Rockland Butterfly Garden, and STEM Lab.

**Aqua Lab**
The Aqua Lab at Palmer Trinity School is a center for education, training, and research in the areas of aquaponics, marine biology, and freshwater ecology. The Aqua Lab allows students to conduct experiments and scientific investigations in these areas all under one roof (click to view [2022 article](#)).

**Living Garden**
The living garden is the result of a collaborative effort between students and staff. The garden serves to engage students and the community in growing healthy, organic food and herbs. The garden provides life science students with opportunities for education and hands-on gardening experience.

**Pine Rockland Butterfly Garden**
Palmer Trinity School teamed up with Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Connect to Protect Network to restore the school’s butterfly garden into a Pine Rockland Butterfly Garden. Pine rockland is a critically imperiled ecosystem that has been heavily impacted by urban development and agriculture. The Pine Rockland Butterfly Garden serves as an educational tool for Biology and Environmental Science courses and a meditation and inspiration space for art courses.

**STEM Lab**
The STEM Lab integrates science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to create a student-centered learning environment in which students investigate and engineer solutions to real-world phenomena. Under the guidance of the STEM coordinator, the STEM Lab provides a safe and healthy environment where problem-solving and engineering practices are included, technology is seamlessly integrated throughout, and learning is personalized to engage all types of students.

Teaching and learning about sustainability is not limited to these spaces. The school uses the campus as a tool for education. Palmer Trinity School published The Trees of Palmer Trinity book for students, faculty and visitors to explore campus and learn to identify its exceptional multitude of trees. (click to view [The Trees of Palmer Trinity Book](#)). One tree from each of 76 species on campus is tagged with a number, which corresponds with the numbers shown on the Tree Map and in the descriptions that follow.

Palmer Trinity School is committed to enhancing the health, productivity, and quality of life of our community through the design and maintenance of the campus and the development of well-being programs. With regard to personal well-being, the school offers student-specific health resources as well
as staff-specific health resources. Student resources include the athletics program, clinic, and counseling services.

Another way Palmer Trinity is working to improve and protect the health of its community is by identifying and reducing chemicals of concern on campus. The School uses environmentally preferable cleaners to reduce the community's exposure to toxic chemicals and high efficiency air filters to improve indoor air quality. As part of our ongoing effort to enhance the health and well-being of the School community, we have a tobacco and smoke-free campus.

Palmer Trinity works with its food service provider SAGE Dining to promote and offer smart, healthy food choices. The food offering and signage are designed to increase access for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to sustainable and healthful food offerings. In addition, they aim to enhance food literacy (click to view PTS Cafeteria Menu). The online menu allows students and staff to view a detailed version of the daily menu. The menu includes the SAGE online allergen filter, which enables students and faculty to customize the menu by clicking on the allergen(s) they want to avoid. Menu items that contain the allergen(s) will fade and be crossed out. The School offers vegan and vegetarian dishes as well as items handpicked for student athletes through our Performance Spotlight™ program.

Palmer Trinity School recognizes the need to reflect the reality that humanity is affecting the environment in ways that are historically unprecedented and which are potentially devastating for both natural ecosystems and humankind. The school offers courses on energy, environment, and sustainability from Life Science in 6th grade to International Baccalaureate Environmental Systems and Societies in the Upper School. The curriculum is aligned with travel experiences in 6th, 7th, and 9th grade as part of the Experiential Education Program. The academic program and extracurricular activities educate and empower students to embrace an environmentally healthy, socially just, and economically viable lifestyle.
Narrative for Pillar I: Efforts to Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

Palmer Trinity School believes schools have a special role and responsibility in confronting the challenges of climate change and environmental stewardship. The school is dedicated to addressing these issues both inside and outside the classroom. We are working to create replicable models of how schools can engage their entire community in implementing innovative and economically viable solutions that build a healthier, more sustainable campus. These green initiatives help Palmer Trinity School achieve its goals of promoting a cultural change within the school and becoming a sustainable school for the long term.

In 2009, Palmer Trinity School joined the Green Schools Alliance to access the tools, programs, and resources needed to develop a roadmap toward becoming a sustainable school. Students and faculty attended the Student Climate & Conservation Congress (Sc3). The goal of Sc3 is to empower student sustainability leaders with skills, knowledge and tools to address climate change and other environmental challenges, and become change-makers in their schools and communities.

The efforts of the school to reduce environmental impacts and costs are categorized under four different topics:

1. Climate Change and Energy
2. Transportation
3. Waste
4. Water

Climate Change and Energy
Palmer Trinity’s climate change and energy plan builds on our past progress and uses the campus to confront the difficult questions posed by climate change.

In 2012, the School installed a 22 kW solar photovoltaic system at the Falcon’s Nest (click to view 2012 press article). The installation was one of the first projects of its kind in South Florida. It included a solar charging station to give students and faculty the opportunity to charge their computers and cell phones.

In collaboration with our electric services company Florida Power & Light, Palmer Trinity School conducts Business Energy Evaluation of our facility. These comprehensive analyses of our facility's usage provide the School valuable information and tools to control and manage our energy expenses. The last energy audit was conducted in 2017 (click to view 2017 Report). The recommendations of the energy audits are generally implemented including:

- Install occupancy sensors or wall timers in areas with transient use
- Turn off lights in unoccupied areas
● Retrofit or replace fixtures with LED Systems
● Clean condenser and/or evaporator coils
● Clean or replace filters regularly
● Replace unit with high efficiency model on as-fail basis

Our facilities manager and Associate Head of School for Operations pursue energy efficiency as part of our energy strategy.

In 2020, Palmer Trinity completed a 15 kW solar photovoltaic installation at the new Kipp Field House. The project consists of 45 panels and the SolarEdge optimizer and inverter system (click to view 2020 press article). This system allows users to monitor the energy production of the system and the energy produced by each individual solar panel. In 2021, a 15 kW solar photovoltaic extension was added to the solar system to make the Kipp Field House an energy neutral building. The PV system is a great opportunity for a greener school and a great educational opportunity for students. The School collects data from the solar panels via the online monitoring platform. Teachers and students have access to this data, which is then used to compare various other facets of energy expenditure (click to view Kipp Field House energy dashboard). As of December 2022, the environmental benefits of the solar panels installed were approximately 157,000 pounds of CO2 saved.

Transportation
Palmer Trinity School is committed to providing students, faculty and staff with safe, healthy and sustainable transportation options. Therefore, the school offers a shuttle bus service to pick up and drop off students. The service gives our students a less stressful way to commute daily, saves families mileage on their cars, and contributes to reducing the traffic on the road.

Bicycling is recognized as an integral component of the School’s transportation system. There are covered bike parking locations in buildings 1, 2 and 3 and a bicycle service station on campus. These bike racks throughout the campus provide an opportunity for cyclists to lock their bikes safely. Bicycling to school is a great way to get kids into a healthy lifestyle that will stay with them into adulthood. Students and faculty take advantage of this opportunity, particularly on dress down and spirit days.

Since 2021, electric vehicle charging stations have been installed across campus. The four SemaConnect S6 Charging Stations are available for students, faculty, parents, staff, and visitors to use free of charge.

Waste
In 2010, the school cafeteria went trayless to reduce food waste. This student-run initiative was supported by most students and faculty. Going trayless discourages students from taking more than they
can eat. The initiative was followed by a commitment from the School and its food service provider SAGE Dining Services to replace single-use cutlery and plates with reusable dinnerware in the main dining room. The efforts to reduce plastic waste from the School’s cafeteria earned Palmer Trinity School the Surfrider Foundation’s Ocean Friendly Restaurant designation in 2020. To be able to participate in the program, the school’s main dining room followed the mandatory criteria:

- Only reusable foodware is used for onsite dining.
- Paper straws are provided only upon request.
- No expanded polystyrene use (aka Styrofoam).
- No plastic bags are used for takeout or to-go orders.
- Single-use utensils, straws, condiments, and other accessories are provided only upon request.
- Beverages are not sold in plastic bottles.
- Proper recycling practices are followed.

Since 2007, Palmer Trinity has offered the community opportunities to recycle and divert waste from landfills. From 2007 to 2022, the school used single-stream recycling, a system in which all recyclable materials and containers are placed, unsorted, in one recycling bin and are sorted by processing equipment at a regional recycling center. In 2022, the School switched to recycling cardboard, high quality office paper, aluminum cans, and batteries (click to view Recycling at PTS public service announcement).

**Water**

Palmer Trinity uses water conservation technology and landscaping techniques to reduce water use on campus. The School tracks water usage, uses low-flow or automatic faucets and toilets in restrooms.

In a process called "naturescaping," the school selects plants and shrubs that are native to South Florida or are low maintenance, which means that they require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.

The school is a leader in efforts to reduce bottled water usage as part of our commitment to sustainability and creating less waste. These initiatives range from the installation of refill stations in our buildings to educational campaigns to persuade our community to eliminate bottled water use and waste. In 2019, Palmer Trinity School phased out single-use plastic water bottles (click to view 2019 press article).
Narrative for Pillar II: Efforts to Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

**Athletics Program**
PTS Athletics provides opportunities for young people to compete while encouraging the development of social skills, building healthy habits, and fostering school spirit. Our students have the opportunity to participate in 12 different sports and be a part of more than 47 different teams. Many of these sports take place outdoors such as the co-ed youth sailing program and the cross country program.

**Clinic**
Palmer Trinity School offers student health and wellness services in a school clinic that consist of an isolation room, a patient room, an office, and a waiting room. The clinic is run by a Registered Nurse along with an assistant. The clinic is equipped with a HEPA filtration system to help contain and remove airborne particles, microorganisms, and other contaminants that may be in the buildings indoor air system.

Palmer Trinity provides a Basic School Health Program which consist of managing day-to-day student health concerns, emergency health concerns including but not limited to injuries, and in school management of chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, allergies, and epilepsy. The goal of our program is to provide a healthy environment for students on a daily basis and help manage both acute and chronic illness for students to be at optimum health and succeed in their studies.

**Counseling Services**
Palmer Trinity School is committed to promoting the health, wellness and resilience of our students and entire school community. We have two exceptional bilingual mental health licensed school counselors on campus who actively participate in and help coordinate student-support services.

Counseling services include individual counseling, small groups, substance abuse education, health and wellness convocations, stress management, crisis counseling/de-escalation, screening for suicidal/homicidal ideation, staff education, and training and use of peer counselors. In addition, cognitive behavioral, mindfulness meditation, anxiety reduction, and behavioral techniques are used to assist students in their daily lives.

Programs, activities, and pro social workshops are provided to assist students in their social and emotional development. The counselors also provide support to our parent education committee. The counselors act as liaisons between teachers/staff, parents, health care providers, and administrators when appropriate. When a possible learning problem is identified, a referral is made to the school’s Learning Resource specialists. Referrals are also made when emotional/psychological problems require the outside assistance of a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or mental health counselor. In addition, the
school counselors recruit and train qualified upperclassmen to become peer counselors. Peer counselors assist students by being involved in social-emotional programming for younger students and providing one-on-one peer counseling when requested.

In summary, our goal is to help support our students by modeling and teaching them healthy strategies to navigate personal and educational challenges, stress and experience success in middle and high school, and ultimately, for their lives.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Palmer Trinity School embraces the Episcopal Church's commitment to diversity, inclusion, justice and equity. As such, we strive to respect the dignity of every human being, embracing how we differ from one another while also affirming our shared humanity. Faculty and staff act with patience, compassion, and integrity as we develop our students into well-informed, critically thinking, and empathetic global citizens who will lead with love. An important diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative is our Mosaic program.

Mosaic is an inclusivity curriculum integrated into the Advisory program in grades 6th through 12th, which aims to raise awareness and affirmation of identity by discussing diversity and inclusion. The goal of Mosaic is to promote the holistic safety of each individual in our educational community through a series of age-appropriate and relevant lesson plans that are co-created by both faculty and student leaders. Teams of advisors and student facilitators from our Diversity Peer Educator Program run these lessons. Twice per month, students are exposed to issues related to ability, cultural awareness, race and ethnicity, class, privilege, socioeconomic status, gender identity and sexual orientation, and global citizenship. Discussion and reflection on these topics promote a deeper understanding of the multiple dimensions of human diversity, foster a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusivity in our school community, and launch global citizens (click to learn more about DEI at PTS).

Nutrition
The school’s food service provider SAGE Dining Services helps students to develop a positive relationship with food and to make informed choices. The kitchen staff uses the SAGE Spotlight Program to create menus with variety, balance and moderation. They designate all foods with varying shades of green to represent higher, moderate, and lower nutrient densities. Our school nutrition policy aims to promote a healthy lifestyle for all our students, faculty, and staff. Here is what the kitchen staff does:

- They cook from scratch reducing the use of processed foods.
- They use fresh vegetables and fruits.
- They offer fresh salads and house-made dressings.
- They offer a variety of whole-grain breads, bagels and rolls.
They house-roast deli meats.
They cook with trans fat-free oils and MSG-free seasonings.
They serve antibiotic- and hormone-free milk.
They use cage-free, Certified Humane® shell eggs.
They use local and campus-grown ingredients.
They offer substantial vegetarian and vegan options.

**Staff Benefits**
Palmer Trinity School offers a rich benefit package that positively impacts our employees health and wellness (See Figure 3. Palmer Trinity School Benefits). Concerns of employees are considered when making decisions. This intangible gives peace of mind which definitely impacts our mental health. This year the School included Employee Only coverage for Short Term Disability (STD), Dental, and Vision and increased the subsidy on all plans to help with rising insurance rates. Some events held on campus include Flu and COVID booster vaccines, Massage Therapist, and Fitness Competition (issued fitbits to all employees/ Kickball competition).

**Staff Gratitude and Appreciation Weeks**
Gratitude Week at Palmer Trinity School takes place yearly in November. The week is focused on faculty/staff and is faculty/staff-led. It is an opportunity for faculty and staff members to share their appreciation for one another through gratitude practices like writing notes and by spending time together (click to view 2022 Gratitude Week schedule). Faculty and Staff Appreciation Week takes place yearly in May. The week coincides with Teacher Appreciation Week, a special time to honor the individuals who lend their passion and skills to educating our children.

**Air Quality**
- The school Clinic has a ceiling mount UVC air sanitizer to safeguard large areas against harmful bacteria, virus and pathogens.
- The school uses high efficiency air filters with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value 8 or higher in all buildings.
- ClimatePro changes air filters monthly and inspects and cleans equipment as necessary.
- Buildings have open air hallways and windows that open during cooler months.
- The school also has an outdoor classroom and several outdoor dining areas.
Contaminant Controls
- The school works with US Ecology, an environmental services provider, to identify, remove and dispose of laboratory chemicals.
- US Ecology focuses on safety and environmental compliance to protect and preserve the health and well-being of our environment, our faculty and students, and our school community.
- All chemicals are properly labeled and stored.
- The last Lab Pack was done in Summer 2022.

Pest Management
- The school uses Orkin for pest management.
- Orkin offers Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs that use an effective combination of treatment methods grounded in science to achieve acceptable levels of control with the least possible impact to humans, non-target organisms and the environment.
- On school grounds, Orkin uses products that are scientifically tested, proven and registered by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Cleaning
- The school uses Coastal Building Maintenance (CBM) for janitorial and maintenance services.
- The school uses CBM’s “Go Green” cleaning program to protect students, educators, and staff against pathogens without negatively impacting the environment.
- Examples of the cleaning products used include: Enviro Solutions Glass Cleaner, Betco Green Earth Push Drain and Floor Cleaner, and Simple Green - All Purpose Cleaner.
Narrative for Pillar III: Efforts to Ensure Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Palmer Trinity School recognizes the need to reflect the reality that humanity is affecting the environment in ways that are historically unprecedented and which are potentially devastating for both natural ecosystems and humankind. Schools are uniquely positioned to influence the direction we choose to take as a society. As major contributors to society’s values, health, and well-being, schools have a fundamental responsibility to teach sustainability. We believe that the success of schools in the twenty-first century will be judged by our ability to make sustainability and the environment a cornerstone of education.

Education in environmental literacy and sustainability prepares students to understand and manage the complex relationships impacting our communities, Florida’s economy, and our natural resources. This education contributes to overall academic achievement and prepares students with the 21st century skills, knowledge, and experience needed to succeed in today’s changing world. Palmer Trinity School aims to advance education for environmental literacy and sustainability to ensure all students graduate environmentally literate and prepared to contribute to a sustainable future.

The mantra “Palmer Trinity Preps for the Planet” is seamlessly incorporated throughout the curriculum, co-curricular opportunities, and enrichment. (click to view 2010 Eco Education article and 2013 Greening Schools 2.0). The School’s plan to advance education for environmental literacy and sustainability proposes strategies to ensure all students graduate environmentally literate and prepared to contribute to a sustainable future. The Science Department provides leadership and guidance for the Plan. However, the plan’s goals can only be achieved over time with the support and participation of all members of the school community. For example, in Middle School English courses, students read “Flush” by Carl Hiassen, a hilarious adventure involving crooked casino boats, floating fish, toxic beaches, and one kid determined to get justice. The reading aligns with the Life Science curriculum in the Science Department and the 6th Grade travel experience to the Florida Keys.

Experiential Education Program
Palmer Trinity’s Experiential Education Program provides learning experiences that embrace the School’s core values and seeks to help students build a sense of stewardship for the environment and see the relationship between the natural world and classroom learning (click to learn more about our Experiential Education Program).
6th Grade - Marine Lab
MarineLab is a 3 days and 2 nights educational travel experience for our 6th-grade students. Through introductory discussions, hands-on activities and field observations, students learn about marine science and the interdependent nature of the marine ecosystem of the subtropical Florida Keys.

7th Grade - Lakes, Ropes, and Stars
Lakes, Ropes, and Star is a 3 days and 2 nights educational program for our 7th-grade students to explore freshwater and forest ecosystems, build confidence, and enhance teamwork. Students will participate in team building initiatives such as the rope course and enjoy lake activities while learning about water and forest ecology, and taking part in evening hikes and astronomy lessons.

9th Grade - Everglades Expedition
The Everglades Expedition is a professionally guided five-day outdoor educational experience that promotes authentic learning, personal growth, leadership, and stewardship. The Everglades as a classroom offers an unprecedented learning environment where curiosity is fostered, critical thinking is required, and diligence is vital. The curriculum focuses on human skills, with objectives associated with improving students’ self-actualization, civic responsibility, leadership, and environmental stewardship.

Upper School - Shark Research and Conservation
The Shark Research & Conservation Program provides educational experiences to groups of high school students to take an active role in real scientific projects, learn the scientific method, and assist in protecting threatened marine species through shark tagging field research opportunities.

Environmental Stewardship Program
The environmental Stewardship Program at school aims to educate and empower students to embrace an environmentally healthy, socially just, and economically viable lifestyle.

Blue Stewards Program
The Blue Stewards program blends traditional education and travel experiences at Palmer Trinity School with scientific research and advocacy happening right here in Miami and around the globe. Working with private and nonprofit partners, students explore the centrality of water in people’s lives by examining water as both an environmental necessity and a key cultural element (click to learn more about our Blue Stewards program).

Environmental Action Club (EAC)
The mission of the EAC is to foster personal environmental responsibility and mindset to "think globally & act locally". Several service projects are offered throughout the year, including clean ups and the A Plant In Every Classroom initiative. The club engages student volunteers to clean up their
neighborhoods, shorelines, and waterways as a way to raise awareness about marine debris. A Plant In Every Classroom is an initiative to help improve the health of students and educators by bringing nature into their daily lives. The EAC works with the School to bring indoor plants to the classrooms. Volunteer students also propagate and grow their own plants to donate to underserved schools.

**Fairchild Challenge**
The Fairchild Challenge is an interdisciplinary, environmental science competition designed to engage students to explore the natural world. Palmer Trinity students and faculty participate in the challenge including The Million Orchids Project and Growing Beyond Earth (GBE). GBE is a classroom-based citizen science project operated in partnership with NASA, designed to advance NASA research on growing plants in space. These projects are an integral part of our [STEM School of Excellence recognition by ITEEA](https://www.iteea.org/). Palmer Trinity School has also won the Fairchild Challenge in past years (view Appendix, Table 1 Timeline).

**GenCLEO Chapter**
The GenCLEO Chapter at Palmer Trinity helps students increase climate literacy, awareness, and advocacy. Students begin by certifying as CLEO Climate Speakers, which gives them the training and credibility needed to educate their classmates and members of the community. Following this training, students provide peer-to-peer lectures about climate change in their schools and to their families.

**STEM Initiatives**

**Dream in Green’s Green School Challenge: Design and Build Competition**
Students learn about sea level rise projections and resilient design. Students imagine what Downtown Miami might look like in the future (2100). Students explore adaptation strategies that can be used to mitigate flood risks and other predicted environmental effects.

**Jacobs Teen Innovation Challenge**
Students develop an innovator’s mindset and the skills to create solutions to local and global problems. Students are introduced to the innovator’s mindset, the 17 United Nations Global Goals, and design thinking. Students form teams to identify a local or global problem that feels relevant to them and then work through three phases of a design thinking curriculum to develop solutions.

In 2021, one of our PTS teams focused on “Clean Water and Sanitation”, and won first place. The prize was a $1000 donation to a charity of their choice. They chose “Water Aid”.