



School Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

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

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

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Name of Principal:

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

Official School Name:

(As it should appear on an award)

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

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

Allison Emig

Date:

01/31/2024

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent:

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



District Name:

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

Carl L. Albano

Date:

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

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

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

Name of Nominating Agency:

Name of Nominating Authority:

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

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

Kateri A. Sargen

Date:

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUBMISSION

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

Expiration Date: October 31, 2026

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

Summary Narrative

The Garrison School considers sustainability a fundamental principle. Spanning nearly 200 acres, the school campus provides abundant space to impart meaningful sustainability education. Our Pre-K-12 Youth Climate Summit unites the entire community, exposing students to experts and allowing them to present their ideas. The District demonstrates a robust dedication to educating every student about the significance of the environment. Guided by our Coordinator of Environmental Education, Rachel Arbor, and supported by teachers, students engage in multi-disciplinary curricula, citizen science, STEAM, and civic action, seamlessly integrating environmental literacy across all grade levels and content areas.

Pillar I Narrative

Garrison School has made significant strides in environmental stewardship, particularly in Pillar 1 of the Federal Green Ribbon award, focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Through a \$10 million capital bond project, the school successfully transitioned from oil-powered boilers to fully electric air-forced heat pumps and is eliminating its gas-powered hot water heaters. The community approved these changes, aligning with the EPA Portfolio Manager to track and optimize electricity usage, demonstrating a commitment to renewable energy sources. The District is also investigating solar as a further option for renewable energy.

The District also used bus route planning software for the 23-24 school year. This program allowed the district to maximize the routes and thus eliminate one of its buses. The District has a well-publicized no idling policy for buses in accordance with New York State Education Law and all other vehicles. "No-Idling" signs are posted for all buses vehicles. 15% of the students walk or bike to school or carpool. The other 75% ride the school buses or take public transportation. This helps eliminate additional vehicles on the road. The district has established Safe Pedestrian Routes to school which are distributed to parents/guardians and posted in the main office. The District has a pedestrian crosswalk with a crossing guard in front of the school for our walking students. Sidewalks are maintained by the town and the school. These efforts help provide safety to the students during their commute to school and back home. The district also provides a sufficient number of bicycle racks for the students.

The district adheres to green building standards certified by the EPA, utilizing the Energy Star Portfolio Manager for energy efficiency. The Garrison School employs occupancy sensors for lighting and follows set schedules to minimize energy consumption during unoccupied times. Renovations included energy-efficient features like low-flow toilets, water bottle refill stations, and 90% LED lighting, significantly reducing water and energy usage. The extensive renovation project encompassed every facet of the school building, resulting in an environmentally friendly structure. Installing LED lighting, refillable water stations and motion sensors significantly increase energy efficiency. Partnerships focus on education, showcasing the school's commitment to sustainability.

The school takes pride in its expansive 181-acre forest, utilized for research and recreation, reflecting its dedication to ecologically beneficial practices. Landscaping initiatives prioritize water

efficiency, regionally appropriate plants, and the transition to electric landscaping equipment. The school specifically chooses plants for its landscaping that can thrive without excess water usage, meaning 100% of the landscaping is water-efficient. Similarly, 100% of landscaping at Garrison School is regionally appropriate and no plants at the school are considered to be among invasive species in the region. As a result, an irrigation system is not required, saving substantial amount of water. The District is also in the process of transitioning away from gas powered landscaping equipment and moving to electric.

Garrison School prioritizes water conservation, with automatic faucet shut-offs and eliminating bathroom paper towels. Lead control measures surpass state requirements, including installing stainless steel faucets and regular testing. Green procurement policies ensure environmentally friendly custodial, maintenance, and instructional products. The District has a recycling campaign that has reduced the amount of garbage by half and increased the amount of recycling by 6%. All the District's paper content is post-consumer material or fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed by the Forest Stewardship Council, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, American Tree Farm System or other certification standard. All the District's paper content is also totally chlorine-free (TCF) or processed chlorine free (PCF). The District also uses "third party certified" green cleaning products as listed on the New York State Office of General Services approved product list.

Pillar II Narrative

Garrison School is steadfast in environmental health, aligning with Pillar 2 of the Federal Green Ribbon award. Mr. Joe Jimick, the IAQ coordinator, oversees a comprehensive environmental health program that includes a new HVAC system with clean-running air source heat pump technology and MERV air filters. The school has written plans covering emergency response, integrated pest management, respiratory protection, chemical hygiene, and safety.

The school places a particular emphasis on supporting students with asthma, providing training for staff members, and maintaining an on-site registered nurse for guidance. Asthma management plans developed collaboratively with students, parents, and healthcare providers are in place. The school takes various measures to reduce exposure to asthma triggers, both inside facilities and on school grounds. A coordinated approach to student health is evident through a coordinated school health initiative. The school has a local wellness policy and an active committee addressing critical components of student health.

The Physical education program provides many opportunities for outdoor supervised physical education. From September to November and Mid-march until late June, classes are held outside, weather permitting. The PE program meets or exceeds the minutes requirement for physical education, depending on the week. With the vast forest and grounds, classes also go outside at other times. The District also partners with the Garrison gardening club to learn more about local plants in the area. The Garrison Gardening Club also shows our students how they take care of the different gardens around the school. The local community Garrison Gardening Club takes care of the plants and flowers when needed.

The District does not have a lunch program since the students bring their own lunches (driven by community input). The District provides education to the student on healthy choices and provides healthy meals when lunch is provided. The District continues to explore options for incorporating healthy food choices into the school.

Furthermore, The Garrison School is committed to the safe use of chemicals, adhering to state mandates for training, spill response, and hazard communication. A detailed chemical hygiene plan guides chemical purchasing, training, spill response, and safety procedures, with staff members undergoing annual Right to Know training.

The integrated pest management program emphasizes prevention through routine housekeeping and maintenance protocols. The Garrison School complies with state laws regarding pesticide use notification and maintains records of all pest-management activities.

The District has banned all cell phones during any class period. Garrison School actively promotes physical activity through a variety of initiatives. It participates in national campaigns such as the week-long "turn off televisions" campaign, providing students and families with information on reducing television and recreational screen time. Informative assemblies are also held, focusing on social media usage and the importance of daily limitations.

Garrison School is committed to fostering students' mental well-being and cultivating a nurturing and empathetic school atmosphere. To achieve this objective, the school maintains a team of one school counselor, one full-time school psychologist, and a consultant school psychologist, all readily available to offer support and guidance to students. Moreover, the school regularly hosts a series of anti-bullying initiatives and fully adheres to the state's Dignity for All Students Act requirements. The school has implemented the RULER program in all grade levels. Several of the teachers are trained in Dialectic Behavior Therapy (DBT) to help students work through issues. The District also has a monitoring system on all devices that alerts the administration whenever any language that could indicate harm to a student is used.

Pillar III Narrative

The Garrison Union Free School District (GUFS) is committed to Pillar 3 of the Federal Green Ribbon, aiming to nurture the next generation of environmentally conscious individuals. Rachel Arbor, the Coordinator of Environmental Education, plays a crucial role in this endeavor and actively integrates environmental education (EE) into the curriculum across all grade levels. Teachers' professional development ensures effective EE integration, while collaboration fosters the creation of interdisciplinary ecological content.

EE is seamlessly blended into the everyday curriculum at Garrison across all grade levels. Through science, students explore nature first-hand, yielding a holistic understanding of how our interactions with the environment shape our knowledge. In history classes, students learn how an ecosystem services mindset has influenced our trade programs today and how this historical perspective can help them take civic action today. Mathematics supports students in conducting quantitative analysis of the human-wildlife relationship, examining population trends of endangered species. English language arts help our students communicate their findings and establish a personal connection with our natural world.

The Garrison EE program strongly emphasizes achieving net-zero environmental impacts and underscores the connection between the environment and personal health. The Annual Youth Climate Summit serves as a platform for PK-12 students from various school districts and states to converge in the spirit of sustainability. Here, students share their long-term research projects, learn from experts in the field through hands-on workshops, and contribute to public discourse.

The school's expansive 181-acre forest serves as a classroom for place-based learning, so Garrison incorporates outdoor experiences into its curriculum. Using green spaces, students explore self-expression and personal narratives and delve into composting, climate change, indigenous perspectives, and biodiversity - all rooted in standards across disciplines. The Garrison School Forest also serves as a hub for citizen science, civic action, and STEAM-based learning, including projects like Carbon Sequestration and Forces and Motion in Nature.

Enriching the educational experience, guest speakers, local field experts, and participation in community events deepen students' knowledge of the local ecosystem and their role within it. From reusing materials through student-led clothing swaps to studying the effects of climate change on extreme weather, every PK-8 Garrison student is actively involved in various projects promoting civic action and environmental awareness.

When students graduate from Garrison, they leave with a profound understanding of their impact on the natural world and the importance of positive civic action. The curriculum's interdisciplinary connections provide a holistic learning experience, allowing students to explore, communicate, and connect with the natural world across subjects.