SY2023 Information:

**COVID modifications end:** In the last two school years (SY2021 & SY2022) MAEOE modified the MDGS application to better meet the needs of school systems during the COVID pandemic. This school year (SY 2023) the application is reverting to its pre-pandemic form with one exception which is found in Objective Two.

**Objective 2 Update:** Schools are required to submit information and documentation for actions in EIGHT sustainability practices. These actions must be from three or more practices.

**Applications 5 and Beyond:** The portal for these applications will be ready in the Fall of 2022. If you’d like to start collecting information before the portal is ready, please use this [spreadsheet](#) template to begin organizing.

**Questions?** Any questions regarding the Maryland Green Schools Application should be sent to applications@maeoe.org.
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Introduction

The Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) is a non-profit organization that has been in existence since 1985. MAEOE encourages, engages, and empowers the community to understand, responsibly use and promote the natural world.

The MAEOE Maryland Green School award program began in 1999 and allows a school to demonstrate that by integrating hands-on, inquiry-based instruction, youth are empowered to practice environmental sustainability. At school, home, and in their communities, schools are reducing pollution, decreasing waste, increasing habitat, limiting carbon emissions, creating healthy learning, living environments, and supporting environmental literacy. The program is designed to highlight achievements and progress that schools are making towards environmental sustainability, aligned with the Maryland Environmental Literacy graduation requirement as set forth in COMAR 13A.04.17.01 and the Environmental Literacy Goal established in the Chesapeake Bay Agreement. By providing environmental education, Maryland teachers and partners enable students to make decisions and take actions that create and maintain a positive relationship between themselves and the environment. Maryland’s students, teachers, families, and those who work at the schools are all involved in the preservation and protection of the state’s unique natural resources, particularly those of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Find more information about Environmental Literacy here.

Keep in mind that multiple parts of your application connect with Maryland College and Career Ready Standards including:

- NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) curriculum
- Maryland Content Standards
- C3 curriculum
- STEAM curriculum (Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math)
- Pressing environmental issues including climate change, decreasing biodiversity, nitrogen cycle, aquifer depletion, endangered species, habitat loss and other issues
- Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience
- Chesapeake Bay Backpack Resources
Using This Guide

The purpose of this guide is to show you how to fill out and submit your MDGS application through our new online portal. This is the **ONLY way to submit applications**—we are not accepting any other formats.

To help you understand the application process and requirements, please view the 2022-2023 Application Guide, available [HERE](#)–the Application Guide goes into depth for **what** is required in the application. The portal guide focuses on **how** to complete the application.

Accessing the Portal and Portal Resources

The Online Portal is new for the 2022-2023 school year. As we begin this process of using this application submission method, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through any challenges and changes needed to make the portal as useful as possible.

The portal can be accessed through the MAEOE website, or by going to [https://marylandgreenschools.org/](https://marylandgreenschools.org/).

The portal provides information on the MDGS program, steps to getting started, the youth summit, news, FAQs, and grant opportunities.

The portal creates a website sharing the information provided in the application for you. This allows you to view the application information clearly, and to share the application with members of your staff and school community if you so desire.

See more information regarding the website on page 20 of this guide.
Using the Portal to Create Your Application

All information for the application will be submitted to MAEOE using the portal. For each section, the specific information and requirements are given.

Considerations When Using the Online Portal

Unlike Google or Microsoft products, the online portal does not have the capability for multiple users to work on the same field (i.e. text boxes) at the same time, nor can the users view “version history”. To avoid problems with filling out the application, we suggest:

- **Split the workload**: Assign different people different sections of the applications to complete. This prevents any work in one field being overridden and saves work correctly.
- **Make sure you click out the field before exiting**: The portal saves work automatically when you click outside of any field.
- **Adding and Deleting Information**: When applicable, there will be options to provide additional data or delete data.
  - Click the green plus to provide additional data.
  - Click the trashcan to delete additional data provided.

  *Note: Deleted data cannot be recovered! Do not click unless absolutely certain you want to delete the data.*

  *You can undo (Ctrl-Z) deleting text from a field when typing.*

Other Portal Tools

- Some sections of the portal have a question mark symbol. Click to see examples and documentation ideas that count toward the section.

Uploading Documentation

In the portal, documentation is referred to as “materials”. You must add at least one material to support statements, where applicable. Include the date and a caption describing the material you updated.

1. Click “Upload One or More Files”
2. Follow the instructions to upload the document

You can opt-in to have uploaded materials be publicly displayed on the application website.

Provide a description of the supporting material.
Creating an Account for Your School

1. Click on “New School”
2. Fill out the School Information section
3. Fill out the Contact Information section
4. Fill out the Administrator Account
   
   The administrator account is the person who is creating the account, or has control of the account. This is not necessarily the principal or assistant principal. The account administrator can make accounts for other people working on the application (see page _).

5. Fill out the School Statistics
   
   The number of teachers, students and other school personnel can be updated after the account has been created. Make sure these statistics are filled out before you submit your application.

Signing into Your Account

1. Type in the name of your school
2. Sign-in using your username and password*

* If you are the account administrator, this is the username and password you created when you made the account. If your account was created for you by the account administrator, you will use the username and password they provide to you.
Your Account Dashboard

This is the dashboard for the school account. From here, you can pay your Intent to Apply, update your school information, work on your current application, look at user accounts, and see the progress on completing your current application.
Adding Accounts

If you are the account administrator, you can add additional people to work on the application. The only difference between your account and other accounts is that you can add accounts to the application. An account for your principal MUST be created so they can sign the document (see page 11).

To add an account:

The “User Accounts” tab lists all the accounts that have access to the application.

1. Click on the “Account” tab
2. Click the “+” to add accounts
3. Fill in the required information
4. Select the all the roles that apply

You can create more than one application manager account.
Application Section Checklist

Complete all required parts (marked with a *) on the online portal. You cannot submit the application until all parts are complete.

Portal Dashboard:

This section allows you to pay your Intent to Apply, update your school information, work on your current application, look at user accounts, and see the progress on completing your current application.

- **Intent to Apply**: $75 fee paid using the “Pay Now” button on the dashboard. MUST BE PAID by December 16, 2022.

School Information:

This information was given when your school’s account was made. This information can be updated (except for the application number) before you submit.

Current Application:

Access the four parts of the application: School Survey, Objective 1, Objective 2 and Objective 3. Complete all required fields.

- **School Metrics Survey**: Complete Legal Permissions, Committee/ Green Team Members, Top 5 Accomplishments, Sustainable Practice Metrics, Other Metrics
- **Objective 1—Systemic Sustainability**: Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development, Sustainable Schools, Celebrations
- **Objective 2—Student-Driven Sustainability Practices**: Give information on 8 Student-Driven Sustainability Practices (need to be from three or more sustainability practices).
- **Objective 3—Community Partnerships, Awards and Special Recognition**: Community Partnerships (School Active in Community, Community Active in School), Awards and Special Recognition (optional)
Paying the Intent to Apply

The Intent to Apply (ITA) $75 fee MUST BE PAID by December 16, 2022 for the March 17, 2023 submission deadline. Use the “Pay Now” button on the Portal Dashboard.

If a check must be used, mail the check payable to MAEOE at P.O. Box 1103 Edgewater, MD 21037.

*IMPORTANT: If you are not planning on applying in 2023, DO NOT pay the ITA yet! Pay the ITA the December before the year you are submitting the application.

Check Payment Status

Once you pay the ITA fee, it should be listed under the “Payments” tab. (please give a few days for the payment to be processed).

If you mailed a check, MAEOE will update your payment status in the portal once the payment is processed.
School Survey

This part of the application has two sections. The first section of the School Survey asks about legal permissions and provides information on the school’s Green Team members and Top 5 Accomplishments. The second section focuses the school metrics, the data regarding the student-driven practices.

Legal Permissions, Green Team members and Top 5 Accomplishments

Q.1.2 Legal Permissions

Provide permission for each by checking the box.

Before submitting, have the principal electronically sign and date the document using the principal account.

You can opt-in to give MAEOE permission to use photographs in this application for promotions if you wish.

Q.1.3 Committee / Green Team

List each member of the Committee/ Green Team that helped with this process.

The first set of Team Members are staff. The second set of Team Members are students. You can add student members if applicable.
This section lists your school’s:

- Top 5 Accomplishments
- Assistance in completing any parts of the application or application process
- How you were assisted

**Top 5 Accomplishments**

1. Connecting all students to the environment through sustained partnerships with Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Annapolis Maritime Museum, and Maryland Park Service
2. Habitat restoration (pollinator and unity gardens)
3. Commitment to continued solid waste reduction
4. Environmental integration to school wellness event Renew You
5. Regular advisory class lessons

Use one sentence or a phrase for each accomplishment. This will NOT be scored when reviewing your application, but it is required and does give the reviewers an indication of what is important to the school/center. Your Top 5 are shared at the MD Green Schools Youth Summit.

From whom have you had assistance? *
- Green Leader
- Green Center
- N/A
- Check all that apply

Give name of Green Leader/Green Center that provided assistance.

What type of help did you get from the Green Leader or Green Center? *
- Introduced the Program at a Staff Meeting
- Helped Review the Application
- Provided Professional Development for teachers at the School
- Helped the students with a Sustainable Practice (eg. planted trees, set-up a rain garden, painted storm drains)
- Provide Resources (materials like compost bins, shovels, etc.)
- Answered any questions you might have had
- Other (please specify)

Specify Other
School Metrics Survey

The metrics survey provides data regarding the eight sustainability practices listed under Objective 2:

1. Water Conservation/ Pollution Prevention
2. Energy Conservation
3. Solid Waste Reduction
4. Habitat Restoration
5. Structures for Environmental Learning
6. Responsible Transportation
7. Healthy School Environment
8. Community/Citizen Science

For each practice, you will need to share whether or not any actions toward this practice occurred and provide data regarding each practice. This data can come from School-Wide Behavior Change (Objective 1.3), Student–Driven Sustainability Practices (Objective 2), or projects done at a Green Center. For any practices that you did not do, enter 0.

Some of the metrics ask for information regarding amount of water saved, electricity saved, food waste reduction, etc. The facilities person at your school should be able to help you locate this data.

Example Metrics Section

0.2.1 Water Conservation / Pollution Prevention

Did you implement strategies to reduce water use in your school? *

Yes  No

If possible, quantify how much water you save in one year (gallons) *

0

Cumulative Practices on the School Grounds (over the application period)

Stream Bank Planting (Riparian Buffer) (sq ft) *

0

Erosion Control Project other than Stream Bank Planting - Describe in comment box (sq ft) *

50

Painted Storm Drains (ft) *

5

Rain Garden/Retention area planted (sq ft) *

20

No-mow zone installed (sq ft) *

0

Rain barrels installed (gallons) *

250

Stream Cleaning - Length of Stream Cleaned (ft) *

75

In this example, strategies to reduce water use were used.

We were not able to quantify this, so we wrote “0”.

If the practice was done, write how much for each practice. If the practice was not done, write “0”.

Describe any additional actions, and give details for the actions completed.
Objective 1: Systemic Sustainability

1.1 Curriculum and Instruction: Environmental Issue Instruction

Demonstrate that outdoor, environment-based instruction is occurring through hands-on, authentic lessons on environmental issues.

ES/MS: Provide at least one example of environmental issue instruction per grade level
HS: Provide at least one example of environmental issue instruction in at least four subject areas

You will need to add a grade for each activity. Click the green plus to create new activity.

For each activity, you will need to include:
1. Grade(s) of students
2. Date of activity
3. Lesson/Activity name
4. Teacher Name
5. Student Count
6. Description of activity
7. Material - The material refers to the documentation you are providing. You only need one material example for each lesson.

To add more activities, click the green plus sign.
1.2. Professional Development

1.2.1– School-Wide Awareness of Green School Certification

All staff are aware of the Green Schools application process.

Give Summary: How have you promoted awareness of the Green School certification process?

For each example, you will need to add a Meeting.

For each meeting, you will need to include:
1. Date of meeting
2. Staff in attendance
3. Description of what information was shared and how
4. Material

1.2.2– Environmental Education Professional Development

At least 10% of teachers have participated in environmental education PD (Recertifying Schools– within past 4 years; New Schools– within past 2 years)

Give Summary and Staff Engagement numbers

For each teacher who has participated, you will need to add an Attendance record.

The number of attendance records you include should be the same as the number of teachers who have participated in PD.

For each attendance record, you will need to include:
1. Date of PD
2. Staff in Attendance
3. Description of PD
4. Material
1.2.3– Additional Professional Development (Optional)
Any PD received earlier than 4 years ago.
Include a description of all additional PD, and upload supporting materials.

1.3 Sustainable School
1.3.1– School-Wide Environmental Behavior Change
Demonstrate the non-student driven sustainability practices your school has taken.
Include a description of the behavior change, and upload supporting materials.

1.3.2– Systemic Partnership
Demonstrate one partnership within the school system that supports an aspect of the Maryland Green School Program.
Include a description of the partnership and upload supporting materials.

1.4– Celebration
Describe a least one school-wide, annual environmental event
Include a description of the event, including the number of students involved, and upload supporting materials.
Objective 2: Student Driven Sustainability Practices

Schools are required to submit information and documentation for actions in EIGHT sustainability categories. These actions must be from three or more practices.

*Each school needs to demonstrate eight actions TOTAL. These eight actions must be spread across three or more practices.

Each action needs to fit into one of the eight sustainability practice categories:

1. Water Conservation/ Pollution Prevention
2. Energy Conservation
3. Solid Waste Reduction
4. Habitat Restoration
5. Structures for Environmental Learning
6. Responsible Transportation
7. Healthy School Environment
8. Community/Citizen Science

In the portal, each of the eight sustainability practices is listed. The process to add an action, and what is needed to be included for each action, is the same.

To add an action:

1. Go the sustainability practice that the action fits
2. Click "New Record" to add action
3. For each action, include the following:
   1. Date of activity
   2. Activity title
   3. Description of activity
   4. Material
4. To add an action in the same practice, click the plus sign.

*You can see all the actions you have created and toggle between them by clicking on the record number.

Continue this process until all eight actions are documented.
 Objective 3: Community Partnerships, Awards and Special Recognition

3.1 Community Partnerships

3.1.1 School Active in Community
Describe at least one sustained partnership where the school is active in the community.

2. For each event, include the following:
   1. Date of event
   2. Activity title
   3. Description of event
   4. Material

3.1.2 Community Active in the School
Describe at least one sustained partnership where the partner is active in the school.

2. For each event, include the following:
   1. Date of event
   2. Activity title
   3. Description of event
   4. Material

3.1.2 Awards and Special Recognition (OPTIONAL)
This information will enhance your application. If your school or students have received awards or special recognition, describe this here.

2. For each event, include the following:
   1. Date of award
   2. Activity title
   3. Description of award
   4. Material
Submitting the Application

Once you are ready to submit, scroll down to the bottom of any section under the Current Application page.

Click “Submit application”

There are 8 failing fields. Review your application and correct or add the missing fields, then try submitting again.

*If there are fields that are not filled out, you will not be able to submit. All fields that are not filled in will be labeled in red.

*Your application is due on March 17, 2023*

Make sure ALL sections are completed and you can submit before midnight on March 17!

What Happens After I Submit My Application?

Once you submit your application, MAEOE will begin its review process. If the reviewers have any questions or concerns regarding your application, they will contact you for clarification for what needs to be updated or corrected. Schools will have the opportunity to resubmit the corrected application.

All approved Green School Applications will be announced on Earth Day! Awarded schools will receive a plaque and plate recognizing the Green School Award, as well as a citation from the governor and a certificate from their county executive.

We celebrate our Green Schools and the wonderful work occurring in Maryland during our annual Youth Summit at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis, MD. Green Schools will have the opportunity to share their Top 5 Accomplishments and receive their awards at the ceremonies occurring at the Youth Summit.

The MAEOE Youth Summit will occur this year on May 18, 2023.
Accessing, Viewing and Sharing Your Application

The online portal converts the information provided into a website. This website can be accessed at any time while filling in the application. This link can be shared with anyone you wish, including school staff and families.

The created website includes the information provided for Objectives 1-3.

Images:

Documentation materials you uploaded are also included in the website. If you did not opt-in to have materials displayed publicly, all materials will be blurred as shown here.
Contact Us

MAEOE Maryland Green School Contacts:

- **Questions about the application process, online application and general FAQs:**
  Multiple MAEOE staff will be checking this email and your questions will get answered quicker if you use this email address.
  applications@maeoe.org

- **Questions about grant funds and other programming**
  Mary Westlund, Program Director
  greenschools@maeoe.org

- **Questions about Professional Development opportunities**
  Alisa Fried, Education Coordinator
  engagement@maeoe.org