2023-2024 Green School Online Portal Guide



MAEOE

MARYLAND GREEN SCHOOL PROGRAM

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 2023-2024 Application Guide, available <u>HERE</u>- the Application Guide goes into depth for what is required in the application. The portal guide focuses on how to complete the application.

Important Dates:

- Intent to Apply Due: December 15, 2023
- Preliminary Review Sessions: February 2024
- Submission Dates:
 - Early Submission (applications 2-5 only):
 December 15, 2023
 - Final Date for Submission: March 1, 2024
- Announcements: On or around Earth Day
- Youth Summit at Sandy Point State Park: Thursday, May 30, 2024

NEW! Rolling Application Submissions RECERTIFYING SCHOOLS (Applications 2-5) ONLY: Green School applications can be submitted on a rolling basis from December 15, 2023 - March 1, 2024. March 1, 2024. Schools must meet the following criteria to be eligible for early submission:

- The school must be a recertifying school. New schools are not eligible.
- Future actions (e.g. Earth Day Celebration in April) will be capped at two events/actions and require a letter or note from a school administrator stating the action is planned and will be executed.
- The application must show instruction and actions from the current school year.
- Early announcements will not be made. Schools successfully completing the application will be announced on or near Earth Day.

Application Submission: All applications must be submitted by **March 1, 2024** using the online portal: (https://marylandgreenschools.org). See the Online Application Portal Guide for in-depth directions.

Questions? Email 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

Getting Started

This section covers information about creating an account for your school and starting an application:

- Accessing the Portal and Resources
- Tips to Use the Portal
- Troubleshooting
- Creating an Account
- Signing Into Your Account
- Your Account Dashboard
- Adding User Accounts

Accessing the Portal and Portal Resources

The portal can be accessed through the MAEOE website, or by going to marylandgreenschools.org/. The purpose of the online portal is to streamline the Green Schools application process, and provides information regarding the Maryland Green Schools Program, MAEOE News and Grant Opportunities.



Tips to Use the Portal

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 workkload:** 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 of 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 that data...

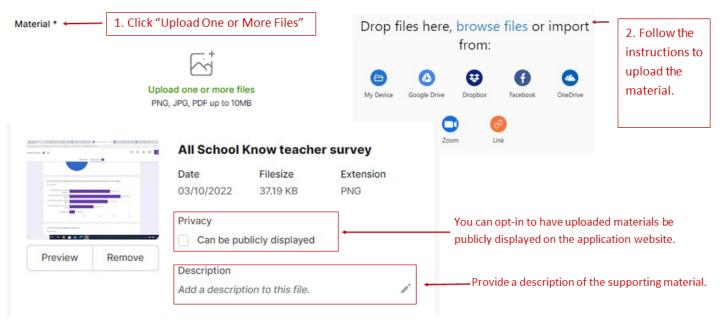
Other Portal Tools

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

PLEASE ONLY UPLOAD DOCUMENTS AS A PDF. Any Word documents, PowerPoints, photos, etc., should be converted to PDF format. Links that are viewable to anyone are also acceptable.



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

"I am having trouble with the portal." What to do if...

I cannot login to my account.

Make sure the name of your school appears on the login page. Click on the text box that says "School" and begin typing the name of your school. Click on your school name and continue to sign in with your email and password.



The work I have done is not saving.

- Make sure you click out of the text boxes before moving to the next section.
- Make sure more than one user is not filling out the same section at the same time.
- Log out of your account when you are finished working on your application.
- Clear the cache on your browser.

Creating an Account for Your School

- 1. Click "New School" on the home page
- 2. Complete the School Information section

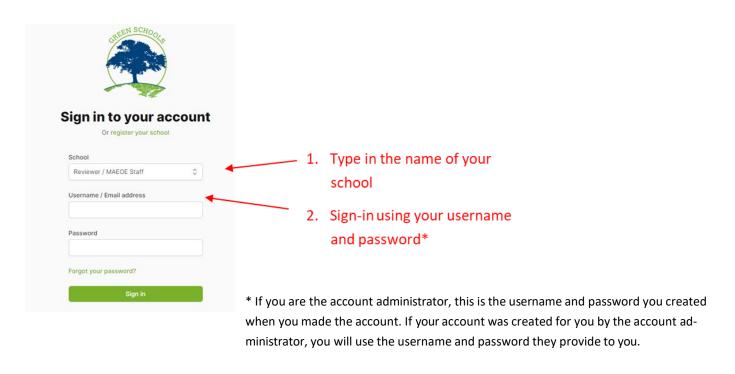
The "About your School" section needs to be filled out before you submit your application but does not need to be completed with creating the school account.

3. Create 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, also called account manager, can make accounts for other people working on the application (see page 9).

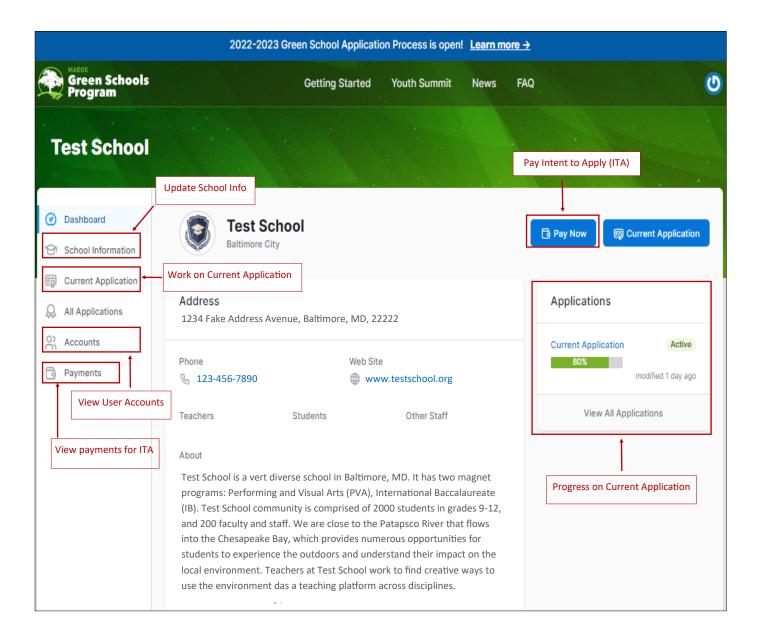
- 4. Fill out the School Statistics
 - Like the "About your School" section, the number of teachers, students and other school
 personnel can be updated later. This needs to be completed before submitting your
 application.
 - If you are unsure which application you are submitting, you can look at the Current Green Schools list on the MAEOE website <u>HERE</u>. Find the name of your school and look at the dates of previous certification. Add one to the total number of dates to find the application number. To find the next certification year, when you are submitting your next application, add four years to the last date listed.

Signing Into Your Account



Your Account Dashboard

This is the dashboard for the school account. Think of it like the "home page" for your school's account. You are able to navigate to all sections of the school account from here.

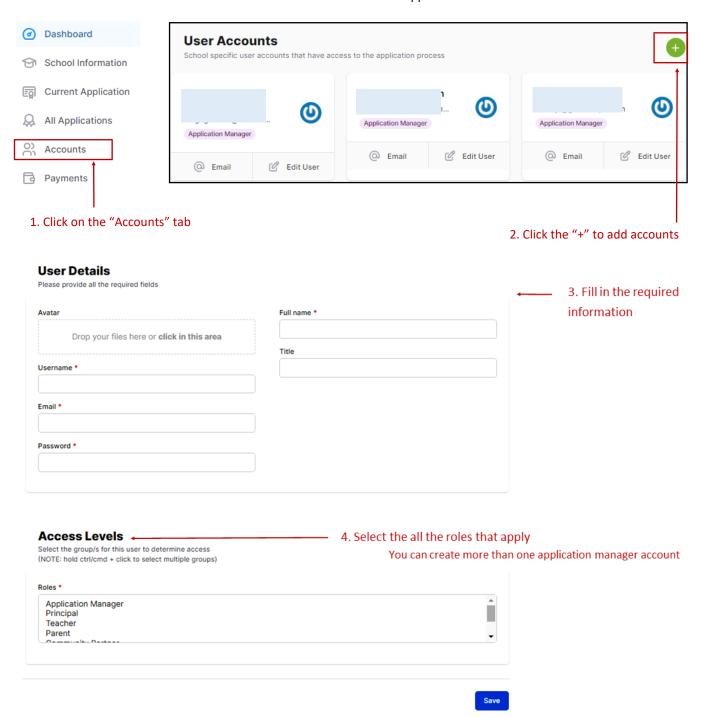


Adding Accounts

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 application electronically (see page 14).

To add an account:

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



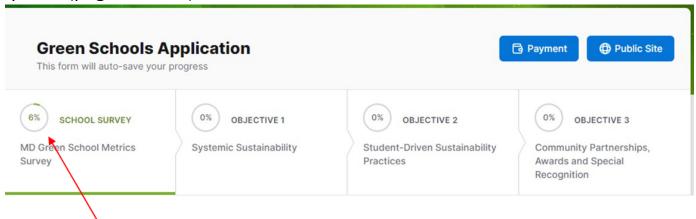
Completing the Green School Application

This section covers how to create and fill out the Green Schools application on the portal.

- Application Checklist
- Starting Your Application
- Paying the Intent to Apply Fee
- School Metrics Survey
- Objective 1: Systemic Sustainability
- Objective 2: Student- Driven Sustainability Practices
- Objective 3: Community Partnerships, Awards and Special Recognition

The Green School application is split into four sections: School Survey, Objective 1, Objective 2 and Objective 3. Within the portal, click on the corresponding tab to complete each section.

Instructions to complete each section on described within in this section on the portal (pages 11–23).



Each section has a percentage circle. The portal will measure how much of each section has been completed.

Application Checklist

To be completed the year of your (re)certification on the portal:

School Information:

School Information: contact information, address, county, Title 1 status

About Your School: describe your school's green culture **School Statistics:** number of teachers, students and staff

Application Number and Year: application your school is completing, year of submission

Basic information and application number are required at the time the account is created. All other

information should be completed before submitting application.

Intent to Apply:

\$75 fee paid by December 15, 2023 on the portal Payment is ONLY due the December before your application submission.

School Survey

Q 1.2- Legal Permissions

Q 1.3- Committee/ Green Team Members

Q 1.4- Top Five Accomplishments

Q 1.5- Goals (Applications 4, 5 and beyond ONLY)

Q 2- School Metrics Survey

Q 3- Other Metrics

Objective 1: Systemic Sustainability

1.1 Curriculum and Instruction

1.2 Professional Development

1.3 Sustainable Schools

1.4 Celebration

Objective 2: Student-Driven Sustainability Practices

Give information of 8 student-driven actions from three or more sustainability practice categories.

2.1 Water Conservation/ Pollution Prevention
 2.5 Structures for Environmental Learning
 2.6 Responsible Transportation

2.3 Solid Waste Reduction2.4 Habitat Restoration2.8 Community/ Citizen Science

Objective 3: Community Partnerships, Awards and Special Recognition

3.1 Community Partnerships

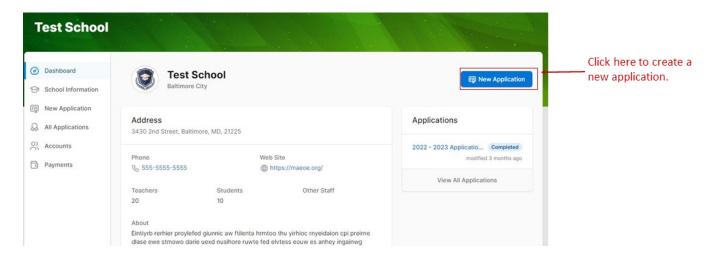
3.2 Awards and Special Recognition (optional)

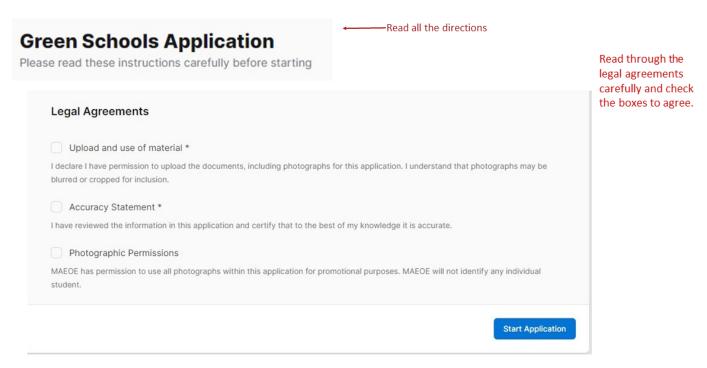
Starting Your Application

All Green School applications will be submitted using the online portal. Each application is saved, and a new application will need to be made for each submission.

Whether you are **submitting an application** on the portal for the **first time** or are **creating another application**, you will need to:

- 1. Sign into your school account
- 2. Go to "Dashboard"
- 3. Click on "New Application" button
- 4. Read through the instructions and tips, agree to the legal agreements, and click "start application".



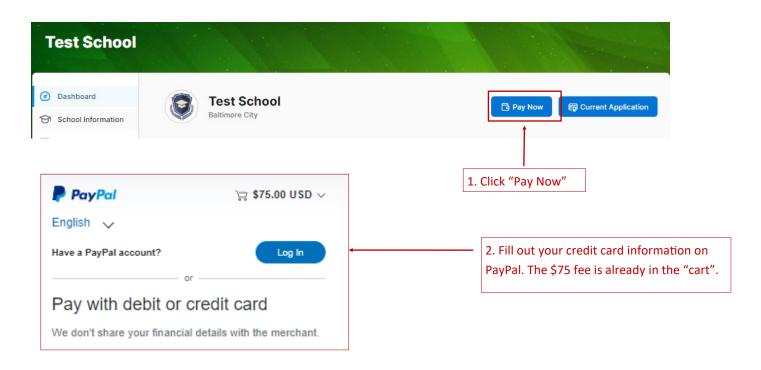


Paying the Intent to Apply

The Intent to Apply (ITA) \$75 fee MUST BE PAID by December 15, 2023 for the March 2024 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.

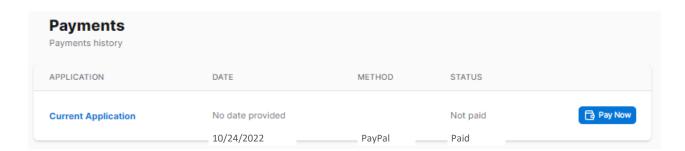
*IMPORTANT: If you are not planning on applying in 2024, DO NOT pay the ITA yet! Pay the ITA the December before the year you are submitting the application.



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).

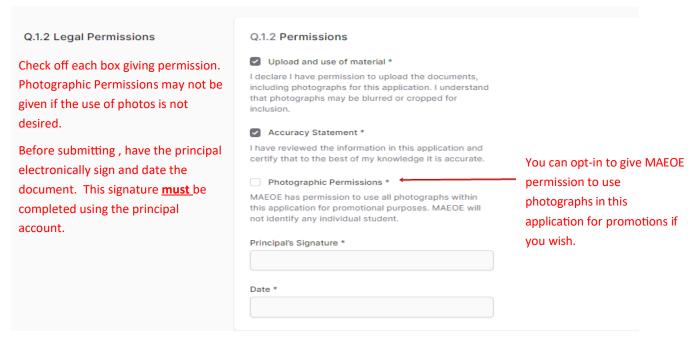
If you mailed a check, MAEOE will update this in the portal once the payment is processed.



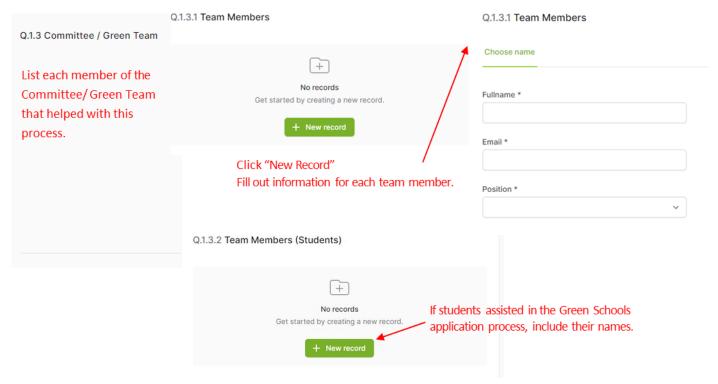
School Survey

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.

Q 1.2 Legal Permissions



Q 1.3 Committee/ Green Team Members



Q 1.4 Top 5 Accomplishments

Q.1.4 Top 5 Accomplishments Q.1.4 Top 5 Accomplishments This section lists your school's: Top 5 Accomplishments * Top 5 Accomplishment 1. Connecting all students to the environment **Top 5 Accomplishments** through sustained partnerships with Chesapeake example Bay Foundation, Annapolis Maritime Museum, and Assistance in completing any Maryland Park Service parts of the application or 2. Habitat restoration (pollinator and unity gardens) application process 3. Commitment to continued solid waste reduction How you were assisted 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 Leader / Green Center * Green Center that provided Green Center - Arlington Echo assistance. If you did not receive assistance, click "N/A" above and type "none" in the text box. If you answered the previous question please list the name of your Green Leader or Green Center. If you answered No, please enter N/A. Check all that What type of help did you get from the Green Leader or Green Center? * apply. Introduced the Program at a Staff Meeting Helped Review the Application If you did not Provided Professional Development for teachers at the School receive Helped the students with a Sustainable Practice (eg. planted trees, set-up a rain garden, painted storm drains) assistance, click Provide Resources (materials like compost bins, shovels, etc.) "N/A" above and Answered any questions you might have had type "none" in Other (please specify) the text box. Specify Other

Q 1.5- Goals (Applications 4, 5 and Beyond ONLY)

All schools completing a Sustainable application (Applications 4 and beyond), must set goals for their school. These goals are set for 4 years, 8 years and 12 years in the future. Schools completing application 5 or beyond also need to reflect on previous goals as well.

Application 4 Set Your Goals	Application 5 and Beyond Reflection and Setting New Goals
Q.1.5 Set Your Goals	Q.1.5 Set Your Goals
Write goals for the next 4, 8, and 12 years. *	Look at your goals from the last application and reflect on them *
Example: In 4 years, we would like to expand our composting from simple classroom to a school wide daily lunch activity. We hope to get composting bins for each grade level to use after breakfast, lunch, and classroom snacks/celebrations. The compost will be used for our vegetable and flower gardens.	Example: During the last several years, the school was able to maintain composting in the classroom, but adding a lunch composting program has been a challenge. Currently, the school is working with the city of Laurel to pick up compost on a weekly basis to take to the compost facility in Upper Marlboro. We hope this beging in the near future.pper Marlboro. We hope this beging in the near future. Set New Goals (for the next 4, 8, and 12 years) *

Example: In the next four years, we would like to expand our composting from classroom composting to a school wide daily lunch activity. In eight years, we hope the composting continues and we are using the compost in community gardens. In twelve years, we hope the composting is a sustainable program that has carried into the community.

Q 2- 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 fields, 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 provide some of the data.

Example Metrics Section

Q.2.1 Water Conservation / Pollution Prevent	ion		
Did you implement strategies to reduce water use in your school? *	In this example, strategies to rec	duce water use were used.	
O Yes O No			
If possible, quantify how much water you save in one year (gallons) *	We were not able to quantity, s	o we wrote "0".	
0			
Cumulative Practices on the School Ground period)		actice was done, write how . If the practice was not don	
Stream Bank Planting (Riparian Buffer) (sq ft) *			
0			
Erosion Control Project other than Stream Bank Planting - Describe in comment box (sq ft) *	Water Conservation: Other a	and Comments *	— Describe any additional actions
50	water Conservation: Other a	ind Comments *	 Describe any additional actions and give details for the actions
Painted Storm Drains (#) *	Large bioswale between p prior to original green scho	ool cert. It has been	completed.
5	maintained and plant life h more storm water. Storm		
Raingarden/bioretention area planted (sq ft) *	SDW in storm water. New aim to absorb and filter sto		
20	aim to absorb and filter sto	Jill Water	
No-mow zone installed (sq ft) *			
0			
Rain barrels installed (gallons) *			
250			
Stream Cleaning- Length of Stream Cleaned (ft) *			
75			

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 a least four subject areas

Click the green plus to create new activity You will need to add a grade for each activity. A new activity should be made for each grade (elementary or middle school) or subject (high school). For each activity, you will need to include: Check all grade levels that apply. Pre-K Grade 5 Grade 11 Kindergarten Grade 6 Grade 12 Grade 1 Grade 7 Other (e.g. course/clubs/subject Grade 2 Grade 8 area) Grade 3 Grade 9 Grade 10 Grade 4 Other Grades High Schools: Please include the subject (i.e., biology, Spanish, chemistry) in "Other Grades" section. Date * ++ Approximate date activity occurred. Lesson / Activity * Name of activity. Teacher Name * Name of all teachers (if it is an activity taught by all in a grade level, include all teachers in the grade). Students Count * Number of students (if this is an activity taught for whole grade, include all students in that grade). Number of students participating in the activity Description * Describe purpose of learning activity, and how it relates to environmental issue instruction. Brief description of the Lesson / Activity. Upload supporting materials. Material * Upload one or more files PNG, JPG, PDF up to 10MB

1.2- Professional Development

1.2.1 School-Wide Awareness of Green School Certification

All staff are aware of the Green Schools application process.

Summary: Describe how awareness of the Green School process was promoted.



Provide examples of how Green School process was promoted by creating a new meeting record.



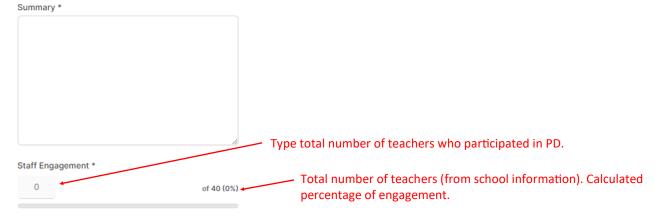
For each meeting record, you will need to include:

- 1. Date of meeting
- 2. Number of staff in attendance
- 3. Description of meeting
- 4. Supporting materials

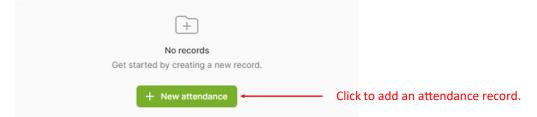
1.2.2 Environmental Education Professional Development

At least 10% of teachers have participated in environmental education PD.

Summary: Brief overview of PD attended by teachers.



Each teacher needs to have their own attendance record, regardless of how many PD opportunities a teacher has participated in. The number of attendance records needs to match the Staff Engagement number provided.



For each attendance record, you will need to include:

- Date of PD
- 2. Name of teacher
- 3. Description of PD
- 4. Supporting materials

1.2.3 – Additional Professional Development (Optional)

Any PD received earlier than 4 years ago.

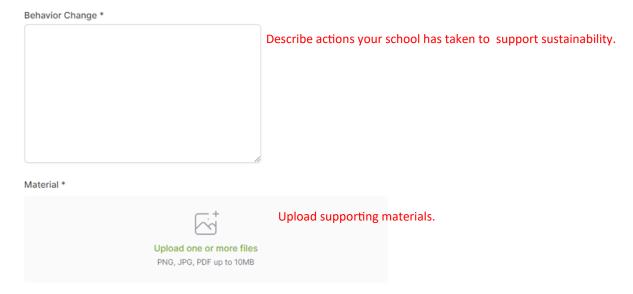
Include a description of all additional PD completed by staff.

Each attendance record needs to include the date of PD, name of teacher, description of PD, and supporting materials.

1.3 Sustainable Schools

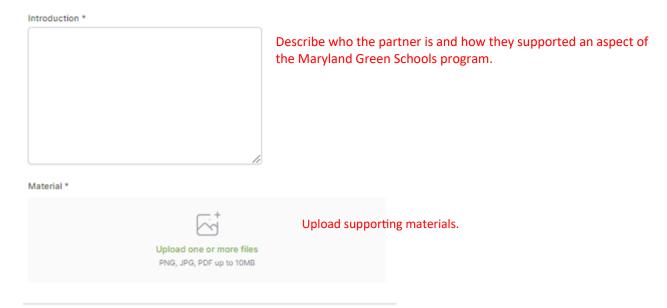
1.3.1 School-Wide Environmental Behavior Change

Demonstrate the non-student driven sustainability practices your school has taken.



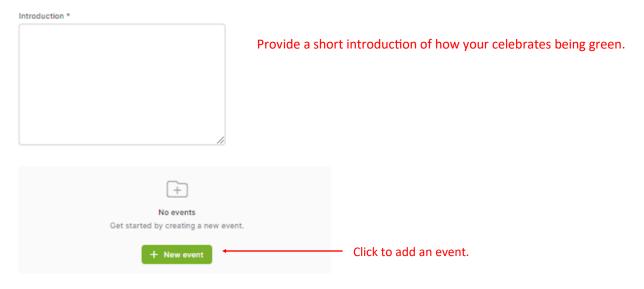
1.3.2 Systemic Partnership

Demonstrate one partnership within the school system that supports an aspect of the Maryland Green School Program.



1.4 Celebration

Describe a least one school-wide, annual environmental event.



For each event record, you will need to include:

- 1. Grades of students participating.
- 2. Date of event
- 3. Name of celebration
- 4. Description of celebration describing how it is a green celebration.
- 5. Supporting materials

Objective 2: Student Driven Sustainability Practices

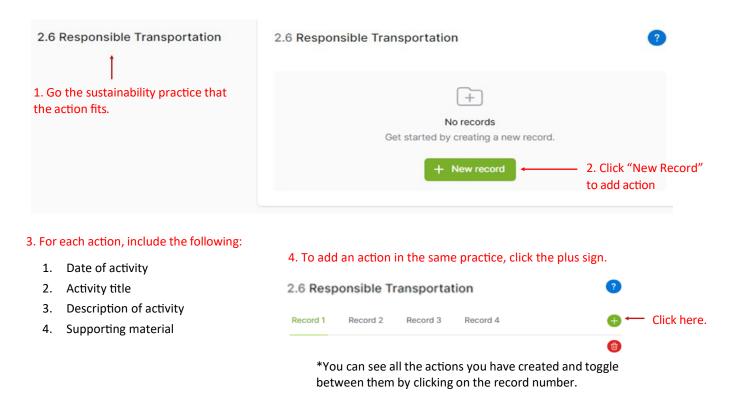
Schools are required to submit information and documentation for actions in **EIGHT** sustainability categories. These actions must be from *three or more practices*.

Each 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 of 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:



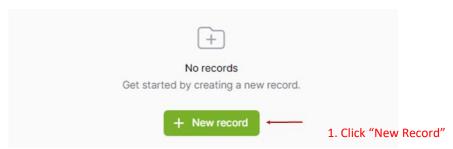
Continue this process until all eight actions are documented.

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.

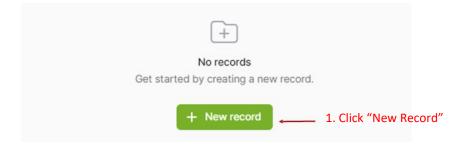


2. For each event, include the following:

- 1. Date of event
- 2. Activity title
- 3. Description of event and partnership
- 4. Supporting materials

3.1.2 Community Active in the School

Describe at least one sustained partnership where the partner is active in the school.

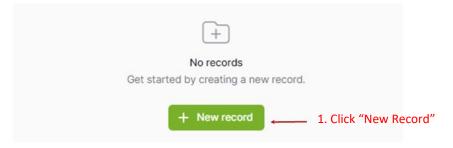


2. For each event, include the following:

- 1. Date of event
- 2. Activity title
- 3. Description of event and partnership
- 4. Supporting materials

3.2 Awards and Special Recognition (OPTIONAL)

Include any awards or special recognition that your school or students have received.



2. For each award, include the following:

- 1. Award date
- 2. Award name
- 3. Description of award
- 4. Supporting materials

Submitting Your Application

This section covers how to submit the application, and next steps.

- Submitting Your Application
- What Happens After I Submit the Application?
- Accessing, Viewing and Sharing Your Application

Submitting the Application

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



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.

Submit application

Your application is due on March 1, 2024

Make sure ALL sections are completed and you can submit before midnight on March 1!

NEW THIS YEAR: **RECERTIFYING SCHOOLS** are eligible to submit their application during the Application Submission Window: December 15, 2023 through March 1, 2024.

New Schools are eligible to submit within in the application submission window. New Schools should submit their application on March 1, 2024.

What Happens After I Submit the 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, Monday April 22, 2024. School that submit their application within the Application Submission *Window will not* receive their announcement early.

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.

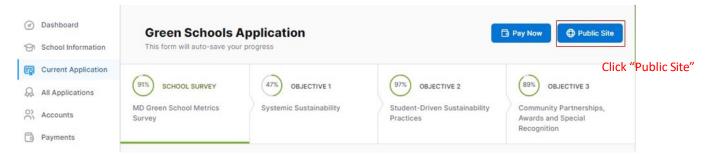
We celebrate our Green Schools and the wonderful work occuring in Maryland during our annual Youth Summit at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis, MD. Green Schools will have the opportunity to share their Top 5 Accomplishments and receive their awards at the ceremonies occurring at the Youth Summit.

The MAEOE Youth Summit will occur this year on May 30, 2024.

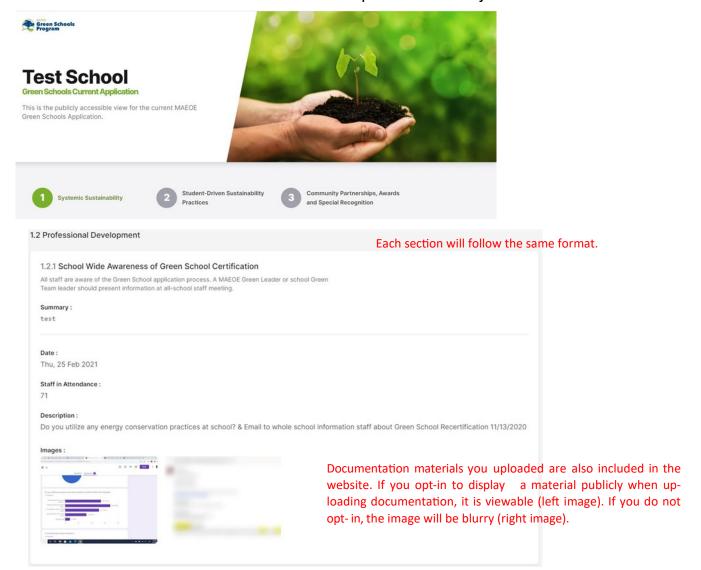
Accessing, Viewing and Sharing Your Application

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

From the Account Dashboard:



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



Contact MAEOE

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 funding:

Multiple MAEOE staff will be checking this email and your questions will get answered quicker if you use this email address.

grants@maeoe.org