



# MARYLAND GREEN SCHOOLS Application Guide



**MAEOE**

Maryland Association for Environmental &  
Outdoor Education

410-777-9530

| [www.maeoe.org](http://www.maeoe.org)

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P.O. Box 1103 Edgewater, MD 21037



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# INTRODUCTION

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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.

Founded in 1999, the MAEOE Maryland Green Schools program allows a school to highlight achievements and progress 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](#), as well as [Environmental Literacy Standards](#), Next Generation Science Standards, Maryland State Standards, C3 Curriculum, and STEAM Curriculum. 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. In school, at home, and in their communities, schools are mitigating pollution, reducing waste, increasing habitat, limiting carbon emissions, creating healthy living environments, and supporting environmental literacy. Maryland's students, teachers, families, and school staff are all involved in the preservation and protection of the state's unique natural resources, particularly those of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. [Read more about Environmental Literacy here.](#)

*The students love being a part of a Green School! It gave them a sense of accomplishment, and... when you're younger, you never feel like you can make an impact just by yourself. Being able to show kids that you can make a difference, and knowing that they have a group of like-minded individuals where they can make a difference together and they can see it being played out in the community, is just really powerful for them.*

- Jennifer Barbee, Brooklyn Park Middle School

*We're really proud of the fact that, from our agricultural classes, to our history classes, math classes, even our P.E. classes- there's always some way to incorporate Green School practices into the curriculum.*

- Kristin Larney, Southern High School





## 10 STEPS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

- 1. **Connect with a Green Center or MAEOE Green Ambassador.**

MAEOE strongly recommends that you reach out to a local Green Center or MAEOE Green Ambassador (formerly Green Leaders) for assistance with your application process. To find a local Green Center or MAEOE Green Ambassador, visit the MAEOE website or contact [applications@maeoe.org](mailto:applications@maeoe.org).
- 2. **Make a list of your school's green activities and documentation.**
  - **First-time applicants:** information and documentation from **the past two academic years** may be included.
  - **Renewing schools:** information and documentation from **the past four academic years** may be included.
  - Applications must also include instruction and actions from **the current academic year** of submission.
  - A maximum of **two future actions/events** (e.g., Earth Day Celebration in April following submission) are permitted and require a letter or note from a school administrator.
- 3. **Review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).**

The FAQs can be found on the MAEOE website or online portal. For specific inquiries, contact your local Green Center or MAEOE Green Ambassador or email [applications@maeoe.org](mailto:applications@maeoe.org).
- 4. **View examples of successful applications for ideas.**

Visit the MAEOE website for a list of example applications.
- 5. **Attend a MAEOE Green Schools info session or online portal training.**

Visit the MAEOE website to register for scheduled trainings in the fall.
- 6. **Visit marylandgreenschools.org and create your school's online portal account.**
  - **All schools must create their own account** and staff logins. Visit the Online Portal Guide for directions on navigating the portal.
  - Complete your school information, including your school's correct application number and year of submission. See **"Creating Your Account"** on page 7 for more details.



7. **Pay your school's \$125 Intent to Apply fee on the portal by December 16, 2024.**

If paying by check, please mail to MAEOE at:  
**P.O. Box 1103 Edgewater, MD 21037**

Include your school's name on the memo line. MAEOE will mark the fee as paid in the portal once payment is received. **Applications cannot be submitted until the fee is paid.**

8. **Sign up for a preliminary review session with MAEOE.**

Schools who attend a preliminary review session can have their application informally reviewed and receive helpful tips before submission. Visit the MAEOE website for preliminary review sessions in the spring.

9. **Submit your application through the portal by March 3, 2025.**

- **New schools** may submit starting **February 24, 2025**.
- **Renewing schools** may submit anytime after the Intent to Apply deadline of **December 16, 2024**.
- Applications received after March 3, 2025 are not guaranteed a review.
- You will receive a confirmation email when you submit your application on the portal. If you do not receive this confirmation, please email [applications@maeoe.org](mailto:applications@maeoe.org).
- **All Green Schools will be announced on or around Earth Day.**
- Consider applying for joint certification with Eco-Schools USA. Contact Lindsey Walker at [WalkerL@nwf.org](mailto:WalkerL@nwf.org) or visit <https://www.nwf.org/eco-schools-us> for more information.

10. **Register to attend the Youth Summit and celebrate!**

The Youth Summit will be held on **May 29, 2025** at **Sandy Point State Park**. This is a celebration for all schools in Maryland, and schools with successful 2024-2025 Green Schools applications will be recognized in an awards ceremony. The [application for Youth Summit transportation funding](#) will be available in early 2025.







## APPLICATION CYCLES

All schools, including Sustainable schools, must reapply every four years to maintain their Green School Award. For new applicants, activities and programs from the past two academic years are eligible as application evidence. All subsequent applications may utilize activities and programs from the four years between awards. Applications are accepted every year.

Application Number	Eligible Activities	Application Type	Award Type
New (1st Application)	Activities occurring two academic years prior to submission (years 1-2)	Regular	Regular
2nd Application	Activities occurring after Application 1 (years 3-6)	Regular	Regular
3rd Application	Activities occurring after Application 2 (years 7-10)	Regular	Regular
4th Application	Activities occurring after Application 3 (years 11-14)	Regular with 4-year goals	Sustainable
5th Application	Activities occurring after Application 4 (years 15-18)	Sustainable	Sustainable Bronze
6th Application	Activities occurring after Application 5 (years 19-22)	Sustainable	Sustainable Silver
7th Application	Activities occurring after Application 6 (years 23-26)	Sustainable	Sustainable Gold
8th Application and In Perpetuity	Activities occurring after Application 7 (years 27+)	Sustainable	Sustainable Evergreen





## CREATING YOUR ACCOUNT

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Starting in 2022, Green Schools are submitting their applications through our Green Schools Online Portal. Each school must create their school's account in the portal in order to start their application. To do so, visit [marylandgreenschools.org](https://marylandgreenschools.org) and click on "New School" in the upper right corner, then fill out the following information.

### School Information

Provide basic information about your school, including your school's county, grades taught, and number of teachers and students.

### About Your School

Provide a summary of your school's green culture and accomplishments. Share examples of sustainable changes your school has taken to become greener, as well as any special programs that target environmental literacy in your students.

### School Statistics

Provide the number of teachers and students at your school, then select your application number and submission year. If you are unsure of your school's application number, [check the Green Schools list here](#).

### Intent to Apply

All applying Green Schools must pay their \$125 Intent to Apply fee by December 16, 2024 in order to submit their application in March. Fees may be paid on the online portal or via check. If paying by check, please mail to MAEOE at P.O. Box 1103 Edgewater, MD 21037 with your school's name on the memo line.

**For further assistance navigating the portal, visit our [Online Portal Guide](#).**



# DOCUMENTATION GUIDE

Documentation is required for all activities listed in the application. Keep in mind that professionals who do not know your school will be reviewing the application, so **please include detailed descriptions** for all activities.

Strong Documentation	Documentation to Avoid
Photos, videos, or other media of students in action	Photos with no students present
Completed student assignments, projects, worksheets, etc.	Lesson plans and blank student worksheets*
Workshop registration emails, certificates of completion, or sign-in sheets	Promotional fliers and emails
Screenshots of email correspondence between staff and partners, including the date	Staff headshots or partner organization logos
Links to public-facing websites	Links to websites without public access
Agendas describing plans for a near future event	<i>*While lesson plans would not pass as standalone documentation, they may supplement the examples listed on the left.</i>
Photos or screenshots of news articles or social media posts	

**Documentation is NOT required for Sustainable schools (Applications 5 and beyond).**  
**[Click here to access the Application 5 and Beyond Checklist.](#)**

Before submitting documentation, double check that your files have first been downloaded to your desktop. **Files that are uploaded directly from school servers will be blocked.**

## Recommended file formats:

- PDF files
- JPG images
- PNG images
- MP4 videos
- AVI videos
- MOV videos
- Links to public-facing websites (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, etc.)

## DO NOT SUBMIT the following file formats:

- HEIC images
- ZIP files
- Google Drive files
- OneDrive files
- Links to school servers or websites without public access

Review the **Online Portal Guide** for further tips on uploading files.



# MAEOE RESOURCES

## FUNDING

MAEOE has mini-grants available for student action projects, transportation, and more! Explore funding opportunities on our [Funding page](#) or email [grants@maeoe.org](mailto:grants@maeoe.org).

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MAEOE provides several professional development workshops throughout the year, including Project Learning Tree workshops, Environmental Education Certification, and more. Workshops are offered in both in-person and virtual formats. Visit our website for a list of workshop opportunities, including some from other providers. For questions about professional development, email [greenschools@maeoe.org](mailto:greenschools@maeoe.org).

## BECOME A GREEN AMBASSADOR

MAEOE Green Ambassadors (formerly Green Leaders) are individual volunteers charged with assisting Maryland Green Schools with their application processes. Green Ambassadors meet with MAEOE four times throughout the year to be trained in the Green Schools application and review process and work with their assigned school in completing their application. Anyone can become a MAEOE Green Ambassador; for more information, visit the MAEOE Green Ambassadors page on our website.

## YOUTH SUMMIT

The Maryland Green Schools Youth Summit is an annual celebration of our Green Schools' and Green Centers' achievements that takes place at the end of May at Sandy Point State Park. All schools in Maryland are welcome to attend, and that year's newly awarded Green Schools and Green Centers will be recognized. Advance registration is required at \$2/person. To register, visit our Youth Summit page on our website beginning in March. For questions about the Youth Summit, email [applications@maeoe.org](mailto:applications@maeoe.org).

## MAEOE CONFERENCE

The annual MAEOE Conference is a gathering of teachers, educators, researchers, and environmental professionals for workshops, networking sessions, speakers, and field experiences. The conference is held around early February and alternates between Towson and Ocean City each year. MAEOE members receive a registration discount, and there are a limited number of scholarships available! To register, visit the Conference page on our website beginning in October. For conference questions, email [conference@maeoe.org](mailto:conference@maeoe.org).

## MEMBERSHIP

Individuals and organizations can sign up for a MAEOE membership and receive discounts on conference registration. Learn more on our Membership page.

## QUESTIONS?

For application-related questions, please email [applications@maeoe.org](mailto:applications@maeoe.org).



# GREEN SCHOOL APPLICATION WORKSHEET

This worksheet is provided for your own use to organize everything you need for your Green Schools application. **The application has been recently updated**; please check pages 13-22 for further details on each objective's requirements and examples of acceptable activities and documentation.

Application Item		Assigned To:	Notes
Create your school's online portal account <i>Visit <a href="http://marylandgreenschools.org">marylandgreenschools.org</a> and create your staff and principal logins. Visit the Online Portal Guide for directions on navigating the portal.</i>			
Complete your school's information <i>Fill in the "about" section of your school account, provide a description your school's green culture, and select the correct application number and year.</i>			
Pay the \$125 Intent to Apply fee <i>Pay via the online portal or mail a check to MAEOE at P.O. Box 1103 Edgewater, MD 21037.</i>			
<b>Objective 1: Systemic Sustainability</b>			
1.1	Environmental Curriculum & Instruction <i>Provide environmental curriculum in multiple grades or subjects.</i>		
1.2.1	School-wide Awareness- Staff <i>Demonstrate that all staff know of the MAEOE Green School application.</i>		
1.2.2	School-wide Celebration <i>Demonstrate how your students celebrate being green in a school-wide event.</i>		
1.3	Professional Development <i>Demonstrate that 10% of instructional staff have had environmental education PD within the last 2-4 years.</i>		
1.4.1	School-wide Staff Sustainability <i>Provide at least one staff-driven sustainable practice.</i>		
1.4.2	Systemic Partnership <i>Provide at least one partnership with a member of your school office.</i>		



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Application Item		Assigned To:	Notes
<b>Objective 2: Student Action</b> <i>Provide a total of 8 actions that address 3 or more of the following sustainability practices.</i>			
2.1	<b>Water Conservation/Pollution Prevention</b> <i>Addresses indoor and outdoor water use, stormwater management, erosion control, outdoor cleanups, and water quality.</i>		
2.2	<b>Energy Conservation</b> <i>Addresses energy/electronic use and reducing carbon footprints.</i>		
2.3	<b>Solid Waste Reduction</b> <i>Addresses resource use, waste disposal, and waste management.</i>		
2.4	<b>Habitat Restoration</b> <i>Addresses native plant and animal habitat, strengthening local ecosystems, and invasive species removal.</i>		
2.5	<b>Opportunities for Nature Exploration</b> <i>Addresses structures, signage, and artwork that encourage the use of outdoor space for environmental learning.</i>		
2.6	<b>Responsible Transportation</b> <i>Addresses sustainable options for school transportation and other strategies to reduce carbon emissions.</i>		
2.7	<b>Healthy Indoor Environments</b> <i>Addresses healthy food and maintenance choices to promote a healthy indoor environment.</i>		
2.8	<b>Citizen/Community/Participatory Science</b> <i>Addresses student participation in scientific research via submissions to GLOBE, iNaturalist, eBird, or other online databases.</i>		



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Application Item		Assigned To:	Notes
<b>Objective 3: Community Partnership</b>			
3.1.1	School Active in the Community <i>Provide at least one ongoing partnership in which the school benefits the community.</i>		
3.1.2	Community Active in the School <i>Provide at least one ongoing partnership in which a community partner is working in the school.</i>		
3.2	Additional Achievements (Optional) <i>List any other green accomplishments your school, staff, or students would like to share.</i>		
Legal Permissions <i>Indicate whether MAEOE has permission to use any provided photos/media in promotional materials.</i>			
Green Team <i>List any staff and/or students who worked on the application.</i>			
Top 5 Accomplishments <i>Write one sentence per accomplishment to be shared at Youth Summit award ceremonies.</i>			
Goals ( <b>Applications 4 and beyond only</b> ) <i>Set goals for the next 4, 8, and 12 years.</i>			
Goal Reflections ( <b>Applications 5 and beyond only</b> ) <i>Reflect on goals set in your last application.</i>			
School Metrics Survey <i>Quantify the impact of the school's green actions.</i>			
Submit Application <i>Renewing schools may submit anytime after the Intent to Apply deadline. New schools may submit starting the Monday before the application deadline. Applications received after the deadline are not guaranteed a review.</i>			
Register for the Youth Summit <i>May 29, 2025 at Sandy Point State Park</i>			
Apply for Youth Summit Transportation Funding			



# Application Objectives

A DETAILED OVERVIEW OF OBJECTIVES 1-3,  
ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION,  
EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES,  
AND THE SCHOOL METRICS SURVEY





# OBJECTIVE 1: SYSTEMIC SUSTAINABILITY



Demonstrate that teachers and staff are integrating environmental literacy and sustainability into their curriculum, professional learning, and day-to-day practices.

## 1.1 Environmental Curriculum and Instruction

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

- **Elementary and middle schools** must provide one example of outdoor/environmental instruction per grade level.
- **High schools** must provide one example of outdoor/environmental instruction in four different subjects (which may include multiple different sciences).

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class name</li> <li>• Grade(s)</li> <li>• Date</li> <li>• Lesson/Activity name</li> <li>• Teacher name</li> <li>• Detailed description of how students are using the outdoors or nature in their learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs)</li> <li>• Lessons incorporating outdoor/schoolyard exploration</li> <li>• Environmentally-focused field trips</li> <li>• Student presentations on nature/climate-related subjects</li> <li>• Student debates on environmental policies</li> <li>• Outdoor/nature-themed arts education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos/videos of students participating in activities</li> <li>• Completed student work</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Examples</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Documentation</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action projects without lesson content (e.g., sorting recyclables, creating outdoor artwork, trash pickups, removing invasive plants, installing bird boxes, etc.)</li> <li>• Lessons that do not demonstrate an environmental connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plans (may supplement other documentation)</li> <li>• Blank student worksheets</li> </ul>

# OBJECTIVE 1: SYSTEMIC SUSTAINABILITY

## 1.2 Green School Awareness

Demonstrate that everyone in your school is aware of the Maryland Green School application process.

### 1.2.1 School-Wide Awareness - Staff

Demonstrate that all school personnel are aware of your school's Green School status and application.

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of meeting</li> <li>• Number of staff in attendance</li> <li>• Description of how your staff were made aware of your school's Green Schools application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop led by a MAEOE Green Center, MAEOE Green Ambassador, or other county-designated Green Leader</li> <li>• Presentation conducted during an all-staff meeting by your school's Green Team</li> <li>• Staff brainstorming session on meeting the application requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff meeting agenda</li> <li>• Whole staff presentation</li> <li>• Staff sign-in sheet</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email correspondence with no additional action or follow-up</li> <li>• Meetings or workshops without all teachers present</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos showing only a small fraction of teachers engaging in the meeting</li> </ul>

### 1.2.2 School-Wide Celebration

Demonstrate how your school celebrates being a Green School by hosting a school-wide, environmentally-focused event open to all students.

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades</li> <li>• Date of event</li> <li>• Celebration/event title</li> <li>• Detailed description of the event's environmental activities and how all grades participated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-wide Earth Day celebration highlighting Green School accomplishments</li> <li>• Whole school shutting off lights for Earth Hour</li> <li>• Classes contributing to bird counts for the Great Backyard Bird Count or World Migratory Bird Day</li> <li>• Week-long morning announcements reminding students of Green School status and green actions</li> <li>• Attendance at the Youth Summit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos of students participating in activities</li> <li>• Newsletters or social media highlighting the event</li> <li>• Detailed event agendas</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that are not available to all students</li> <li>• Activities that do not acknowledge the Green Schools program</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner logos/websites</li> <li>• Staff headshots</li> <li>• Web images</li> </ul>



# OBJECTIVE 1: SYSTEMIC SUSTAINABILITY



## 1.3 Environmental Professional Development for Teachers

Demonstrate that **10% of instructional staff** have completed an environmental PD. Instructional staff is defined as any staff that manages a gradebook.

- **New schools** must have all PD completed **within the past 2 academic years**.
- **Renewing schools** must have all PD completed **within the past 4 academic years**.

**A teacher who has participated in multiple workshops may only be counted once.**

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of training</li> <li>• Teacher name</li> <li>• Description of PD and how it relates to the teacher’s environmental education practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects WET/WILD/Learning Tree educator workshops</li> <li>• <u>MWEE 101/201 online workshops</u> by NOAA</li> <li>• <u>Using the Outdoors as a Classroom</u> virtual training</li> <li>• MAEOE Conference attendance</li> <li>• Master Naturalist/Gardener certification</li> <li>• College degrees in an environmental field received in the last 2 years (for new schools) or 4 years (for reapplying schools)</li> <li>• <u>MAEOE Environmental Educator Certification</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificate of completion</li> <li>• Screenshot of registration confirmation email</li> <li>• Training agenda</li> <li>• Photos of teachers attending their training</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops taking place over 2 years (for new schools) or 4 years prior (for reapplying schools)</li> <li>• Workshops not demonstrating a clear environmental connection</li> <li>• Activities conducted as part of student programming</li> <li>• Personal field trips or vacations</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos of training that do not show the teachers in question or environmental activities</li> <li>• Promotional flyers or emails</li> </ul>



# OBJECTIVE 1: SYSTEMIC SUSTAINABILITY

## 1.4 Achieving Sustainable Schools

Demonstrate the steps your school and staff are taking to be sustainable.

### 1.4.1 School-Wide Staff Sustainability

Demonstrate the sustainability practices your **teachers, staff, and other school personnel** have implemented school-wide to make your school green. *Any actions involving students belong under Objective 2.*

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed description of practices being implemented by teachers/staff/personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing paper use via double-sided copying, electronic communications, etc.</li> <li>Reducing electricity via energy-efficient bulbs, motion-sensitive lights, de-lamping (removal of ½ of light bulbs), use of natural light, etc.</li> <li>Utilizing integrated pest management</li> <li>Incentivizing carpooling or public transportation</li> <li>Reducing impervious surfaces (blacktop, concrete)</li> <li>Reducing single-use plastics via reusable lunch containers, water bottles, utensils, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos of practices being implemented by staff</li> <li>Policy documents</li> <li>Blueprints</li> <li>Email or other correspondence</li> </ul>
	Non-Passing Examples	Non-Passing Documentation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practices being implemented by students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos of student practices</li> </ul>

### 1.4.2 Systemic Partnership

Demonstrate one partnership with a central office or board **within the school system** that supports part of the Maryland Green Schools Program. *Any partnerships outside of your school system belong under Objective 3.*

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed description of the partnership and how it supports an aspect of the Green Schools program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing food waste reduction with your district's food and nutrition office</li> <li>Managing energy efficiency or school ground plants with your district's facilities services</li> <li>Monitoring recycling with your district's waste/recycling office</li> <li>Conducting programming with your district's Outdoor Education Department</li> <li>Independent schools may partner with their board of trustees, parish office/archdiocese, or funders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos of practices being implemented</li> <li>Completed program or funding applications</li> <li>Letters/emails with your district partner addressing plans</li> </ul>
	Non-Passing Examples	Non-Passing Documentation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships outside of your school system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner logos/websites</li> <li>Staff headshots</li> <li>Web images</li> </ul>



# OBJECTIVE 2: STUDENT ACTION

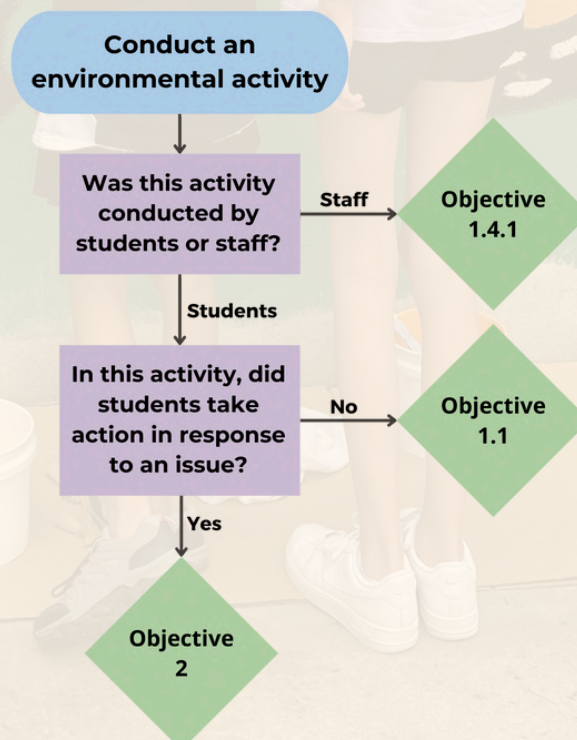
Demonstrate that students are taking a step beyond instruction and responding to environmental issues by planning, implementing, leading, and/or participating in sustainable practices.

Required Information	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of activity</li> <li>• Activity title</li> <li>• Grade level(s)</li> <li>• Detailed description of the activity and how students are taking action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos/videos of students conducting action</li> <li>• Completed student projects</li> <li>• Screenshots of social media posts</li> </ul>
	Non-Passing Documentation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plans (may supplement other documentation)</li> <li>• Blank student worksheets</li> <li>• Photos without students or student projects</li> <li>• Receipts of materials purchases</li> <li>• Logos</li> <li>• Web images</li> </ul>

Schools must document eight total actions that address at least three of the listed sustainability practices. Not all eight practices are required; however, each action must be distinctly different and can only count for one practice. A variety of ages and grades should be represented.

Application 5 and beyond schools need only provide four total actions that address four sustainability practices. [Click here to access the Application 5 and Beyond Checklist.](#)

Note that these are student actions, not curriculum or staff actions. If you're unsure if an activity belongs under Objective 2, use the following figure to help you determine where to place that activity.





# OBJECTIVE 2: STUDENT ACTION



Demonstrate that students are taking a step beyond instruction and responding to environmental issues by planning, implementing, leading, and/or participating in sustainable action. Schools must document **eight total actions that address at least three of the following eight sustainability practices.**

Sustainable Practice	Passing Examples	Non-Passing Examples*
<p><b>2.1 Water Conservation/ Pollution Prevention</b></p> <p>Addresses indoor and outdoor water use, erosion control, stormwater management, trash cleanups, and water quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installing a rain garden or no-mow zone</li> <li>• Reducing impervious surfaces</li> <li>• Installing riparian buffer zones to reduce runoff</li> <li>• Conducting a stream cleanup</li> <li>• Creating signs to turn off faucets in bathrooms</li> <li>• Stenciling storm drains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting water quality testing without applying or sharing the findings</li> <li>• Investigating the levels of erosion at a site without performing mitigation</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.2 Energy Conservation</b></p> <p>Addresses energy and electronics use and strategies to reduce carbon footprints.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labeling light switches with reminders to turn off lights</li> <li>• Conducting an energy audit of the school and present findings to school administration</li> <li>• Sharing energy-saving tips over morning announcements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining one’s own carbon footprint</li> <li>• Conducting an energy audit without sharing the findings</li> <li>• Staff installing energy-efficient lightbulbs</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.3 Solid Waste Reduction</b></p> <p>Addresses resource use, waste disposal, and waste management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating in no-waste lunches</li> <li>• Creating a share table at lunch</li> <li>• Sorting recyclables from trash</li> <li>• Conducting composting</li> <li>• Repurposing used materials into art projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff adding more recycling bins</li> <li>• Installing water bottle refill stations without student involvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.4 Habitat Restoration</b></p> <p>Addresses native plant and animal habitat, strengthening local ecosystems, and invasive species removal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising native species, such as terrapins or sunfish, in the classroom for release</li> <li>• Planting native trees, shrubs, pollinator plants, or bay grasses</li> <li>• Removing invasive plants</li> <li>• Building and installing bird boxes</li> <li>• Implementing bird-proofing measures on windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting introduced/ invasive trees, shrubs, or other plants</li> <li>• Staff planting trees or other plants on behalf of students</li> </ul>

\*Refer to the flow chart on page 18 to help you determine if an activity belongs under Objective 2.



# OBJECTIVE 2: STUDENT ACTION



Demonstrate that students are taking a step beyond instruction and responding to environmental issues by planning, implementing, leading, and/or participating in sustainable action. Schools must document **eight total actions that address at least three of the eight provided sustainability practices.**

Sustainable Practice	Passing Examples	Non-Passing Examples*
<p><b>2.5 Opportunities for Nature Exploration</b></p> <p>Addresses structures, signage, artwork, and events that encourage the use of nature in learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installing interpretive signage</li> <li>• Creating or maintaining an outdoor classroom space</li> <li>• Installing outdoor artwork</li> <li>• Planting or maintaining an edible garden</li> <li>• Participating in running events that show a clear environmental connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installing an outdoor classroom without student involvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.6 Responsible Transportation</b></p> <p>Addresses sustainable options for school transportation and fossil fuels reduction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installing signs to designate a no-idle zone</li> <li>• Handing out fliers to advocate for no idling or carpooling</li> <li>• Advocating to the district for electric buses</li> <li>• Participating in walking field trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riding the bus</li> <li>• Riding electric vehicles</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.7 Healthy Indoor Environments</b></p> <p>Addresses healthy food and building maintenance choices to promote a healthy indoor environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating and using non-toxic cleaning products</li> <li>• Keeping indoor plants to improve air quality</li> <li>• Harvesting produce to be used in lunches</li> <li>• Monitoring air quality and sharing results with the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring air quality without sharing or acting upon the findings</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.8 Citizen/Community/ Participatory Science</b></p> <p>Addresses student participation in scientific research via submissions to GLOBE, iNaturalist, eBird, or other online databases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting a bird count and submitting sightings to <a href="#">eBird</a></li> <li>• Participating in a bioblitz and submitting observations to <a href="#">iNaturalist</a></li> <li>• Training and collecting water quality data for <a href="#">the Chesapeake Water Watch project</a></li> <li>• Training and collecting atmospheric or hydraulic data to submit to <a href="#">GLOBE</a></li> <li>• Submitting monarch butterfly sightings or milkweed observations to <a href="#">Journey North</a></li> <li>• Documenting storm damage on <a href="#">MyCoast</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering data without submitting it to an online database</li> </ul>

\*Refer to the flow chart on page 18 to help you determine if an activity belongs under Objective 2.

# OBJECTIVE 3: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



Demonstrate that your school is forming long-term partnerships to foster environmental stewardship and cultivate community wellness through real-world connections.

## 3.1 Community Partners

Demonstrate long-term collaborations with outside organizations to support environmental education and sustainable practices. Schools must describe how these partnerships are long-term.

The same partner may be used in both Objectives 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.

### 3.1.1 School Active in the Community

Describe at least one environmentally-focused partnership in which your school is working to benefit your community.

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of activity</li> <li>• Partner name</li> <li>• Detailed description of how your school partnered with an organization to benefit your local community</li> <li>• Explanation of how your school considers this a long-term partnership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding a reoccurring used clothing drive for a local church/charity</li> <li>• Conducting environmental service projects in an off-campus public space (including trash clean-up, native plantings, invasive species removal, community garden maintenance, etc.)</li> <li>• Harvesting produce from a farm to be donated to a local food bank</li> <li>• Visiting another school for students to teach other students about an environmental issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos of students participating in activities</li> <li>• Newsletters or social media highlighting the event</li> <li>• Detailed event agendas</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field trips that do not demonstrate students benefitting their community</li> <li>• Holding a canned food drive or other food drive that does not improve sustainability practices</li> <li>• Service projects without an environmental connection</li> <li>• Partnerships with only one occurrence across all of Objective 3</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner logos/websites</li> <li>• Headshots</li> <li>• Photos without students or student projects present</li> </ul>



# OBJECTIVE 3: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



## 3.1 Community Partners

### 3.1.2 Community Active in the School

Describe at least one partnership in which a community partner is benefitting the school. These actions and projects occur on or near school grounds with support from the partner.

Required Information	Passing Examples	Passing Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date of activity</li> <li>Partner name</li> <li>Detailed description of how your school partnered with an organization to benefit your school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A business providing funding or in-kind donations for an environmental activity or materials</li> <li>Organizations delivering classroom presentations or assemblies on environmental topics</li> <li>Organizations assisting with school campus projects (such as tree/garden plantings, bird box installation, rain garden installation, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos of students participating in activities</li> <li>Newsletters or social media highlighting the event</li> <li>Detailed event agendas</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field trips</li> <li>Organizations providing services without an environmental connection</li> <li>Partnerships with only one occurrence across all of Objective 3</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Passing Documentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner logos/websites</li> <li>Headshots</li> <li>Photos without students or student projects present</li> </ul>

## 3.2 Additional Achievements (optional)

Share any environmentally-related awards, special recognition, certifications, or other achievements that your school, staff, or students have accomplished.

Required Information	Examples	Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date of activity</li> <li>Achievement title</li> <li>Description of the achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Wildlife Habitat Award from NWF</li> <li>County awards</li> <li>Measurable energy savings awards</li> <li>Green Ribbon School award</li> <li>LEED Certification</li> <li>Environmental professional development received more than 4 years ago</li> <li>Students or teachers recognized for green efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos of the award or a special recognition event</li> <li>Newspaper/newsletter articles</li> <li>Copy of certificate/award</li> </ul>

# ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS AND SURVEY



## ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

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Complete the following items at the end of your application.

### Legal Permissions

Acknowledge your school's permission to upload your chosen documents and that the provided information is accurate. You may choose to give MAEOE permission to use the provided photographs in our promotional materials. Finally, for your application to be submitted, your school's principal must sign and date the application. Visit our [Online Portal Guide](#) to learn how to create your principal's login.

### Green Team

List the teachers, students, and/or other personnel who assisted with compiling your school's application.

### Top 5 Accomplishments

Provide one sentence for each of the five accomplishments your school is most proud of. These statements will be shared during the awards ceremony at the Youth Summit. You may also list any Green Centers or MAEOE Green Ambassadors you received assistance from.

### Goals (Applications 4 and Beyond Only)

Schools completing Application 4 are being considered for Sustainable status, which means they must set goals for themselves for the next 4, 8, and 12 years. Sustainable schools, or schools completing Application 5 and beyond, will also provide written reflections on these goals and set goals for themselves for another 4, 8, and 12 years.



# ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS AND SURVEY



## SCHOOL METRICS SURVEY

The purpose of the School Metrics Survey is to quantify the impact of the green actions taken by your school to support sustainability and improve the environment. All survey quantifiers align with the sustainability practices outlined in Objective 2.

Schools are **NOT** expected to have an impact in every quantifier. This survey simply helps MAEOE document the collective impact of the Maryland Green Schools program and will not count against the school's application.

Due to the nature of the survey, MAEOE recommends completing this part of the application last.

Metrics Survey Quantifiers	Possible Data Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gallons of water saved</li><li>• Erosion control projects</li><li>• Stream cleaning</li><li>• Reduction of impervious surfaces</li><li>• Litter collection</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.1: Water Conservation/ Pollution Prevention</b></li><li>• Community cleanup events</li><li>• School facilities/utilities personnel</li><li>• Utility bills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KWh of energy saved</li><li>• Use of renewable energy</li><li>• Efficient lighting fixtures</li><li>• Delamped light fixtures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.2: Energy Conservation</b></li><li>• School facilities/utilities personnel</li><li>• Energy bills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LBs of recycled materials</li><li>• LBs of compostable materials</li><li>• # of electronics, ink cartridges, etc. recycled</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.3: Solid Waste Reduction</b></li><li>• Information from waste collection</li><li>• TerraCycle recycling programs</li></ul>

# ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS AND SURVEY



Metrics Survey Quantifiers	Possible Data Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of native trees/shrubs planted</li> <li>• Native habitat creation</li> <li>• Bird box creation/ installation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.4: Habitat Restoration</b></li> <li>• Community events</li> <li>• Actions with partners</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails, pathways creation</li> <li>• # of outdoor classrooms</li> <li>• Environmental art projects</li> <li>• # of times schoolyard used for learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.5: Opportunities for Nature Exploration</b></li> <li>• Actions with partners</li> <li>• Grants for outdoor space creation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No idle zones</li> <li>• # of staff/faculty carpooling, biking, walking, etc. to school</li> <li>• # of staff/faculty carpooling, biking, walking, etc. to school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.6: Responsible Transportation</b></li> <li>• Students' transportation information</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of indoor plants</li> <li>• Edible gardens</li> <li>• Outdoor running/environmental festivals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.7: Healthy Indoor Environments</b></li> <li>• Community events</li> <li>• Actions with partners</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster campaigns</li> <li>• Analyze data and identify solutions for environmental problems</li> <li>• Online data submission projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student action projects completed in <b>Objective 2.8: Citizen/Community/Participatory Science</b></li> <li>• Community events</li> <li>• Actions with partners</li> <li>• Use of iNaturalist, etc. with students</li> </ul>





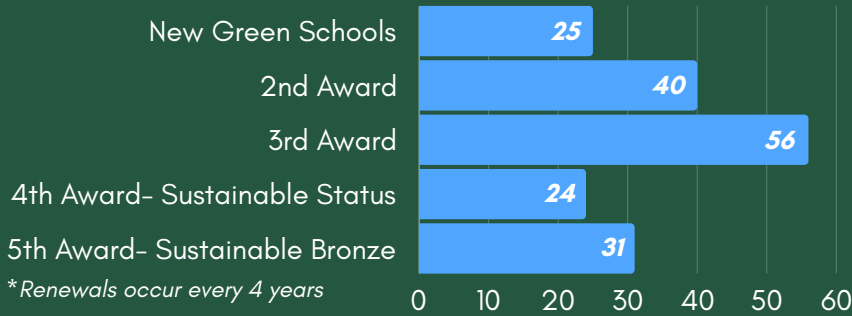
# MAEOE

Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education

*Encouraging, engaging, and empowering communities to understand, responsibly use, and promote the natural world.*

## MARYLAND GREEN SCHOOLS 2023-2024 METRICS

### 176 GREEN SCHOOL AWARDS IN 2024



**7,361 TEACHERS & 111,346 STUDENTS SERVED**

**654 Total Green Schools as of 2024**



### 2023-2024 CUMULATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Water Conservation	1,913,383 gal	Native Habitat Plantings	163,579 sq ft
Rain Gardens/ Bioretention Areas	71,232 sq ft	Bird House Installations	578 houses
Stream Bank Planting	65,519 sq ft	Native Shrub/Tree Plantings	18,266 plants
Stream Cleanups	19,428 ft	Invasive Plant Removal	93,568 sq ft
No-Mow Zones	887,799 sq ft	Outdoor Classrooms	188 classrooms
Energy Use Reduction	5,519,945 KWh	Outdoor Nature Art	1,039 pieces
Green Energy Usage	2,944,971 KWh	No-Idling Zones	39 zones
Recycled Materials	3,851,475 lbs	Indoor Air Quality Plants	5,416 plants
Food Waste Reduction	357,309 lbs	Edible Gardens	22,551 sq ft
		Outdoor Events/Festivals	503 events