



School Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

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

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

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2015-2018

Public Charter Title I Magnet Private Independent Rural

Name of Principal: **Ms. Sue Hellmers**

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

Official School Name: **Houlton Elementary School**

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: **70 County Road E, Houlton, WI 54082**

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

County: **St. Croix** State School Code Number *: **2611**

Telephone: **715-377-3850** Fax: **715-549-5797**

Web site/URL: www.hudsonraiders.org E-mail: hellmesh@hudson.k12.wi.us

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

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

Sue Hellmers
(Principal's Signature)

Date: **January 20, 2017**

Name of Superintendent: **Dr. Nick Ouellette**

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



District Name: **Hudson School District**

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

[Signature] Date: **January 20, 2017**
(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

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

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

Name of Nominating Agency: **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**

Name of Nominating Authority: **Dr. Tony Evers**
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

[Signature] Date: **January 23, 2017**
(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Provide a coherent summary that describes how your school is representative of your jurisdiction's highest achieving green school efforts. Summarize your strengths and accomplishments in all three Pillars. Then, include concrete examples for work in every Pillar and Element. Only schools that document progress in every Pillar and Element can be considered for this award.

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications and documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to green.ribbon.schools@ed.gov according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509
Expiration Date: March 31, 2018

Public Burden Statement

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

**U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools
Summary of Achievements
for
Houlton Elementary School**

Houlton Elementary School's mission is "Students, staff and families learn, care and grow by: working together thinking deeply and caring for our community." As a strong and positive learning community, they focus energy in three critical efforts: 1) student leadership, 2) health and wellness, and 3) environmental sustainability. Houlton Elementary received a *U.S. Healthy School, Silver Award* in 2012-13 as well as monetary award through the *Healthier Together* initiative from the Hudson Hospital Foundation and was recognized as a *Sugar Maple School* by Green and Healthy Schools Wisconsin in 2015. Houlton's commitment to these initiatives is so strong it continues as administrators change, truly demonstrating that sustainability is an integral part of the school's culture. Located in Houlton, Wisconsin, this suburban public school serving 225 students in grades K-5 with 35 staff has documented significant achievement in all three pillars of U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools.

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact

Houlton students have opportunities to be active in different student leadership groups – each advised by a team of adults passionate about supporting students in becoming independent and responsible thinkers, collaborators and problem-solvers, and positive role models. Among those student leadership groups, three directly support efforts to be Green & Healthy: R3 (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) Squad, Health and Wellness Crew, and Garden Club. R3 Squad members accept responsibility to educate students about recycling, and remind classmates about procedures. The R3 Squad plans special announcements (Green Tips) and competitions (cleanest recycling materials and garbage) to raise awareness about recycling for America Recycles Day (November 15) and Earth Week (week of April 22). For example, each day of Earth Week they focus on conserving an item: White Out Day (use no paper), Yellow Out Day (use no lights), Blue Out Day (use less water), Black Out Day (use less electricity), etc. The Squad also manages the composting schedule, assuring 2-3 students take responsibility for monitoring and emptying the compost bucket into the compost bin near the gardens. The school also made some site changes to reduce environmental impact by planting native species to reduce erosion and increase biodiversity and restored part of the school acreage to its natural prairie state.

Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness

The Health & Wellness Committee meets monthly. Items for purchase in the Student Leadership Council's School Store meet USDA guidelines for nutrition, and the school promotes alternative ways to celebrate birthdays, including a favorite board game or physical activity. The school tracks participation in an annual 3-month long Family Fun & Fitness program and local businesses donate prizes (gift cards, passes, pedometers, etc.) to recognize student and family efforts to be physically active together. Monthly Minute to Win It physical activities are integrated into All School Meetings. A healthy eating recipe contest engaged families to submit recipes for posting on the school's website, then students voted on their favorite recipes, and three were prepared and served for lunch by nutrition services.

The school is nearing the completion of the construction of a larger and more functional greenhouse to support larger gardening projects year-round. The Garden Club functions March - November; students take turns working with volunteers during lunch recess to prepare soil, turn compost, plant seeds, pull weeds and harvest vegetables. Each grade level has a gardening project supporting core curriculum and families volunteer to weed, turn and screen compost, and harvest vegetables each week of the summer when school is not in session.

A recent baseline assessment regarding students eating fruits and vegetables and a variety of foods across the food groups showed a significant disparity between the other five elementary schools and Houlton. When asked to what the school attributed their students' healthy eating habits, the teachers responded without hesitation, "It's the gardens!" The nutrition services manager added, "When students know the vegetables on the lunch line are from the gardens they planted and worked, they are eager to eat them!" Additionally, visual pictures aligned with *MyPlate*

help students make healthy choices. The nutrition services manager works with the custodian and master gardener to assure compost is managed well.

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Houlton has worked collaboratively with the township, local foundations, state agencies, and community volunteers to develop a long-range plan for enhancing outdoor learning spaces with gardens, a classroom, a restored prairie, a nature and fitness trail (to connect with a larger trail part of St. Croix River Crossing Project) and a Challenge Course.

In addition to the grade-level garden work culminating with fifth grade students focusing on a prairie restoration project and a rain garden in a low, wet area of the gardens, the school's curriculum develops different aspects of environmental literacy through Integrated Units of Inquiry. Examples of inquiry questions include:

- How do people's past, present, and future choices affect the local and global environment?
- How can we influence world-wide water stewardship?
- What is our responsibility as citizens in conserving natural resources and exploring alternative energy forms?

About the Summary and Scoring:

The complete state application is too long to include in this nomination submission, so the applicant's information has been summarized in the following pages, aligned with the pillars and elements. Each application was ranked by teams of external reviewers and internal reviewers, each with different areas of expertise, using a common ranking tool. In addition, the slate of nominees was forwarded to related state and federal agencies to ensure there were no compliance or regulatory issues.

The summary of the nominee's achievements as reported in their application is presented in each pillar and element below. The focus area is in reference to Wisconsin's application structure.

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact

Element 1A: reduced or eliminated green house gas (GHG) emissions

Focus Area: Energy

Houlton is a part of the Hudson School District, who was recognized as an Energy Star School District in 2010 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: for leadership in reduced greenhouse gas emissions by achieving 10% improvement in overall energy performance and was recognized for financial savings based on a reduction in energy use. They conducted an energy audit with Focus on Energy in 2008. They currently work with CESA 10 Energy Management Services and have reduced energy expenditures district wide by \$1,000,000 over the past five years.

The building manager, Jim Stejskal, obtained his Building Operator Certification (BOC) in 2005 and they have employed the following practices and energy saving measures:

- Thermostat temperature setpoints
- Monitor energy usage by tracking monthly energy consumption and costs
- Guidelines for limiting personal appliances such as portable space heaters or mini-fridges
- Follow a schedule for regular maintenance of HVAC equipment
- Energy efficient lighting: whole school lighting conversion to more efficient fluorescent lighting; de-lamping to reduce energy use as well
- Occupancy sensors in our "cafegymatorium"
- Energy efficient HVAC system: replaced boilers with 95% efficiency boilers 2013
- Have removed vending machines from school
- Increased insulation in roof
- Reduced operating hours
- We've also executed a "plug load" and appliance reduction program across the district, resulting in fewer printers, lamps, and other appliances running in each building.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the Houlton has engaged students and staff in changing their behaviors regarding energy. Students and staff are diligent about turning off lights, computers, projectors and other appliances

when they leave classroom spaces, separating recycling from waste (for subsequent energy reduction); and using natural light when and where possible.

Our R3 student leadership committee has looked into ways that students and staff can conserve energy. This year, they plan to brainstorm a list and work with the staff to identify 5-8 ways they can reduce energy consumption. This begins with the student leadership committee, but then is shared and finalized with staff input for a better chance of implementation.

To further help students understand and internalize the importance of energy efficiency and conservation, energy is taught in the fourth grade integrated unit of inquiry focused on the ensuring understanding that “Our use of energy impacts our environment.” Students explore essential questions including:

- 1) How do we use energy?
- 2) How is energy converted to a form we use?
- 3) What are the advantages and disadvantages of the energy resources we use?
- 4) What is our responsibility as citizens in conserving natural resources and exploring alternative energy forms?

Professional development is provided to further help staff understand and internalize the importance of energy efficiency and conservation. All staff were involved in professional learning in 2011, including a classroom energy efficiency checklist assessment and survey provided by a representative from Xcel Energy. Custodians were involved in trainings through Energy Management Services 2008-2011. Teachers are integrating concepts from KEEP (Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program) into the 4th grade Integrated Units of Inquiry on Energy. We continue to use the classroom energy efficiency checklist every other year to remind ourselves of ways we can reduce our consumption of energy.

Element 1B: Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation

Focus Area: Water

Houlton’s water comes from a well on school property; The well head is locked and water is tested quarterly according to Wisconsin DNR protocols for hazard assessment. In addition, the school take the following measures to ensure water quality and promote water conservation:

- Our school conducts annual audits of the facility and irrigation systems to ensure they are free of waterleaks and to identify opportunities for savings.
- Taps, faucets, and fountains at our school are cleaned at least twice annually to reduce contamination and screens and aerators are cleaned at least annually to remove particulate lead deposits.
- Our school has a program to control lead in drinking water (including voluntary testing and implementation of measures to reduce lead exposure).
- Our school has a medication disposal policy.
- Our school has a chemical disposal policy that helps ensure water quality.
- Our school has a grease trap or oil/water separator for the kitchen sanitary waste line.
- Our school inspects and cleans the school septic system per state requirements (as applicable)
- All faucets have aerators; all toilets have been replaced with low-volume flush toilets.

Students are actively involved in planning and implementing water conservation and/or protection activities. At the end of their Water unit, 3rd graders made signs/posters to put around the school to remind students different ways to conserve water. Our R3 committee did something similar during Earth Week, with posters and Kids News announcements. In addition, we had a committee of students from all grades plan and build a rain garden in our school garden.

Water topics are taught in third grade in an Integrated Unit of Inquiry focused on the water cycle and water conservation. The unit includes the enduring understanding that “Water is a natural resource that is required for the survival of all living things.” Students develop this understanding by exploring these essential questions:

- 1) What is the water cycle and what interrupts or changes it?
- 2) How does your use of water affect life?
- 3) How can we use water so everyone has clean water in the future?

Staff also participate in professional development related to water and/or water education. Houlton's Facilities and Grounds director has NOTM (Non-Transient Other Than Municipal) Systems Operator certification, requiring continuing education to renew certification. We have two teachers trained in Project WET, and 4 teachers have gone through the Earth Partnership for Schools Program. As a school, we are using native plant species on our school grounds as a rain garden to reduce erosion. We have worked with different community volunteers, from the EPA and St. Croix County.

Due to the fact that everyone in our attendance area is dependent on well water, we have also done training with 3rd grade staff about aquifers and how to protect them (and our drinking water supply) so that these concepts can be part of the curriculum.

Element 1B: Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation

Focus Area: School Site

Houlton's landscaping and runoff or stormwater practices also conserve water:

- use of alternative water sources (ie. grey water, rainwater) for irrigation.
- use of a smart irrigation system that adjusts watering time based on time of day or weather conditions or does not irrigate landscape.
- landscaping designed to be water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate
- Rain water collection and use for irrigation. We use rain barrels to help with watering the gardens.
- We have a restored prairie and native species plants and rain garden all on site.

Houlton has a number of outdoor learning areas that help conserve water and get students outside:

- Our school has an acre of prairie where students continue to study, monitor for invasive species, and restore with native species.
- Our school uses the existing site, lawns, parking areas, playgrounds, etc. for outdoor teaching.
- Our school has integrated natural features into the playground area including a rain garden planned and installed by fifth grade students with the support of our Master Gardener, fields, wooden structures, walking trail, large play area, etc.
- Our school uses a water body *within driving distance* to fish or do aquatic habitat explorations.
- Our school uses community parks (Homestead Parklands - Perch Lake County Park)

In anticipation of the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing, Houlton is partnering with St. Joseph Township to suggest the development of a nature and fitness trail around the perimeter of our school grounds and a Challenge Course to link to the Loop Trail planned as part of the St. Croix River Crossing bike/pedestrian Trailhead project.

Future site plans include upgrading the learning platform in the prairie for additional outdoor learning/instructional space and advocating for an amphitheater at the St. Croix River Crossing bike/pedestrian trailhead across from our school.

Element 1C: Reduced waste production

Focus Area: Recycling & Waste Management

Our school has a policy to minimize the generation of all waste types. We have routines set up for recycling items such as paper, boxes, milk cartons, and ink cartridges. Recycling bins are clearly labeled and placed next to a trash can in all locations, including hallways, classrooms, lunch room, staff lounge, and the main office.

Our hauling company, Waste Management, conducted an audit in 2010. We have a 42% Solid Waste Diversion Rate. We recycle:

- Paper
- Glass
- Metals
- Plastic Containers
- Ink Cartridges
- Cell Phones
- Milk and Juice Cartons
- Batteries

Paper is separated from the other recyclables; plastic, glass, aluminum are co-mingled; milk cartons are recycled separately; batteries are collected periodically by the administrative offices; ink cartridges and cell phones collection is coordinated by a parent volunteer. We recently held a fundraiser that collected shoes to be reused for those in need. This encouraged people to drop off their shoes rather than throw them away.

Our school has a small scale, compost demonstration site used primarily for educational opportunities.

Our school composts our cafeteria food waste and school landscape waste material.

Our Master Gardener provides a reminder lesson on composting for all students each year. Our District R3 Team has provided classes on composting and worm composting for staff. Students compost lunch and snack waste, manage a three bin compost system, and turn and screen the compost for use in the gardens. Our Kindergarteners have year-round in-room worm composting; students “feed” the worms from fruit and vegetable snack waste.

Our school has a policy on the proper storage, transportation, and disposal of regulated wastes that is actively enforced and followed at our facility. We have only small amounts of hazardous waste generated: paints, solvents, chemicals, typically for boiler treatment. These are stored in a secure area until disposed of each spring at a County Hazardous Waste collection day. Our school disposes of unwanted computer and electronic products through an approved recycling facility or E-cycle Wisconsin program. All our computer purchases are Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) certified products.

Students and staff help identify and/or implement changes to encourage waste reduction, reuse, and recycling behaviors. We have a R3 student leadership that works with two staff members in the spring of the year to brainstorm and develop ideas to teach and remind the school about reducing, reusing and recycling. The committee works together to identify the areas of needs, and then is guided by the adults to come up with solutions. R3 Squad provide Hawk Talk (morning news) announcements, host competitions for the “cleanest” recycling and waste receptacles (no recyclables in the garbage and no garbage in the recyclables). Our R3 Squad provides educational videos, messages, and mini-lessons every November (America Recycles Day November 15) and April (Earth Day April 22) focusing on conserving with a different resource each day.

Our district’s movement to 1:1 devices for grades 3-12 also supports going paperless, and staff have received professional development on how to rethink their instruction to align with that.

Waste reduction, recycling, and management topics are taught in the curriculum in second and fourth grade Integrated Units of Inquiry:

2nd GRADE:

Enduring Understanding: Choices affect the environment.

Essential Questions:

1. How do people's past, present and future choices affect the local and global environment?
2. What can I do to make a difference to the environment?
3. How can I get others to change their habits to impact the environment?

Essential Skills (Transfer to district Graduate Learner Outcomes):

1. Students reduce, reuse and recycle.
2. Students will be able to explain how their choices will affect the environment.
3. Students understand why their choices are important to the world.
4. Students will inform others about the importance of their choices to the world.

4th GRADE

Enduring Understanding: Our use of energy impacts our environment.

Essential Questions:

1. How do we use energy?
2. How is energy converted to a form we use?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the energy resources we use?
4. What is our responsibility as citizens in conserving natural resources and exploring alternative energy forms?

Element 1C: Use of alternative transportation

Focus Area: Transportation

Houlton conducted an internal audit of transportation to school. Due to our location, sustainable transportation is difficult. We are a rural school, located on a county highway. The majority of families live over a mile away, and walking/bike riding along the county road is not advisable.

Bus: 78%

Walk: 1%

Bike: 2%

Carpool (2+ in the car): 19% which include families who are enrolled on a boundary exception or open enrolled and drive their children to school, Open Enrolled or on a Boundary Exception (within district not transported by bus) or students in school-age care (parents drive to and from school).

Houlton has identified bus or carpool transport as an area for improvement: There are a number of students who get dropped off in the morning, rather than ride the bus. As a rural school, this is a little tricky. Some of the bus pick up times in the morning are very early, so parents opt to drive students in 30-45 minutes later. We continue to work with the bus company on this to reduce long these morning bus rides. If this can be established, we believe we would see less parent transporting in the mornings.

We have posted a "No Idling" sign at our drop-off area, as it is close to our air exchange and the front doors of the school. Houlton promotes efficient or sustainable transportation option in the following ways:

- Bike racks, showers, lockers, and/or other bike amenities.
- A well-publicized, no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses).
- A plan to regularly review bus routing to optimize passenger/miles driven ratios. All routes are designed to save on mileage and to keep the child's time on the bus to a minimum including bus door side pick ups whenever possible. All of our buses are equipped to meet the latest federal emissions standards.

The community is in the process of developing a loop bike/pedestrian trail, and we are encouraging our students to participate in the planning process at the county level. As a school, we are working with the county to consider including bike paths in their long range planning. With the bike/walking trailhead across the road from our school, bike paths leading to the trailhead would make sense, and would be beneficial for the entire community.

Transportation issues, including correlations to outdoor air quality, are taught in the curriculum in 5th grade Environmental Studies:

Enduring Understanding: Interactions within environmental systems affect the survival and quality of life for all living things.

Essential Questions:

1. How do people conduct research and collaborate with one another to learn new information and answer questions?
2. What are the interactions within an ecosystem?
3. How are environmental systems impacted by human choices and natural events?
4. In this Inquiry unit, students look at different human behaviors (i.e. transportation), and how they impact the environment - looking specifically at water and air pollution. We are located near the St. Croix River, so students have also looked at the impact that water drainage (gas and oil on streets) and personal recreation (i.e. boats) has on the water quality of the river.

Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness

Element 2A: Integrated school environmental health program

Focus Area: Environmental Health

Houlton Elementary School ensures for quality indoor environmental health in the following ways:

- Our school has a comprehensive indoor air quality management program that is consistent with EPA's Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools.
- Our School has taken actions to prevent exposure to asthma triggers such as mold, dust, and pet dander
- Our school meets ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2010 (Ventilation for acceptable indoor air quality)
- Our school has installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources
- Our staff visually inspects all our school's structures on a monthly basis to ensure they are free of mold, moisture, and water leakage
- Our school's indoor relative humidity is maintained below 60%
- Our school has moisture resistant materials/ protective systems installed (i.e. flooring, tub/shower, backing, and piping)
- There are no wood structures on school grounds that contain chromate copper arsenate
- Our school does not have combustion appliances
- When necessary, students and staff use engineering controls such as fume hoods and personal protective equipment.
- The posting of "No Idling" signs reminds people to turn off their cars to help improve our air quality in and around our building.

All chemicals are stored in a secured, properly ventilated, locked area, in appropriately labeled containers, separated and stored off the floor on shelves. Houlton's chemical management program includes:

- Chemical purchasing policy that supports low or no-VOC products and substitution when less hazardous alternatives are available.
- Storage and labeling.
- Training and handling.
- Hazard communication.
- Spills (clean up and disposal).
- Selecting third-party certified green cleaning products.

Radon testing is not a requirement in Wisconsin schools. According to the Department of Health Services, Houlton, Wisconsin has an average radon level of 6.12 pCi/L, but the sample size was only 58 homes.

The school has an integrated pest management (IPM) coordinator and the school is implementing a program through the IPM Manual. Our school has an employee who is certified to apply pesticides and also contracts with a certified and licensed pesticide applicator. Our school posts a notice at the time of pesticide application and for at least 72 hours following application and prohibits students from entering a treated area for at least 8 hours after the treatment

or longer if required by the pesticide label. Our school provides pest control policies and methods of application to parents and school employees and meets posting requirements. Our school makes available copies of pesticide labels, copies of notices, material safety data sheets (MSDS) and annual summaries of pesticide application in an accessible location. We plant marigolds and place toads in our gardens to disuade those pesky squash bugs from infesting our vegetable gardens, provide bat houses for mosquito control, and have placed bluebird houses on perimeter.

Element 2B: Nutrition & Fitness

Focus Area: Health & Wellness

Our district's Graduate Learner Outcomes for Hudson School District students include Life Skills, which builds the understanding of personal health and well-being. At the elementary level, we build the beginning foundation by incorporating a Life Skills curriculum that focuses on healthy choices (physical and mental) that is delivered by our Guidance Counselors.

We promote healthy lifestyles in the following ways:

- Our district Wellness Committee sponsors monthly events to promote the health and wellness of our staff and our school has a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) or school wellness committee. A dietician from the local hospital shares information during two meetings each year.
- Our school participates in the National School Lunch Program.
- Our school has a salad bar.
- Our school participates in Farm to School activities, including local food procurement (started in 2013).
- Our school has a garden, established in 2013, supplies food for our students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class or to the community.
- Our school has on-site indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities available to students, staff, and the community.
- Houlton is USDA Healthier US School Challenge certified.
- Health measures are integrated into assessments.
- We offer opportunities for students to be physically active outside of physical education classes (e.g., recess, open gym, before/after school programs, classroom activity breaks).
- Promotes hand washing for staff and students.
- Physical Education curriculum is based on state standards and grade-level outcomes for physical education.

Houlton is a member of "Team Nutrition" in the state and the Nutrition Services manager prepares new recipes from family suggestions, and she worked with the principal to prepare baked beans and squash for the first time from the school's three-sisters garden.

In working with our parents, we have made the following changes/requests to our school policies:

- Back to School ice cream social has been changed to yogurt parfaits.
- Parents are requested to send healthy choices for birthday and mid-day snacks.
- After-concert dessert bars has been discontinued.
- Food rewards have been gradually decreasing.

We also participate in Power Up, which is a program developed by the Hudson Hospital and Clinic to to make it easy, fun and popular to eat better and be active so kids can reach their full potential. The program runs for 3-4 weeks, and includes students tracking their healthy food intake, daily PowerUp announcements to students and weekly reminders to parents, and additional resources to support the program. We recognize that our students need to live healthier lives, so our partnership with PowerUp is helping us to do what's best for kids.

Houlton has a 3-month Family Fun and Fitness challenge where students keep track of their physical activity on a monthly calendar. Monthly celebrations recognize the students who turn in their completed calendars.

District nurse supervises (visits weekly and contacts daily) Health Assistant on school site daily; school counselor (.6), school psychologist (.2), school social worker (.17). All of those staff members are present at least part of one day each week, and their schedules are communicated regularly to staff and families. The School Counselor and principal work closely with the School Psychologist, district nurse, and school social worker to assure students' needs are met.

Our school district uses the PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) behavior program, which focuses on positive responses to good behavior choices. Houlton has extended this concept a little bit in adding our three mission statements: Work together, Think deeply, and Care for our Community. It is our goal to catch positive behaviors, but when behaviors fall below the line, we use these three statements to guide the discussion. Our behavior expectations align to the district Bullying and Harassment policies, and are referenced when issues arise. These topics are also covered K-5 in Life Skills, with the Guidance Counselor. Students who have concerns will meet with the principal and/or counselor, and follow up conversations are had with the parents of all students involved.

We have ample green space, natural play structures, and large fields. Student recess time (2x/day) is busy with football, kickball, soccer, and lacrosse games on the multiple fields we have behind our school. We have a large sandbox and sand toys available for students. We've added some low-impact games (i.e. Corn Hole, bowling) for students with limited physical ability, so that they can still participate in outside activities. Recess equipment (balls, jump ropes, scooters, sleds in the winter) can be checked out by all students.

We also have trails around the playground that students can use for walking, and an outdoor learning center students and teachers use for instruction. Our physical education classes have a strong focus on student health and wellness, and incorporate the tracking of different health areas so students can set goals and see progress. This is done to set patterns of behavior that will continue beyond elementary school.

Our parent group raised over \$40,000 to put towards a new playground structure with handicap accessible stand-alone pieces. The structure is on track to be completed by June 2017.

Health, nutrition, wellness, and physical activity are taught in the curriculum. Recently embarked on overhaul of K-5 health to include 3E's: Eat, Exercise, Encourage. Each grade level focuses on a nutrient to learn what it does to keep our bodies healthy and an organ / body system. Our P.E. program includes the P.A.C.E.R. assessment and students set goals and track their progress toward those goals. K-5 student Integrated Units of Inquiry (science and social units) have health/nutrition components built into them as well.

Staff have participated in professional development or training related to health and wellness. K-5 teachers have professional development when the Integrated Units of Instruction are introduced. The training is designed to provide background information for teachers so they are equipped to teach the units to their students. We also have teacher representatives on the district Health committee, who are responsible for sharing information, curriculum, and resources with other staff. Our district nurse has done staff trainings on different health issues, such as food allergies/allergic reactions, defibrillators, as well as specific student health concerns with individual teachers.

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element 3A: Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems

Focus Area: Environmental & Sustainability Education

At a district level, when we first started working with the Environmental Sustainability Graduate Learner Outcome, the curriculum facilitators and the science committee reviewed Wisconsin's Environmental Education Standards. This is when most schools worked to develop rain gardens, butterfly gardens, composting efforts, school forests etc. Most of this is still in place K-12.

At the elementary level, much of our environmental education has been embedded into our Integrated Units of Inquiry. Students are studying water, energy, ecosystems and often looking at local, national or world issues as part of their inquiry real-world problem and go public projects. The Integrated Units of Inquiry (described throughout this application) are written to allow students to integrate their reading, writing, speaking and listening standards in meaningful ways. Central themes include:

- Choices affect the environment. How do people's past, present, and future choices affect the local and global environment?
- Water is a natural resource that is essential for the survival of all living things. How can we influence world-wide water stewardship?
- Things we do can affect the environment and we can make choices to reduce our impacts. How do the choices we make in our everyday lives impact our local and global surroundings? What is our responsibility as citizens in conserving natural resources and exploring alternative energy forms?
- Interactions within environmental systems affect the survival and quality of life for all living things. How are environmental systems impacted by humans and natural events? How do choices affect the environment?

Students' performance tasks include a demonstration of understanding of environmental and sustainability enduring understandings. Examples: creating a public service announcement for broadcasting to the school and/or community; teaching a younger grade level about recycling; and coordinating a community cleanup with a group of families.

Houlton Elementary has an amazing school garden, overseen by a community Master Gardener. The students volunteer to help once a week during recess, from September-early November and again in April-June (with families volunteering to care for it over the summer as well). The Master Gardener identifies the tasks, and guides students in doing the necessary tasks to keep the garden producing. She also works closely with our School Nutrition Specialist, so that the produce can be used in the kitchen and served to the students. This process allows students to reap the benefits of their work in the garden.

Six raised bed vegetable gardens and a new greenhouse allows each grade level to grow at least one vegetable to contribute to our lunch program and support their core curriculum. All of our students, K-5, have the opportunity to work in our school garden and eat produce from it. Our Master Gardener works with staff to share information related to composting, planting, weeding, and growing vegetables. Examples of curricular connections include:

- Kindergarten: parts of a plant - they study pumpkin seeds and plant the seeds in the spring of kindergarten then harvest their own pumpkins in the fall of 1st grade. Kindergarten students planted an apple tree this fall to watch the seasonal changes
- 1st: learn about relationships and systems by planting marigolds to ward off pesky insects from our squash rather than sprays
- 2nd: plants cucumbers, radishes, carrots, melons, and beans and learning from their science unit on plants is reinforced by their work in the garden/greenhouse
- 3rd: plants a pizza Garden (tomatoes, onions, basil, and oregano) in the spring of 3rd grade, and use them to make sauce for their own mini pizza in 4th grade, tied to writing/following directions for a recipe
- 4th: learning about the Three Sisters garden (beans, corn, squash) ties directly to the curriculum standard of Native Americans.
- 5th: studies biomes, works on our prairie restoration project, and recently completed a rain garden in a wet and low area of our gardens while learning research skills and problem solving to managing and maintain these areas.

In addition, our 3rd grade has a unit on Water, where they learn the basics about water, but also the impact we are having on the quality and availability of our water supply. Included in their learning is a trip to an area lake where they look at water quality, water sources, and how to preserve and conserve the resources we have. Student learning has been shared with the whole school through news reports on Kids News, informational posters around the school, and a variety of projects shared with other students.

Our 5th grade attends Camp Sandstone Audubon Nature Center in the fall where they learn about nature conservation, wildlife preservation, and water quality during their stay at the camp. These experiences help to create foundational learning, and are referred to throughout the year.

Other outdoor learning opportunities include writing outdoors, observation and scientific variables / experiments, study of biomes and habitats, historical presentation at local county and state parks, field trips to county/state parks, tree farm visit, and an apple orchard visit.

Staff members guide student leadership groups in areas such as Health and Wellness and Recycling. The areas addressed by the staff leaders of these committees include building student understanding, developing leadership, and increasing communication to others in the school. These are all critical components of environmental literacy.

Staff have participated in a variety of professional development opportunities to advance environmental literacy. The 5th grade team has been trained and uses resources from the Earth Partnership for Schools, as well as the Rivers Institute through Hamline University. Both of these classes included training in Project Wild, Project Wet, and LEAF, DNR environmental education programs. One of the 5th grade teachers has also taken Advanced Science Learning offered through a science grant through CESA-11 and UW-Stout to train using the Engineering is Elementary units. They are STEM based curriculum, also including environmental issues. Staff have also taken training offered through the local CESA and Camp Sandstone training (2)

Students have access to a number of clubs to support environmental education:

- **STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS CREW** (24 students, 3 staff): Create a healthy school environment, promote physical activity, and encourage healthy eating among students and staff.
- **GARDEN CLUB** (2 adults, 12 families, 75 students) Work with Master Gardener in Houlton’s perennial gardens, restoring the prairie, and caring for vegetable gardens and composting, as needed. Weekly gardening in the fall (Sept-Oct) and spring (March-April-May) Shared summer responsibility for garden care with other families.
- **R3 SQUAD** (2 staff, 15 students): Student representatives in each classroom serve as R3 (Reduce, Reuse & Recycle) leaders Share questions and ideas with Houlton’s R3 Squad to improve our efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle
- **HOULTON’S OUTDOOR LEARNING SPACE COMMITTEE** (2 adults, 15 students): Previous committee that Identified and communicated the goals and purposes for our Outdoor Learning Space. Engaged our Houlton community (school and beyond) in prioritizing and recommending projects, based on the goals and purposes for our Outdoor Learning Space. Developed, refined, and recommended a long-range plan for implementation of the prioritized recommendations.

We partner with Sustain Hudson to display environmentally friendly and recycled art around the community during Earth Week. Our district R3 Team and Houlton’s R3 Squad co-presented on vermi-composting at the County Earth Day event. The two groups also provide announcements and clean up after all home football games to assure recycling is separated from garbage.

Element 3B: Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills

Focus Area: Environmental & Sustainability Education

We are piloting STEM units at the fifth grade level. We have started to use some Engineering is Elementary (EiE) kits, some which have an environmental focus. One of our 5th grade teachers took a class for several summers, and has used the kits from our local CESA. The district is looking to incorporate these kits into our Integrated Units of Inquiry, and/or Project Lead the Way. Both of these programs have STEM concepts woven through.

Our 3rd grade students had the opportunity to connect STEM education to their learning about the new bridge being built in our community, the St. Croix River Crossing. The students and teachers have worked with the Department

of Transportation and civil engineers to learn about the aspects involved in building bridges, and have had access to a computerized bridge building program that incorporates the skills that go into constructing a bridge.

Our school R3 Squad partners with the District R3 Team on several projects including educational tours of businesses including a Materials Processing Center, a Recycling Plant, a Water Treatment Facility, a Community Sustainable Agriculture Vegetable Farm, and a Cheese Factory Waste to Energy Conversion plant, as well as a landfill that also converts waste to energy. This helps students see the connections between STEM fields and sustainability.

Element 3C: Development and application of civic knowledge and skills

Focus Area: Community Involvement

Near our school, the MN DOT and WI DOT are constructing the St. Croix River Crossing bridge. The construction of this bridge has had a huge impact on our community, and it isn't even open yet! Our 3rd grade's curriculum includes "Changes in our Community". This bridge project has provided many opportunities for the students to be involved in something that will have a big change on their rural community.

The 3rd grade teachers and students have been in close communication with the WI DOT, and have had guest speakers throughout the process. The students have learned about the environmental impact of the project, how bridges are constructed, and the thought and detail that goes into planning for new roads/road changes. The students have participated in the following activities: visits from WI DOT, boat tour of the bridge construction process, panel discussion with stakeholders in the project (to include area farmers, landowners along the river, DOT workers, engineers, county board members, etc.), speaking to the township board about naming the new road outside the school, and presenting ideas on what to include on the interpretative signs along the bike trail. Within these experiences, our students have had increased opportunities for STEM education by connecting their learning to a community based issue. Throughout the process, the students have had direct involvement in a community project, and have come to realize the many working parts of something this big. They have been able to work/communicate directly with the people involved in the project, and have a sense of involvement and ownership in the different stages of development. In addition to the 3rd graders, their learning has been shared with the entire school, as well as with families and other community members through presentations and articles in the local newspaper.

Our school has many community partnerships to support sustainability initiatives and with whom students engage that have been mentioned throughout this application. Additional partnerships are listed below.

Art Bench Project - Begun in 2006 by The Phipps Center for the Arts in partnership with the St. Croix Valley Foundation (SCVF), the Art Bench Project engages local community groups (especially elementary students) in designing, locating, and creating benches, each a unique work of art. The stated goals for the Bench Project are:
-to build relationships and a sense of civic responsibility among participants,
-to spark appreciation for the federally-designated "wild and scenic" St. Croix River – its history and wildlife, and
-to spark appreciation of special qualities of each participating community.

Greenhouse/Garden - we received grants from the Hudson Hospital Foundation and the Hudson Community Foundation that have allowed us to begin the construction of a greenhouse that will be attached to our school, near our school garden. We have worked with community businesses and volunteers in the varied stages of this project.

Recycling & Waste Management - our partners include our waste hauler (Waste Management), Rock Tenn (paper recycling), volunteer parents (ink cartridges and cell phones), and nutrition services (recycling milk cartons district-wide)

Health & Wellness - several area businesses contribute prizes for students and families participating in Family Fun & Fitness; hospital dietician and nutrition services director visit Health & Wellness Crew (students, staff and parent volunteers) to share new information, clarify guidelines and policy changes, and solicit input regarding school meals

Environmental Impact - Houlton has a two-mile stretch of highway we've adopted near the school to keep clean and free of garbage. The staff and students participated in the planting of Bee Bombs this spring, in an effort to increase pollination habitats for bees in the Houlton community, both on and off of school grounds.

Naturalist-at-School - We are also in the process of developing a partnership with the Willow River State Park, where the naturalist has come to the school to share the resources she has from the Nature Center at the park. She is also interested in starting a Nature Club this spring, which would be held at Houlton after school.