

## District Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

### CERTIFICATIONS

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#### District's Certifications

The signatures of the district superintendent on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the district's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the superintendent's knowledge.

1. The district has been evaluated and selected from among districts within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The district is providing 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.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school district 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.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the school district has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
5. 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 school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
6. The district 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 District Sustainability Award 2019-2021**

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Name of Superintendent: Dr. Barry M. Reilly

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


District Name: Bloomington Public School District 87 (As it should appear on an award)

Address: 300 East Monroe Street, Bloomington, IL 61701

Telephone: 309-827-6031 Fax: 309-827-5717

Web site/URL: [www.district87.org](http://www.district87.org) E-mail: [reillyb@district87.org](mailto:reillyb@district87.org)

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



Date: January 15, 2019

(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 district's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The district 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 education.
2. The district 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: Illinois State Board of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: Tony Smith, Ph.D.

(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.

Date: 2/6/19

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

### SUBMISSION

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

Expiration Date: March 31, 2021

### 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](mailto: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.

# ILLINOIS GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION

## School Applicant Information

1. School Name: Applying as a district — Bloomington Public Schools District 87 (nine schools: 1 early learning, 6 elementary, 1 junior high, 1 high school)

District Name: Bloomington Public Schools District 87  
 Street Address: 300 E. Monroe St.  
 City: Bloomington, IL; County: McLean  
 Zip: 61701

2. Website: [www.district87.org](http://www.district87.org)  
 Facebook page: [Facebook.com/BloomingtonDistrict87](https://www.facebook.com/BloomingtonDistrict87)

3. Principal Name: Superintendent Barry Reilly  
 Principal Email Address: [Reillyb@district87.org](mailto:Reillyb@district87.org)  
 Phone Number: 309-827-6031

4. Lead Applicant Name (if different): Julia Perez, Community Relations Coordinator  
 Lead Applicant Email: [perezj@district87.org](mailto:perezj@district87.org)  
 Phone Number: 309-827-6031 x1039

<b>Level</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK - 5 or 6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12)	<b>School Type</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet	<b>How would you describe your school?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<b>Is your school in one of the largest 50 districts in the nation?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			<b>Total Enrolled: 5,315</b>  <b>Graduation rate: 89%</b> <b>Attendance rate: 93%</b>
<b>% receiving FRPL: 56%</b> <b>% limited English proficient: 7% English Learners</b> <b>Other measures: 14% students with disabilities;</b> <b>1% homeless students</b>			

# ILLINOIS GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION

## School Summary and Highlights:

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- 1. Please describe your school's efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Please highlight any benchmarking initiatives and unique or innovative practices. *Note: This text may be used in promotional publications that describe the winning nominees.***

Situated in a Central Illinois community, Bloomington Public Schools District 87 is home to more than 5,300 students in its nine schools from pre-kindergarten to high school. The district is one of the oldest and most diverse in the state, with a mission to challenge, support, and inspire all students to learn and achieve to their highest potential in order to become productive citizens and lifelong learners. Through this mission, the district is committed to enhancing and maintaining sustainable practices and education in every building. Over the last decade, District 87 has made numerous impactful changes within its nine schools to improve energy efficiency, reduce waste, and increase the health and fitness of students and staff. These ideas are made possible under the direction of dynamic leaders, resourceful staff, bright students, and a supportive community. The most innovative project implemented at Bloomington Public Schools has been a district-wide cafeteria composting and recycling initiative that was organized in 2010 and introduced in 2014. After every school meal, students empty their trays into three waste receptacles: compost, recycle, and trash. Any unopened food or uneaten produce is placed on a share table for students to take, and remaining leftovers are donated to local food pantries. Local companies — Midwest Fiber and Better Earth Compost — regularly collect the recycling and compost. Included in this project was a goal to begin more sustainable kitchen practices. Disposable lunch trays and plasticware were replaced with reusable trays and silverware, saving each school approximately \$4,700 per year. Since start up, the district has reduced dumpster sizes by half, preventing over 50 tons of waste from entering area landfills. The district organized a Green Team that meets quarterly to discuss sustainability efforts. This team was instrumental in the cafeteria composting and recycling initiative. The team plans to perfect this system and find ways to capture more trash that could be recycled or composted. Students are also involved in the recycling and composting program, earning rewards by properly instructing their peers and being conscious of food waste. Additionally, since 2015, the district has reduced electricity use by an average of 34 percent annually and reduced gas use by an average of 47 percent annually, resulting in a total energy cost avoidance in excess of \$500,000 each year. This energy efficiency was made possible through a multistep process — gradually upgrading HVAC equipment, controls, and lighting in each building. This is a continual effort as upgrades are regularly made in schools. Each school has also implemented unique fitness programs and events to keep students and staff active and healthy, such as weekend runs, before- and after-school fitness opportunities, outdoor education programs, and outdoor learning spaces. By reducing its carbon footprint through waste reduction and energy conservation, District 87 hopes to set an example for neighboring districts, organizations and families. Sharing sustainable tips with area superintendents through the “School Wellness Matters” newsletter opens the door to conversation and collaboration. These collective endeavors have earned the district several sustainability awards, from the state, county, and city.

While many efforts listed above have led to financial savings for the district, that is not the only reason these sustainable decisions are made. District 87 administrators and staff are committed to providing quality academic education in tandem with environmental education, leading to more productive and civically engaged young citizens.

- 2. Does your school have a forum where those involved in its daily operation (e.g. students, teachers, maintenance staff and cafeteria staff) meet to discuss and implement green initiatives? If so, please describe some the forum's recent accomplishments and future plans:**

**The district has organized a Green Team that meets quarterly to discuss sustainability efforts. The team includes a “wellness champion” from each school who share ideas and overcome challenges together. Recently, one school stopped offering straws with meals and the practice spread to other buildings after this group's discussion. This team was also instrumental in the cafeteria composting and recycling**

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initiative. The team plans to perfect this system and find ways to capture more trash that could be recycled or composted, like milk cartons.

3. Please list any awards or special recognition that your school, staff or student body have received in the last five years for facilities, health, or environment literacy; please list the award(s) and the years they were given.

2017 Governor’s Sustainability Award for green efforts, including upgrades to HVAC equipment, controls, and lighting across the district to more efficient models.

2018 Recycling and Waste Reduction Award from the McLean County Ecology Action Center for the district’s outstanding recycling and waste reduction efforts, especially in school cafeterias.

2018 City of Bloomington Beautification Award for improvements to the grounds and exterior of Bloomington High School and Bloomington Junior High School.

## Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

### A. Energy

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1. Do you track energy use in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®, or other way in district?

Yes  No

2. If so, how have you tracked your resource usage, for how long, and how has your usage dropped over that time? (Data or graphs can be submitted as a separate supportive document if desired.)

District 87 partners with contractor Alpha Controls to monitor temperature controls in every building and assist with HVAC services and upgrades. Alpha Controls maintains a summary chart of monthly Energy Star scores. In 2013, the Energy Star scores in the district were between 0-10 out of 100. Today, the scores are between 40-50 out of 100 and continue to rise. By upgrading HVAC equipment, controls, and lighting in each building, the district maintains an annual cost avoidance more than \$500,000 in electricity and natural gas savings.

See attached document.

3. Please describe the strategies you have implemented or planned to reduce your energy consumption.

Beginning with a life safety survey in 2014, Bloomington Public Schools District 87’s Director of Facilities, Colin Manahan, presented findings of ageing mechanical and control systems to Chief Finance and Legal Officer David Wood and Superintendent Dr. Barry Reilly. Together they decided to make a change. An application was sent to the Illinois State Board of Education for health life safety funding and the district was awarded \$10,000,000 in bonds to address these systems. Assisted by contractors and design professionals, a multistep process was implemented to analyze, interpret and measure the sustainability of each building’s performance. This led to upgrading the worst-performing elementary school, then three additional schools the following year. Measuring the utility consumption change, the upgrades reduced greenhouse gas emissions 41% for the four facilities, or an environmental impact of taking 400 cars off the road. This corresponded to the economic benefit of saving \$155,000 dollars annually despite rising utility costs, a 9% annual return on investment after deducting the \$440,000 in incentive funds received from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. The upgrades also made the buildings more thermally comfortable, creating the social benefit of a more productive and healthy learning environment. Throughout the process, staff were involved in considering their building use

## ILLINOIS GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION

patterns so HVAC systems could respond accordingly. Since then, all remaining schools except one have had updated HVAC systems installed. The equipment at the remaining school was updated less than 10 years ago. In addition to upgrading HVAC equipment to more efficient models, heating and cooling systems are set back on nights, weekends and school breaks. HVAC operates in zones throughout each building, and certain zones can be shut off or turned down to reduce energy consumption. Motion detector lights are installed in most buildings which also reduces electricity use.

#### 4. What percentage of your school's energy is obtained from:

- a. **On-site renewable energy generation:** NA

**Type:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

- b. **Purchased renewable energy:** NA

**Type:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

- c. **Participation in an energy cooperative, USDA Fuel for Schools, DOE Wind for Schools or other school energy program:**

The district participates in a diesel fuel coop for school buses.

5. **In what year was your school originally built?** While all schools have experienced expansion and remodeling, building years range from 1896-1990.

6. **What is the total building area of your school?** District total: 800,000 square feet

7. **Please describe any new construction or major renovations at your school in the past ten years, including the date, the percentage of area renovated. Describe how you achieved green building or similar standards and any certifications earned.**

The district created a 10-year comprehensive facilities improvement plan in the early 2000s. Since then, several major projects have been completed. All buildings have been extensively renovated and infrastructure components have been upgraded. More than \$70 million was spent on facility improvement and renovations and infrastructure upgrades. The largest and most recent construction project occurred at Bloomington High School in 2018. Due to growing numbers of participation in music programs, students were outgrowing the music education space. A new 10,000-square-foot fine arts expansion was added to the school and former classrooms were remodeled. At the same time, a synthetic turf field was installed at the high school outdoor stadium. The new synthetic field allows for water to drain below instead of causing mud and puddles. This state-of-the-art irrigation system greatly reduced grounds maintenance for the field, eliminated the need for chemical use and is safer for students to perform on.

8. **Please describe your sustainability policy and practice for new or renovated construction materials and building maintenance.**

During each construction project, the district uses the latest building codes for sustainability, such as using Smart LED light fixtures, automatic flush toilets and sinks, and integrating the HVAC system so controls can be monitored.

## B. Water and Grounds

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9. **Can you demonstrate a reduction in your school's total water consumption from an initial baseline or describe your best practices to limit water usage? For example, calculate your change in water usage (in gallons per occupant) over a specified period of time, or a reduction in water used for irrigation.**

Regarding best practices, more than 50% of toilets, sinks and hand dryers are motion-activated in school restrooms. This reduces water consumption and waste from paper towels, as well as improving sanitation for students, staff and visitors. The district has a goal to transition all restrooms into touchless restrooms for environmental and sanitary reasons.

10. **What percentage of your landscaping is considered water-efficient and/or dedicated to ecological or instructional use? Describe the kinds of plants used and locations:**

As the district reconstructed parking lots, playgrounds and driveways, water detention basins were added to project plans for storm water runoff as dictated by city code.

11. **Describe the water sources used for irrigation, including any cisterns or rain barrels.**

Besides upgrading and maintaining water run off locations, no cisterns or rain barrels are used at schools.

12. **Describe any efforts to reduce storm water runoff (e.g., rain gardens) and/or reduce impermeable surfaces.**

Water detention areas have been increased and maintained near the parking lots of the largest schools — the high school and junior high. At elementary schools where there is little green space for water runoff, water detention basins were built beneath parking lots.

Several years ago, the storm water/sanitary sewer system at the high school stadium was separated into separate streams.

### C. Waste and Chemicals Management

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13. **Describe the strategies you use to divert solid waste (e.g., trash, cafeteria waste, paper, or landscape waste) from landfills due to reduction, recycling and/or composting. Complete the calculations below or provide reduction rates:**

Since 2010, the school district has worked to reduce its environmental impact through composting and recycling in cafeterias. When a student is finished with a meal, they carry their tray through a line where they are presented with three bins: one for trash, one for recycling and one for composting. An older student supervises their decision as they place their waste in the appropriate receptacle, so both students can reinforce their knowledge on best practices in waste management. Students are encouraged to be attentive through the process and can earn rewards by properly instructing their peers. After each meal, any unopened food or uneaten produce is placed on a share table for students to take, and additional leftovers are donated to local food pantries.

All cafeteria trays and silverware were switched from disposable to reusable, saving each school approximately \$4,700 per year. After implementing cafeteria composting and recycling, dumpster sizes were reduced by half at all buildings. Midwest Fiber calculates the weight of recycling and compost picked up at each school, and since 2014, the district has prevented over 106,000 pounds of waste from entering area landfills.

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14. **What percentage of your school's total office and classroom paper content is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed and/or chlorine-free?**

This percentage is not monitored.

15. **List the types and estimated quantities of chemicals (e.g., laboratory materials, cleaning products, pesticides) managed at your school, and how they are stored, disposed of, and minimized:**

At each building, all laboratory materials, cleaning products and pesticides are properly stored and documented with a Material Safety Data Sheet. When it's time to dispose of chemicals, the materials are manifested, recorded, properly disposed of by Safety Kleen.

A lamp and ballast recycling program for District 87 has been implemented since 2006.

16. **Describe how your school purchases environmentally preferable products for use by students and staff:**

The district worked with food distributors to buy ingredients packaged in recyclable containers, eliminating #6 Styrofoam. Packaged meals are served to students in a plastic container made from recycled waterbottles. If disposable trays must be used, the district uses compostable trays instead of Styrofoam. Bathrooms in the high school, the largest population in the district, were all remodeled with hand air dryers instead of paper towel dispensers to cut back on paper waste.

### D. Alternative Transportation

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17. **What percentages of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 or more students in the car) to and from school? Please explain how these numbers are obtained and calculated, and describe any improvement in this area over time.**

The percentage of students who walk or bike to school ranges from 3 to 16 percent across the district, with the remaining students riding the bus, driving themselves, riding with parents or carpooling.

These numbers were collected by surveying school principals.

18. **Describe the plans or strategies to increase the number of students walking and biking to school.**

Many schools participate in national walk/bike to school day in May. Individual schools will often host additional walk/bike to school days throughout the year. Through a city grant, the district plans to improve sidewalks and crosswalks near schools to improve student safety and increase the number of students walking or biking to school.

19. **Has your school implemented any of the following? Check all that apply.**

Designated carpool parking stalls.

A well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses).

Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.

Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School.



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Describe activities in your safe routes program: The district identifies all hazardous transportation locations to ensure safe routes for children who walk or ride bikes to school.

20. **Describe how your school transportation is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact:**  
School bus routes are reviewed annually to maintain a safe and efficient transportation system. Buses are housed at a garage within district boundaries, reducing additional travel time and wear on vehicles. Smaller district vans are utilized whenever possible for field trips or athletic trips to reduce fuel usage.
21. **Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships:**

### Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of students and staff

#### A. Environmental Health

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1. **Describe your school's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, including any certifications earned, routine inspections, pest identification, monitoring, record-keeping, and pest prevention activities.**  
The district uses bait and trap for pest control instead of pesticides. If a situation does require pesticides, emergency notification procedures are put in place based on protocol in each building student handbook.
2. **Describe the efforts or practices you have in place to minimize or eliminate the use of pesticides, both indoors and outdoors.**  
Bait and trap efforts are used as often as possible to minimize the use of pesticides indoors. The need for pesticide use at the BHS outdoor stadium was eliminated after the district installed synthetic turf in place of the grass field.
3. **Describe the actions taken or the practices your school employs to minimize or eliminate exposure to the following specific hazardous contaminants (if applicable):**
  - a. **Elemental Mercury**
  - b. **Carbon Monoxide from fuel burning equipment or appliances**
  - c. **Radon**
  - d. **Chromated Copper Arsenate in wooden playground equipment**
  - e. **Others (e.g., Lead, Asbestos or PCBs)**  
There are carbon monoxide detectors in all schools near carbon monoxide-generating sources. The district has an active asbestos management program. There is no lead paint in district buildings.
4. **Describe policies and practices in place to promote security and life safety.**  
District 87 is one of the few districts in central Illinois to have a full-time director of safety and security. As a former city police officer, the director works with school administrators, school resource officers,

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and local law enforcement to maintain school security. He attends regular training and is constantly making changes to improve school safety through emergency plans and training, cameras, locked doors, and student mental health hotlines. In an effort to promote the health of all students, District 87 also conducts a life safety survey every 10 years in their facilities.

5. **Describe actions your school takes to prevent exposure to asthma triggers in and around the school, such as animals in the classroom, sanitation, or other airborne contaminants.**

The district conducts occasional air sampling and all HVAC units have proper filtration to prevent airborne contaminants.

6. **Describe actions your school takes to control and prevent leaks, moisture, condensation, and excess humidity; and to promptly cleanup mold or remove moldy materials when it is found.**

Each building has a dehumidification system and conducts regular spot testing for mold remediation.

7. **Our school has installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources.**

Yes  No

*If Yes, list the rooms with these features and their uses:*

Exhaust systems are primarily installed in all school kitchens through exhaust hoods.

8. **Describe your school's preventive maintenance program for the building's ventilation system, including unit ventilators to ensure it is clean and operating properly:**

Routine preventative maintenance is conducted on all HVAC equipment. Each upgraded unit is equipped with controls that provide diagnostic software building analytics. This software collects data from numerous sensors, analyzes it, and identifies problems before they happen. This allows maintenance staff to identify and prevent any issues, as well as control all systems remotely through the diagnostic software.

9. **Describe actions your school takes to ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation standards, including any periodic measurements and record keeping:**

Building ventilation is also monitored through the diagnostic software above. The district follows national ventilation standards set by ASHRAE to meet the minimum number of air exchanges in the room and maintain the turnover of air in the room. When building HVAC systems are upgraded, the district measures carbon monoxide levels in the return of air handling units. A carbon monoxide sensor is positioned near air returns in each classroom. The district maintains those levels by federal standards.

10. **Describe other steps your school takes to protect indoor environmental quality such as implementing EPA IAQ Tools for Schools and/or conducting other periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to identify environmental health and safety issues and take corrective action:**

NA

11. **Describe your green cleaning policies, equipment, products and practices, and green cleaning certifications or awards:**

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When custodians empty trash cans, bags are only replaced if the bag is soiled to prevent excess waste and save on product cost. Recycling receptacles are stationed in nearly every room in District 87 buildings.

### B. Nutrition and Fitness

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**12. Does your school employ the programs below to promote nutrition, physical activity and overall school health? Give details about program and successes:**

- Participates in the USDA's Healthier US School Challenge.
- Participates in a Farm to School program or similar local food program.
- Our school has an on-site garden.
- Our cafeteria provides fresh meals daily with healthy choices for students.
- At least 50% of our students' annual physical education takes place outdoors.
- Health measures are integrated into assessments.

**13. Provide specific examples of actions taken which are innovative or unique practices and partnerships:**

The district highlights a harvest of the month, showcasing produce from a local farmer served in school meals. District 87 also partners with Midwest Food Bank to organize a weekly backback program, sending bags full of pantry items home with students who receive free-and-reduced-priced lunches. Through a partnership with the U.S.D.A. and State Board of Education, the district offers a summer feeding program every weekday during summer months. These lunches are free to school-aged children, and offered at a low cost for adults. Cafeterias at several schools are opened daily for an hour to share these meals. District 87 launched a unique branch of the summer feedrom program, offering a mobile feeding unit in partnership with the local housing authority. District staff drive a van to low-income neighborhoods and housing projects and park for an hour, providing nutritional, sack lunches to students every week day. Through this mobile feeding program, the district has partnered with local organizations like the Bloomington Public Library to provide games and offer educational enrichment for students in addition to healthy meals at each stop.

**14. Describe how outdoor education, exercise and recreation are promoted within the curriculum and outside the classroom.**

Each school offers unique fitness activities during PE and outside the classroom. These programs include Heart Start, an activity before school allowing students to run or walk around the gym instead of sitting in the hallway before the first bell; morning yoga in the gym for students before class; or outdoor fitness activities on the weekends, like a 5k walk/run for students, staff, and families. Most buildings have a green space outdoor separate from the playground, used as a garden, outdoor theater/reading space, or for personal fitness. Bloomington Junior High School maintains a courtyard in

## ILLINOIS GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION

the center of campus. The school offers a Junior Master Gardener's Club where students maintain the courtyard and collaborate with community partners to learn about nature and gardening. The tennis courts, baseball field, soccer field, and multi-purpose field/stadium are utilized during physical education class by junior high and high school students.

Teachers often take advantage of these outdoor areas as alternative learning spaces for class.

**15. Describe efforts to improve nutrition, health, fitness of students and staff, highlighting innovative practices and partnerships:**

The district has a wellness committee that partners with the county health department and local hospitals to provide opportunities for families to maintain their health knowledge and wellness. Free dental clinics and health screenings are regularly offered at schools.

A Bloomington Junior High School PE teacher received a grant from a local organization, Beyond the Books, a few years ago, and was able to purchase several treadmills and exercise bikes. While this was originally meant for students, several staff members use the equipment during personal planning time. Several special education classrooms at the school also have an exercise bike in the room to allow students to rest their mind and burn off energy. BJHS also hosts an Outdoor Education program in seventh grade. Students visit a local camp for a week where the outdoor instruction includes classes on environmental art, archery, canoeing, mountain biking, pond investigation, dutch oven cooking, journaling and silk screen art.

The district shares a Wellness Newsletter with staff and on the district website each quarter. This newsletter features short articles written by staff about physical, social and emotional health, as well as nutrition, sustainability and upcoming projects and programs. Highlights of the most recent newsletter include information about upcoming 10k, 5k and fun-run races in the community; opportunities for mental health first aid training in the district; and a classroom feature about a teacher that uses dancing in the classroom to boost students' moods and get their hearts pumping. Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited on District 87 property and in school buildings and vehicles.

### C. Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety

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**16. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues?**

Yes  No

If yes, describe the health-related initiatives or approaches used by the school:

District 87 uses the school health index tool to assess all schools and administrators meet quarterly with school representatives to stay abreast of health-related initiatives in classrooms. According to the district wellness policy, school wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, shall be promoted in the District's educational program, school activities and meal programs. This Policy shall be interpreted consistently with Section 204 of the "Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). Schools are required to support and promote good nutrition, foster the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and the capacity of all to develop and learn, and nutrition education must be part of the district's comprehensive health education curriculum.

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17. **Does your school partner with any outside institutions, businesses, clubs, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and safety?**

Yes  No

If yes, describe these partnerships:

The Bloomington Police Department partners with District 87 to provide four School Resource Officers to maintain the safety of schools during the day and at after-school events.

Project Oz is a local organization that reunites families, helps kids stay in school, teaching young people useful skills, and teaches students how to keep their lives drug free. Project Oz provides counseling, education and career planning, student support services, safety planning and healthy living strategies to students and families in District 87. The organization also provides aid, shelter and safety for runaway and homeless youth. Full-time Project Oz mentors are stationed at the high school to provide guidance and mental health support, encourage students to graduate on time, and offer resources and shelter for homeless students.

Midwest Food Bank helps the district stock take-home bags before each weekend to be given to students who receive free-and-reduced-price meals.

The Promise Council was established in 2009 to help students achieve academically, socially and civically. The group is a collection of caring adults who work to connect community resources to the specific needs of children as identified by teachers and staff at District 87 schools.

Other community partners include the Boys & Girls Club, Western Avenue Community Center and McLean County YWCA. These groups offer after-school programs for District 87 students of all ages. After school programs help students increase their grades, stay active and stay out of trouble after school.

18. **Describe your school's curriculum content for student health and fitness as well as its applied learning:**

The Physical Education curriculum is designed to challenge students in the areas of psychomotor, cognitive and affective well-being through differentiated instruction. The National SHAPE America & Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and health are implemented on a daily bases to provide students with the foundation to make informed decisions that will empower them to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Courses incorporate the use of game play, team building, problem solving, personal fitness and growth.

According to the district wellness policy, schools must support and promote an active lifestyle for all. Physical education is taught in all grades and includes a developmentally planned and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. Unless exempted, all students are required to engage daily during the school day in a physical activity and the curriculum will be consistent with and incorporate relevant Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and health as established by the Illinois State Board of Education. Wellness-related professional development opportunities are provided each year for staff.

# ILLINOIS GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS APPLICATION

## Pillar 3: Effective Environmental Literacy

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1. Describe what *sustainability* means to your school or district in particular. How is sustainability included in your mission to educate students?

The educational mission of Bloomington Public Schools is to challenge, support, and inspire all students to learn and achieve to their highest potential in order to become productive citizens and lifelong learners. This mission is supported by five goals. Our goal that centers on facilities states “We will maintain facilities that are safe, energy-efficient, and conducive to teaching and learning.” As part of this goal, the district is committed to enhancing and maintaining recycling and eco-friendly efforts throughout our early childhood center, six elementary schools, junior and senior high schools. This commitment is a shared responsibility of our students, teachers, parents, custodians, and other staff members. Our district and staff members have received several awards recognizing our efforts to promote and support sustainability throughout each and every school.

2. Does your school have a written definition and requirement for environmental literacy? Is there an assessment required?

3. What practices, working groups, or committees does your school employ to help ensure effective environmental and sustainability education? Provide specific examples of actions taken.

Answer for question #2: District 87 does not have a written definition and requirement for environmental literacy, and an assessment is not required.

Answer for question #3: McLean County is lucky to be home to two environmental education/recycling organizations. District 87 utilizes partnerships with these organizations to boost sustainability education for all students and staff.

Midwest Fiber Recycling is housed in neighboring Normal, Ill. The company collects single stream recycling from all District 87 schools, offers tours of its recycling facility for students, and sends representatives to the schools to teach about the process.

The Ecology Action Center is a non-profit environmental agency also based in Normal. The mission of EAC is to inspire and assist residents of McLean County in creating, strengthening and preserving a healthy environment. The EAC acts as a central resource for environmental education, information, outreach and technical assistance. The EAC hosts community events, often geared towards children, and sends representatives to visit District 87 schools to teach about environmental responsibility.

In addition, representatives with the University of Illinois Extension office frequently work with teachers during outdoor education courses to boost understanding of commercial agriculture, horticulture, energy and the environment, and local food and small farms.

4. Describe how your school promotes student and teacher engagement with the community and civic involvement outside the school? Have there been green themes to their work?

Several community engagement groups include students from District 87 schools, such as Youth Engaged in Philanthropy through the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation; the Bloomington-Normal Not In Our Town group, which features a branch called Not In Our School, aims to eliminate bullying and hate in the community.

Classes often partner up on Earth Day each year to clean school property and surrounding neighborhoods.

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**5. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning STEM? How is sustainability and the environment incorporated into the curriculum in all areas?**

Sustainability and the environment is often woven into STEM teaching. At a recent STEM activity for BJHS students, teachers worked with employees from State Farm to create STEM activities for each class. One activity was to read the book "Hatchet" by Gary Paulsen and discuss how to utilize natural resources and the environment to survive. Another activity challenged students to create a levy out of the smallest amount of materials available to prevent a town from being flooded. This activity taught students engineering skills, but they also discussed natural disasters and how to create less waste when creating levys.

Students at Sheridan elementary experienced a day of STEM learning in the gym through a visit from the local Children's Discovery Museum. Museum staff taught children about aerodynamics and wind power. District 87 teachers are skilled at incorporating environmental education across curriculum, whether its in reading, art or science.

**6. How does your school use sustainability as a context for learning green technologies and/or career pathways?**

Bloomington High School students can enroll in Environmental Science, where they investigate how current human activities are resulting in harmful environmental impacts and the changes that must be made to attain a sustainable world. An Advanced Placement version of this class is also offered, which covers scientific analysis, interdependence of earth's systems, human population dynamics, renewable and nonrenewable resources, environmental quality, global changes and their consequences, society and decision-making vs. trade-offs, and environmental choices for the future. The main goal is to educate students about the relative risks associated with the environmental problems and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and preventing them.

**7. Describe how does your school share environmental education or sustainability events with other schools or organizations?**

District 87 Director of Food Services, Julie McCoy, is on the wellness coalition in McLean County. She shares a "School Wellness Matters" newsletter with all superintendents in the county, which includes sustainability initiatives, tips, and updates for other districts to utilize. With Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Heartland Community College established in the District 87 community, the district provides internship opportunities for students to work and learn in the health and wellness department.

**8. Does your school have a green team, garden club, or a community green committee on sustainability? Who participates? What kinds of project or activities do they undertake? What roles do they play in the school?**

BHS offers an Environmental Club. These students are in charge of collecting recycling from classrooms. The students also travel to other schools to teach younger students the importance of green living.

BJHS offers Junior Gardeners Club. These students tend to the outdoor courtyard space at the junior high, discover their green thumbs, and care for the space year round. The courtyard is often used by teachers as an outdoor classroom.

A new program has been established at Bloomington Junior High School, where student volunteers in

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6-8th grade receive training to become “Green Champions.” The school partners with the local McLean County Ecology Action Center and Midwest Fiber to provide education about the importance of recycling and composting. Green Champions tour the school kitchen to see where compost and recycling ends up after a meal. Each student received a “Green Team” shirt and they are preparing videos to present to their peers which show the benefit of going green.

BHS hosts the Raider Resource Room with donated clothing so students can borrow items as needed, like formal dresses and tuxedos, or professional clothing for a job interview. Students clean and return the items after the event. This room not only provides a resource for students in need, it offers a way to reuse clothing instead of buying an item for a one-time use.

- 9. If applicable, describe how the school grounds are devoted to environmentally educational uses:**  
**Nearly every school in the district has a green space that is used for environmental education or as an outdoor classroom. The designs of these spaces vary. Most of the elementary schools have a garden for studying plants, insects, birds, and weather. Some of these outdoors spaces include benches or tables to serve as quiet/reading zones. Sheridan Elementary School has an outdoor stage with bench seating, surrounded by trees and bird feeders. Through a grant from a local hospital, Oakland Elementary School has outdoor exercise equipment with instructions installed next to the playground. This equipment offers students an opportunity to stretch, climb, and balance. Schools that lack a sprawling green space will often take trips to nearby parks or recreation areas.**

- 10. Describe students’ outdoor learning experiences at multiple grade levels. How do they support curriculum content?**

At District 87’s early learning center, children learn about patience, kindness and responsibility by spending a day outdoors on the school’s playground where they run around a miniature baseball field.

At Sheridan Elementary, students spent a day “camping” on school grounds. Classes learned how to set up a tent and cook food, while participating in outdoor learning and games.

Many elementary school classrooms take all-day fieldtrips to nearby Funks Grove Nature Center in McLean, Ill. This center offers a variety of nature-related field trip experiences for all grade levels. Teachers can choose from a variety of programs at the nature center to tie into current curriculum. These programs include Tracks, Scat, and All of That; Dead Tree Biology; Meet the Critters; Incredible Insects and Invertebrates; and Plants, Flowers and Seeds. Classes can also go on nature hikes, explore the creek, and play in the outdoor learning space known as Imagination Grove.

All seventh graders at BJHS experience the Outdoor Education Program each year. Students visit a local camp for a week where the outdoor instruction includes classes on environmental art, archery, canoeing, mountain biking, pond investigation, dutch oven cooking, journaling and silk screen art.

- 11. Describe your partnerships to help your school and other schools achieve in the 3 Pillars. Include both the scope and impact of these partnerships:**

District 87 values its community partnerships. Without guidance or support from organizations like Ecology Action Center, Midwest Fiber Recycling, Alpha Controls & Services, Midwest Foodbank, the City of Bloomington, and all other organizations and services mentioned above, the district would not be able to achieve such high levels of sustainability efforts.

Additionally, the district has a deep appreciation for food service, staff and lunchroom volunteers who willingly and eagerly accepted the challenge of recycling and composting in all buildings. This project was a lofty goal, but district staff and students worked together to quickly make recycling and composting



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second nature, instead of a chore.

By reducing its carbon footprint through waste reduction and energy conservation, District 87 hopes to set an example for neighboring districts, organizations and families. Sharing sustainable tips with area superintendents through the “School Wellness Matters” newsletter opens the door to conversation and collaboration.

District partnerships with after-school programs like YWCA, Boys & Girls Club, and more, ensure students have an opportunity to be active and safe after school hours.

By teaming up with area public housing for the summer feeding program, District 87 has found a way to keep students healthy and fed, especially in low-income neighborhoods.

**12. Describe other ways your school integrates sustainability into daily habits and culture of the school’s staff, volunteers, students and community (ie: recycling days, no bottled water, murals, themed events, virtual backpacks, etc):**

Teachers across the district will often incorporate reusing and recycling into their classroom plans. Art teachers recycle materials to turn into art. This teaches students to consider another use for an item before throwing it away.

BJHS students in family and consumer science class recently collected t-shirts from home and from teachers to turn into individual t-shirt quilts. This project taught the class useful home economics and sewing skills, while encouraging the reuse of materials.

A district-wide virtual backpack reduces the amount of paper waste sent home to families.

**13. Any other school practices, visions, projects, plans or information you want to include to showcase the environmental work your school has achieved?**

While many efforts listed above have led to financial savings for the district, that is not the only reason these sustainable decisions are made. District 87 administrators and staff are committed to providing quality academic education in tandem with environmental education, leading to more productive and civically engaged young citizens.

### Supporting Materials

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**Attach a minimum of three photos and a maximum of five photos with your application.** Please save your photos using descriptive language. For example, “Students conduct water quality tests in outdoor classroom with science majors from nearby university x” would be more helpful than “Photo 1.” **Photos should be action shots, not posed.** By sending these photos, you are giving the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them.

**Please provide a brief description (300 characters) for each:**

**Image 1: Students on recycling duty at Washington Elementary collect recycling from each classroom and carry it to a recycling dumpster.**

**Image 2: Oakland Elementary regularly hosts in Walk to School Days. Students, staff, and often parents gather at a nearby park and walk together to the school.**

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**Image 3:** Eighth-graders at BJHS participated in a quilt project in family and consumer science class. Students upcycled t-shirts and learned how to sew them into a quilt.

**Image 4:** Lunchroom staff at Bent Elementary guide the students where to dispose of recycling, compost and trash after lunch.

**Image 5:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

### Submit Your Application

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**Applications must be received by 5:00 PM on Monday, January 14, 2019.** Applications are being collected by the Illinois Green Alliance on behalf of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

For an application to be considered, it must be **submitted via email** to [info@illinoisgreenalliance.org](mailto:info@illinoisgreenalliance.org). Submittals via other methods will not be accepted.

**Questions?** Contact Illinois Green Alliance at 312-245-8300.