

**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 early learning to 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 and sustainability 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**

Public    Charter    Title I    Magnet    Private    Independent    Rural

Name of Principal: Mrs. Carrie Paul

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

Official School Name: Tates Creek Elementary

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: 1113 Centre Parkway, Lexington, KY 40517

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

County: Fayette State School Code Number \*: 165 095

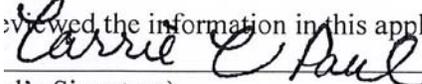
Telephone: 859-381-3606 Fax: 859-381-3772

Web site/URL: <https://www.tces.fcps.net> E-mail: [carrie.paul@fayette.kyschools.us](mailto:carrie.paul@fayette.kyschools.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.

I have reviewed the information in this appl



(Principal's Signature)

Date: 2/15/2019

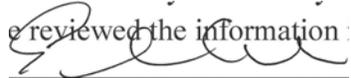
Name of Superintendent:



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

District Name: Fayette County Public Schools

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



Date: 2/15/2019

(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 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: Kentucky Environmental Education Council

Name of Nominating Authority: Mr. Billy Bennett

(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: 2/15/2019

(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.

## SUMMARY NARRATIVE

Tates Creek Elementary is a school of 659 students and over 100 faculty and staff members. We are located in the southeast side of Lexington, Kentucky. Our students are varied by race, socioeconomic levels, language, and learning styles. The student population is 33% white, 42% black, 12% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. Almost 79 percent of our population is on free or reduced lunch. Because this percentage is so high, the federal government offers all our students free and reduced breakfast and lunch through the Community Eligibility Provision. We have 16% English language learners and 18% special education students. Our campus also has a fully staffed pediatric health clinic on site for our students and the surrounding community. The clinic offers flu shots as well as other vaccinations and check-ups that children need. Dental and eye checks also are conducted on a regular basis. Tates Creek Elementary has a resource center that provides clothing for students, food bags, and home visits to help with truancy issues. We are unique in Fayette County in that we are on a campus with Tates Creek Middle School and Tates Creek High School. When those schools work on rain gardens and sustainability initiatives it gives us the chance to collaborate with the other campuses on volunteering, advanced learning, and sharing of resources.

Tates Creek Elementary (TCE) was remodeled in 2012. This allowed more sustainable measures to be put into place. A vegetable garden is active and growing in our courtyard. In the spring each class receives seedlings to plant so that an assortment of fruits and vegetables will grow for us to consume. Our physical education teacher along with parent volunteers, students, and Fayette County Public Schools help to prepare the beds. Our families can receive some of the produce when it is ready as well as our cafeteria. We have lights that shut down at 9:00 pm when cleaning is done. We have bathrooms with both air dryers and towels. New energy efficient windows replaced the old windows and more natural light was obtained. Several floors in rooms such as art and wellness as well as ramps were replaced with rubberized nonslip flooring. This lessens the use of chemicals to clean. No waxing is necessary. Tates Creek Elementary qualified for a Silver Leaf Award in 2016-2017. In 2015-2016 the school was third in a waste reduction competition between the Fayette County Schools.

This is our first year for a green team, the Green Creek Team, which meets during the school day and includes students in grades one through five. The school has had many years of sustainability activities such as Earth Day, STEM classes, energy audits, light monitoring, and some recycling. The team just adds to what has been occurring and takes it further. The school also hired their first Wellness Coach and Environmental Coordinator. Our physical education teacher has been in charge of wellness but more was needed. Our principal has taken it to the next level by hiring a wellness coach so that the students have a chance to work with him once a week. A regular recycling schedule has been established on Tuesday and Thursday. Small recycling bins have been replaced with large outdoor municipal waste receptacles that our school converted to recycling dumpsters. We are the only school in Fayette County that has invested funds towards purchasing an extra bin outside. The school ordered more class bins and we now have one in every classroom and office. We have ranged from 55 pounds to 159 pounds of recycling each time. Our average is 96 pounds since we have been keeping our records in October. TCE was only one of five schools that planted trees on school grounds this year in partnership with the local government, school district, and the University of Kentucky's Urban Forest Initiative. The

Urban Forest Initiative met with Green Creek to teach about the parts of a tree and tree adoption. Two water bottle filling stations have been added with students being encouraged to use refillable water bottles. A container for recycling plastic bags provided for our school and our families is prominent in the front hallway and it is emptied and taken to Kroger recycling bins about every two weeks. A container to collect plastic lids to work toward our third upcycled plastic bench is being added to by faculty, staff, students, and parents. We are working toward collecting 250 pounds of all types of plastic lids from peanut butter jars to butter containers to water bottle lids. These are not recyclable in Lexington, Kentucky.

The Green Creek Team has worked hard to learn what is recyclable and what is not in Lexington, Kentucky. They have visited our Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where Lexington's recyclables are sorted and sent off to recycling centers. The students have worked in teams to develop power point presentations on recycling to show to each class at Tates Creek Elementary. Before the green team was established, recycling was done occasionally. It was not checked or weighed. Now the students weigh each bag of recycling and cardboard and record the mass. Out of the students who belong to Green Creek, five have been chosen to be on a KEY (Kentucky Energy for Youth) team. They are reading a book about how coal affects a community in Appalachia and will be attending an overnight field trip with a coal mine tour in March to learn the positive and negative effects of coal. Coal in Kentucky is our major source of electrical power. Our school has had STEM classes for more than ten years. The students have learned sustainability and energy information in the STEM class as well as in classrooms with teachers who are passionate about recycling and sustainability.

The Green Creek Team has also had a visit from a person in the community who uses plastic bags on a loom to make rugs. She also reuses old clothes and jeans to make items to sell at craft fairs. We are working on a visit from the head of the Kentucky Resources Council from Louisville, Kentucky to explain what he does to change laws regarding sustainability.

Our cafeteria is taking sustainability steps as well. Instead of an open container with napkins we are now using napkin dispensers which has led to less waste. The use of straws at lunch has been eliminated. The cafeteria uses farm to table items to introduce new fruits and vegetables. At events where the school was using paper to cover tables, we have moved to cloth tablecloths which are washed in our energy and water efficient washer and dryer. The cafeteria staff is also encouraging students to drink milk if they take it or to drink water so as not to waste the milk. One other thing the cafeteria is doing is using reusable plastic trays most of the time, but when they cannot, they use biodegradable trays. This is a switch that occurred early in the school year from styrofoam trays. The Green Creek Team recycles the biodegradable trays that meet our recycling specifications.

The TCE students that are part of Green Creek are working to learn about water quality. They are partnering with local nonprofit Bluegrass Greensource to learn about recycling, sustainability, energy, and water quality. They will complete a project of water quality testing at McConnell Springs (a karst topographical area in Lexington that contains artesian springs that go underground and come up again to the surface), plus testing the water at Tates Creek Elementary and a nearby lake in a park that the community uses. These results will be reported to McConnell Springs, Bluegrass Greensource, and the city for review.

Our school has implemented Chromebooks in grades 2-5 with first grade on the way. This has decreased our paper usage for this school year. The faculty uses Google docs and Google classroom to share documents for a paper decrease as well. The faculty has been shown how and what to recycle and many have contributed to this endeavor. One of our teachers picks up recycling on the playground every day at recess. Another teacher is working on reducing the amount of plastic cups that are used in the cafeteria. Hopefully we can change to recyclable paper cups. Our staff is bringing in plastic lids and plastic bags each week. They have their students recycle their clean trays. Wrappers that go around a ream of paper are not recyclable and teachers have stopped putting these in the recycling bin. Also, no more lamination is going in the bin.

Wellness is a top priority at TCE. The clinic sees students on a daily basis for illnesses and wellness visits. They provide counseling, vaccinations, dental and eye checkups, as well as flu shots and minor accident first aid. They see about 400 students a month on an average. Wellness is a special in our rotation to help students focus on physical and mental health. We are the first Fayette County Public School to have a full-time wellness coach. Our Physical Education teacher also uses wellness techniques to help the faculty, students, and other schools. Each classroom at TCE has a "wellness corner" to help students feel calm and focused. Last year we had a yoga class for adults after school. The female students have an opportunity to sign up for a class after school that addresses mental and physical issues as well as service opportunities and connection with peers. The program is a fitness and learning program for 4th and 5th grade girls. The program combines training for a 5K run/walk, with life changing, self-esteem building activities that encourage emotional, social, mental, and physical development. The faculty and staff had a Trauma Informed Training to help us give assistance to students who are experiencing trauma. Tates Creek Elementary has a social worker, counselor, and many resource teachers to deal with the wellness of the students.

## PILLAR ONE NARRATIVE

The Tates Creek environmental impact begins on the outside of the school. Tates Creek Elementary has a Walk-to-School Day in the fall which kicks off our focus on lessening our environmental impact as we begin the school year. As we see students, parents, and teachers walking through the neighborhood, we hope to inspire our car riders to join us on a regular basis, and many do join in.

Our vegetable garden planting in the spring gets each student involved in using our outdoor garden. As the plants grow and are ready for harvesting when they return in August, they can see the process of seed development, learn about photosynthesis, get experience in planting a garden and harvesting what they plant. Tates Creek Elementary has a large population of students in apartments so this gives them a chance to see the process of nature working in their school and a chance to eat fresh vegetables. Each student is involved in planting types of vegetables and discussing nutrition in their regular classrooms as well as during Wellness.

Outside our school is a low land area that holds water with cattails and other native species as well as drainage toward a storm sewer. Our partnership with Bluegrass Greensource will enable us in the spring to learn how to test water in that area and a lake nearby that the students in the neighborhood use. We will take a field trip to an inner city natural karst formation and test that water as well. The Green Team will also visit the Waste Water Treatment Plant. They will give presentations to groups of students during regular class time.

As we follow the outside perimeter of our school, we will pass two benches made from plastic lids that the school has collected. We are working on our third one. The entire school community including faculty, staff, students, families, and guests are invited and encouraged to participate by recycling lids in multiple locations around the school. As we move around the corner of the school, we see five trees that the green team planted during tree week. Three are American hornbeam and two are Kentucky coffee trees. The students had visitors from the University of Kentucky who belong to the Urban Forest Initiative. They taught the parts of a tree from the inside out. They explained why trees are important and how to adopt a tree.

The last outside stop is near the trees where we are developing a NO IDLE zone. This is where cars line up at pick up time. About 30% of our population goes home in car line. This NO IDLE zone is a work in progress. Car line students as well as walkers see the tree development every day.

Tates Creek Elementary's two recycling dumpsters connect our outside to the inside of the school. We had one dumpster until this year until we used sustainability funds we had earned to purchase a second badly needed one. Our cafeteria recycles all the large cans and boxes when they unload the food. This fills up one dumpster and we need the other one for the twice weekly recycling from the rest of the school. We have just acquired an All-in-one recycling bin with two recycling receptacles connected to a landfill receptacle. This sets in our lobby for families, students, and faculty to use. We are discussing getting more to use around the school in common areas. Each classroom and office has a recycling bin. More were purchased to meet the needs of our school. This is the first year

for an environmental team at Tates Creek Elementary. Our Green Creek Team of 25 students in grades one through five handle the recycling twice a week, sort the recycling to help us to recycle smarter, teach students and teachers about what is recyclable and what is not, meet with Bluegrass Greensource to learn about landfills, water quality, sources of energy, and other sustainability topics. The team meets twice a week to learn more about energy, sustainability, recycling, landfills, and water quality. Also, the team gets the mass of each bag of recycling and is keeping a record of these quantities to graph the information so we can see our growth.

Watching student developed power points on recycling as they are presented to each class is inspiring and encouraging. Students also distributed Trash Basher sticker booklets to each class to sort and discuss recycling vs landfill. These booklets were provided by the city to help teach smarter recycling. Faculty and staff also have jumped on board to use less paper, recycle more, ask questions, and encourage their class to do their part. The Green Team has also made signs to post around the school to remind students to reduce, reuse, and recycle with specific tips about reducing waste in the cafeteria and restrooms, reusing plastic bags for food that is taken home or changes of clothes, reusing toilet paper and paper towel rolls in art or tissue boxes for containers in classrooms, and recycling paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, and more.

Inside the cafeteria you can also find a sustainability focus. The cafeteria staff uses reusable trays for student lunches. They connect with Farm-to-Table vendors to encourage students to try new fruits and vegetables. When the cafeteria is short on staff they have obtained biodegradable trays to use. This is a change from styrofoam trays used at the beginning of the year. Students recycle biodegradable trays that are not covered in liquid. The cafeteria recycles items from the kitchen and they have purchased biodegradable bowls. They also encourage students who do not want to drink milk, to leave it and choose water instead. Straws have been eliminated from use. Napkin holders have been added to reduce the tendency of students to waste them. Other classroom teachers help to collect recycling on the playground and are working on biodegradable cups to use for water in the cafeteria.

Each month the Green Creek team conducts an energy audit of each classroom. They give the classrooms a note on how they are doing concerning energy conservation. Each class has light switches labeled to remind them to turn off the lights when they can. Individual refrigerators and microwaves have been removed from all but two out of 37 classrooms. Each teacher receives a checklist to complete during school breaks to reduce energy consumption. The other appliances in the school are energy star rated. The addition of Chromebooks from grades one to five has reduced our paper consumption. The district numbers on our copy machine usage from November 2017 versus November 2018 was down 140,000 copies from 374,354 to 134,349. After acquiring Chromebooks for all classes except kindergarten, our numbers from January 2018-167,464 compared to January 2019-99,763, show a significant drop in paper usage.

Our focus in the year 2019 concerns signs and letters to remind the school population and community on reducing, reusing, recycling, and care for the environment. We are beginning this on January 15<sup>th</sup> with a science night presentation on the three R's and wastewater sustainability.

## PILLAR TWO NARRATIVE

Tates Creek Elementary is excited to have a fulltime wellness class this year, as well as a physical education teacher who coordinates wellness for the faculty, students, and district. Each classroom has a “wellness corner” with activities to encourage calmness, mindfulness, and breathing techniques. Each P.E class ends with a wellness activity. An afterschool club encourages physical and mental wellness for those who join. Our teachers take their classes outside every day possible. This directive is sent out by our principal- **“Recess and cold weather:** We believe that kids and adults need outside time. The light of day is good for us all and we need the natural Vitamin D that comes from the sun. Our brains also need fresh air and blood circulation to keep them sharp and productive. If it is 32 degrees or below, you will need to stay off of the mulch as it is a safety hazard at those temps. However, the TCE campus has a lot of options for taking a nice walk. We also have field space that can be used when it is 32 or below. Students need to be told to bring winter coats, hats and gloves on the daily. Unless it is in the "teens," walking or field use for 15 minutes or so is okay. Please make an effort to take our kids outside. “

Our staff has a social worker, a resource teacher, a guidance counselor, a safe room coordinator, as well as many trained staff members who handle trauma care. The resource teacher works with volunteers to distribute food bags each Friday to families who have that need. The school distributes at least 243 bags a week. Students who have a need are given a chance to go clothes shopping at least twice a year. This is used by around 25 students.

Our school has a fully staffed pediatric clinic in our building. This clinic handles well checkups as well as flu shots, dental and vision referrals, illnesses and injuries, and vaccinations. The clinic sees over 600 students each month. Two speech therapists are on staff and take students daily as well as special education instructors for severe to moderate issues.

Our building is monitored and maintained by a wonderful building coordinator as well as a hands-on janitorial staff. The district also visits to deal with issues that arise or to fix problems as they occur.

We have reduced electricity consumption, CO2 levels, and water consumption. We continue to stay vigilant on ways to continue to reduce these levels.

### ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION:

From 2014-2018, TCES reduced our EUI (Energy Usage Intensity) by 33%.

2014 EUI: 61.4 kBTU/square foot

2018 EUI: 40.9 kBTU/square foot

*\*kBTU = kilo-British Thermal Units*

2014 kBTU per student per year: 7139.85 kBTU/student/year

2018 kBTU per student per year: 4910.40 kBTU/student/year

Using the EPA's carbon equivalency calculator, TCES's electricity usage emitted an equivalent of 1006 metric tons of CO2, while by 2018 they emitted an equivalent of 671 metric tons of CO2. On a per student basis, in 2014 TCES emitted 1.53 metric tons of CO2 per student, and by 2018 they were emitting 1.02 metric tons of CO2 per student.

## WATER CONSUMPTION:

From 2014-2018, TCES reduced our water consumption per student by 18.8%

2014 Per student water consumption: 1.78 kilo-gallons per student

2018 Per student water consumption: 1.44 kilo-gallons per student

Water quality is protected from potential contaminants by the following:

A reduced pressure backflow preventer is installed at the domestic water entrance. This device allows a one-way flow of water and prevents the reverse flow of polluted water from entering into the potable water supply. A water storage tank is provided to flush toilets and urinals (non-potable water).

Our school has an asthma management program that is consistent with the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program's (NAEPP) asthma friendly school guidelines. Common asthma trigger such as air fresheners and candles are confiscated during annual hazardous chemicals sweeps. Students include air fresheners on their monthly wellness patrols and provide feedback to teachers/staff who include air fresheners in their classrooms/offices.

Our school visually inspects all structures on a monthly basis to ensure they are free of mold, moisture and water leakage. Our classrooms are routinely monitored for CO<sub>2</sub> and RH levels. If the RH level is above 60% or a building occupant raises concern about RH, additional air mold assessments are conducted. Our student E=USE<sub>2</sub> Team, which is our Green Creek team, collected RH data on multiple and various spaces within our school.

Our school won a Silver Leaf Award in Wellness from our district in 2016-2017. This means we were in the top 20 percent of our district in using wellness in each classroom. Since that time each class has provided a Wellness area in the room as well as mindfulness activities used on a daily basis for all of our students with extra emphasis on our students who have trauma. We have men and women from the community who come at least once a month to work with students who need a mentor in a one-on-one scenario.

### PILLAR THREE NARRATIVE

The STEM teacher at Tates Creek Elementary, along with the environmental coordinator, and every classroom teacher is involved in environmental and sustainability education. The STEM classroom has been a specials class as well as a push in class for every grade level. The environmental curriculum has been coordinated with Bluegrass Greensource for supplies, information, and guest speakers, as well as the NEED (National Energy Education Development) Project. The Green Creek team as well as some classrooms have had the opportunity to use the information from this partnership.

Many topics are covered in our environmental education. Reducing, reusing, and recycling have been taught in all grade levels through classroom teachers, STEM, and environmental class. The Green Creek team of students have researched information and data to produce power points to present to every student during regular class time. Booths at the Fall Festival and science night have been able to reach out to the community on recycling as well as water conservation. Students have developed trifold boards to explain recycling vs landfill and items that should or should not be flushed. These schoolwide events involve our students and their families. Energy lessons have been presented to each class to explain the flow of energy from renewable and nonrenewable resources to usable electricity in each student's home. Simple lessons have been discussed in classrooms daily on turning lights off when not needed, reducing the use of water to wash hands in the restroom, using only one paper towel to dry hands or one cycle with hand dryers, taking only one napkin at lunch, and recycling in the classrooms as much as possible while reducing solid waste. Art class has reused plastic bottles and cardboard tubes for projects. Our librarian has offered books on saving energy and recycling to use by students and teachers, as well as fictional and nonfictional stories such as The Lorax and Here Comes the Garbage Barge to be shared and discussed in library class and in the regular classrooms. The entire school is involved in Earth Day and Arbor Day activities each year.

Tates Creek Elementary has a robotics team and an STLP team that competes with other schools in the district. They cover environmental issues that concern the community and the world as well as learning about professions that deal with these topics on a daily basis. Career day at TCE offers options for students to learn about sustainable careers or sustainability in everything from civil engineering to running a coffee shop.

In the fall of 2018, Bluegrass Greensource along with the city of Lexington, Kentucky offered a teacher environmental academy for five days. Several of the TCE faculty attended from classroom teachers to special education teachers to math interventionists, as well as the STEM and environmental coordinator. Each day was a focus on a different part of the environment. Water testing was done in conjunction with the wastewater treatment plant tour. Solid waste tours of a landfill including leachate filtering and yard waste to mulch was covered. Public transportation information was given to each participant including electric buses, energy usage, and natural gas engines. The last day covered Project Wild, Project Wet, and resources to use in class with any level of student. At the conclusion, each teacher received funds for a classroom project using information learned from the academy.

Bluegrass Greensource also has an educator assigned to TCE. The educator's job is to help teach lessons on the environment, or give the information and supplies to the classroom teacher, coordinate recycling pick up or questions, work with any grade level on projects to learn about the environment,

and connect educators to community resources. Our educator has helped us in all of these ways so far with more to come. The rest of the year the focus is on water conservation and water quality in our environmental class. Other class projects include reducing plastic, saving energy, and forming a rain garden.

Our school has formed a KEY (Kentucky Energy for Youth) team for the first time this year. Students are reading a fictional story about the positive and negative properties of using coal for electrical power. Coal is Kentucky's number one nonrenewable resource for power. In March, the students will take an overnight trip to a coal town and tour a coal mine no longer in use. They will meet with students from other schools to discuss this topic and to do activities together.

Several teachers have also attended NEED workshops this year to learn about energy sources and forms of energy. During a NEED workshop, teachers do the same activities that students will do and are able to receive supplies to use in a classroom setting. It is interesting to learn by doing and to work with teams to learn about energy and sustainability.

Our wellness coach uses teamwork, youtube videos, activities, and discussions to teach about physical wellness, nutrition, rest/sleep, hygiene, plus mental, social, emotional, and spiritual wellness. Nutrition is explained as GO foods (ones you eat as much as you want), SLOW foods (ones you have occasionally), and NO foods (ones you rarely have such as fast food and sweets). This topic is discussed at least once a week along with physical wellness every class.

STEM class discusses animal habitats and our effect on them, renewable resources with examples and activities, nonrenewable resources as they connect to fossils, plant life cycles and the effect of pollution on those. Students in each class have worked on solutions for our world. Ideas have been shared on ways to reuse plastic, the best ways to save water, how to produce less waste in our cafeteria, and how to inform families of our ideas. We hope to take one step at a time to spread the word to our school community, our city, and beyond.