



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 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. Jennifer McConnell

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

Official School Name: Montessori Children's House

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: 5003 218th Ave NE Redmond, WA 98053

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

County: King State School Code Number *: N/A

Telephone: 425-868-7805 Fax:

Web site/URL: www.mchkids.com E-mail: katherine@mchkids.com

**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.



Janifer Mc Connell

Date: 2/4/2020

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: N/A
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)

District Name: N/A

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

(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: Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Name of Nominating Authority: Dr. Ellen Ebert
(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.

Ellen Ebert, Ph.D.

Date: 2/11/2020

(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 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 Application

Montessori Children's House

5003 218th Ave NE Redmond, WA 98053

Summary Narrative

Montessori Children's House (MCH) provides a holistic educational experience. The school's mission is, "Nurture AND Nature: developing your child's individual passions and strengths. Because today's child is tomorrow's future." MCH is a small pre-K-5, private school located in Redmond, Washington. The student Green Team is passionate about caring for the Earth. They are the driving force behind MCH's efforts. The school is extremely fortunate to have a forward-thinking administration that is ready to help make necessary changes.

The student-based Green Team was founded ten years ago. Since then the team has helped the school and the community think more thoroughly about everyday choices and how these seemingly small choices have a larger impact. The Green Team has worked with King County Green Schools and has received recognition for completing Level 1, Waste Management; Level 2, Water conservation; Level 3, Energy Conservation; and in 2020 will apply for Level 4, Sustaining Green School. With King County's help, the Green Team set clear yearly goals and has made real change in school practices and policies.

Now the school has a system in place for tracking energy, water, and natural gas usage. This gives students a tool to reflect on utility consumption as well as brainstorm new ideas about how to reduce the natural resources used. Elementary students discuss their own personal Carbon Footprint, and the Green Team is gathering information to find out the Carbon Footprint of each classroom. Other improvements that have been implemented include: an appliance purchasing policy; an appliance cleaning schedule; checking for drafts in doors; and monitoring light and heat usage.

On campus there is a wetland, which provides not only beautiful scenery and homes to a diversity of wildlife, but also a unique opportunity for students to learn about the water cycle. Some measures taken to improve our water conservation and keep students and staff healthy include cleaning fixtures; testing well water; posting signs to turn off water; using native plants in landscaping; watering the garden in the morning; and collecting rainwater.

Over the years the school's waste management system has been greatly improved. Every classroom has a compost, recycle and garbage bin. The teachers give lessons to students about which items go where and why. There is also a worm bin and a larger onsite composting system. The school collects markers to send to Crayola to recycle. This year the Green Team entered the "Plastic Film Challenge," and so far, has collected over 25 pounds of plastic that would have otherwise gone into the landfill. The plan is to continue this plastic recycling program in future years.

Having a healthy indoor and outdoor environment is of the utmost importance to the Montessori Children's House. The school has an integrated pest management plan. In addition, the school uses certified safe playground equipment and has a natural outdoor play area. MCH uses certified safe building materials, green cleaning products, and has a detailed cleaning schedule that includes dusting often. The school has tested for radon with passing results. In the school gardens students use all organic materials including potting soil, seeds, amendments, and fertilizer. The school has a wonderful campus where students can explore, grow food, and play games. The children grow veggies from seed to harvest and can taste the wonderful fresh produce daily in the growing season.

All the Physical Education classes are held outside. Students have access to two playgrounds, a nature trail, and various sport choices such as basketball, hockey, soccer, jump ropes, hula hoops, balls, bean bags, and tag games. Along with keeping the physical environment healthy, the school focuses on teaching children to have a healthy mental space. Students are encouraged to communicate with each other to resolve problems and all the teachers are certified in positive discipline to assist when needed. Each classroom has a Peace Table where children can come together to respectfully discuss any feelings or issues they might be experiencing. This is a very beautiful and powerful interaction to witness.

The school loves the earth, and this is shown by integrating care for the environment into all that we do here at Montessori Children's House. The students here connect with nature daily and this involvement helps to foster a true understanding of what it means to be sustainable. The curriculum connects subjects to real life situations, for example: when students study the water cycle, there is also a discussion of jobs that are related, such as an environmental scientist, a meteorologist, and a conservationist. Students are encouraged to do their own research and comprehension is assessed with a variety of projects. Students and staff carry this message of sustainable thinking into the larger community as well. During school events all are expected to sort trash; compost, recycle and garbage, with signage to educate the parents, staff, and students. The school gives back to the larger community by hosting a yearly Hope Link Food Drive. This year students grew pumpkins for our Harvest Fest event, then donated 220 pounds of pumpkins to the Food Bank, as well. Community outreach efforts are growing and will continue to grow in the future.

Crosscutting Questions

Awards and Programs

Does your school participate in a local, state, or national green schools' program?

King County Green Schools Program: Level One (waste reduction and recycling) - 2009, Level Two energy conservation) - 2017, and Level Three (water conservation and pollution prevention) – 2019

Washington State Green School Leader award for Pillars 2 and 3 - 2017

Washington State Green School Leader award in Pillar 2 - 2016

Eco-schools USA Silver Award for water conservation

In the past five years, has your district received any awards relevant to the Green Ribbon School/District recognition?

Washington State Green School Leader award for Pillars 2 and 3 - 2017

Washington State Green School Leader award in Pillar 2 - 2016

Eco-schools USA Silver Award for water conservation

Communication Strategies

How do you communicate your Pillar I required policies and best practice recommendations related to school principals, faculty, staff, parents, and other stakeholders in your district?

At Montessori Children's House we believe in being Green! The school has been dedicated to taking care of the earth for over ten years. MCH's eco-conscious efforts are led by a collaborative student/teacher Green Team, comprised of elementary and middle school students and teachers of multiple disciplines. The team communicates policies and recommendations in a variety of ways to the community, such as school newsletters, articles written by teachers and students, posters around campus, and website information.

The school converted to an electronic parent newsletter after 92 percent of the parents, in response to an on-line survey, indicated a preference for a paperless newsletter. The teacher in-service day includes information about waste reduction, recycling, and the school's environmental curriculum. In new employee orientations the commitment to sustainability and conservation practices is reviewed and discussed. In the employee handbook a Green School

section has been added to read; "All employees are expected to participate in our schools' efforts towards minimizing our environmental impact and providing environmental education to our students. Including but not limited to setting an example for proper sorting of trash, recycling, and composting; mindful use of electric and water resources (ex. turning off lights when leaving empty rooms); and staying generally informed about and participating in other green school efforts."

Green Team advisors conducted an all-staff presentation in fall 2016 about energy consumption and conservation. The school has a no-idle policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Information about this policy is regularly shared in a school newsletter and through in-person conversations by staff parking/traffic monitors.

Equity

Please describe how your students and broader community members are being included in, honored for, and engaged in this work.

The Green Team has steadily grown over the years and this year has the most student and teacher involvement ever. MCH has 32 elementary and middle school students and five teachers who meet weekly. The Green Team starts the year by making an action plan together, setting goals, and discussing how to reach these goals. There are three different focus groups: King County Green Schools, Eco-Schools, and Community Outreach. Meeting in smaller groups creates the opportunity to hear all voices and ideas, including student voices. Green Team members are fully engaged in the team discussions and efforts. During the school year there are many all-community events, where the Green Team can shine. To prepare for Harvest Fest in October, student Green Team members make trash, recycling, and compost signs. The team reviews the event yearly to ensure it is doing all it can to make the event sustainable. For the Spring Showcase event, the team creates an informational booth about sustainability. At the event the team conducts a short presentation to share information with the community. The students enjoy these events and their ability to contribute to the school's vision of sustainability.

The administration team has played a huge part in MCH's sustainability efforts during school and staff events. They ensure purchases are compostable, such as paper plates and utensils. They advise staff members to bring their own cups to events where coffee is served. The school has a community of students, staff, and parents who are dedicated to sustainability.

Pillar I: Reduce environmental impact and costs

Element 1A: Energy conservation strategies

Describe how your school programs, policies, and actions have reduced the amount of energy used in your building(s). Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

At Montessori Children's House we strive to conserve energy in order to reduce the school's carbon footprint and global impact. MCH teaches children daily how to be socially conscious citizens of this Earth. The school constantly seeks new ways to reduce its energy consumption, as well as improve upon existing policies.

The school's Energy Management Plan calls for: purchasing Energy Star certified appliances; using energy efficient light bulbs throughout campus; tracking energy usage; turning lights off in unoccupied rooms; and adjusting the heating during vacations and weekends. By tracking energy usage and taking yearly audits, MCH reaches its conservation goals, reducing energy usage yearly. The school maintains a "no idle" policy when parents are picking up their children to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To improve energy efficiency, the school replaced all overhead fluorescent lights with LED bulbs and added motion sensor switches to the lights outside each classroom. Energy conservation signs were posted on light switches and electronics to remind staff and students to turn them off when not in use.

The school has been tracking Energy usage since 2015. There are three building on campus: Building A, Building B, and Building C. MCH reduced energy consumption from 2015 until 2018 end of school year as follows: Building A reduced energy use by 4,818 kwh, and Building B saved 1,632 kwh. Energy use in Building C increased due to the addition of teacher offices, a staff lounge, in-service days, parent events, and an after-school program in that building. Now that Building C is at capacity, the school will continue tracking energy use in that building to reduce consumption.

For the 2019-20 school year, the Green Team is focusing on the Eco-Schools Energy and Transportation Pathways. One of the first steps in the Energy Pathway is to audit the classroom. The team has recorded "energy vampires," how many lights per switch, how long lights are on during the day, and how many electrical devices there are at the school. The next step is to take the information and enter it into the school's Carbon Calculator. From there the students will know the school's baseline and can brainstorm ways to improve this number. The upper Elementary students have been studying their own individual Carbon Footprint in their class. All this information will be shared with the entire community in a newsletter with ideas about how people can reduce their energy usage at home.

Element 1B: Water quality, efficiency, and conservation

Describe how your school implemented and is maintaining your water conservation program. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

The school is committed to reducing our water usage in a variety of ways. One way is to track water usage. From 2016-2018 water consumption was reduced by 3200 CCF. Some of the ways this is accomplished include: teaching children about the water cycle and to appreciate natural resources; signs at every faucet reminding students and other school community members to turn off water when soaping up or when not in use; running the dishwasher and washing machine only when full; and using minimal water for garden beds.

All buildings use city water which is tested annually by the City of Redmond. Landscaping and garden areas use well water which is also city-owned and tested annually. Faucets are cleaned daily by a cleaning crew.

The landscaping is full of native, drought-tolerant plants, requiring little irrigation. The Elementary Playground was intentionally planted with 50% native plant space that requires minimal irrigation in the hottest part of summer. All irrigation is on a timer. Watering takes place in the early morning to avoid evaporation mid-day. The extensive vegetable garden areas receive minimal watering during summer months and are always watered in the morning. Underwater irrigation is used for greenhouse plants, placing trays into 3" of water and reusing this water for all plants. This process not only helps plants establish strong roots but is also excellent at efficiently using water and reducing runoff. The water can then be used to irrigate other more established plants. Two large rain barrels in the garden are used to water the garden.

The student Green Team focused on water conservation last year, receiving King County Green Level Three and Eco-Schools USA Silver Award for water conservation. Elementary students visited MCH's Early Childhood classrooms (2.5-6 years old) and read them books about water conservation. MCH included information in weekly newsletters about how to reduce water usage at home, such as taking shorter showers and turning off the water while brushing teeth. The team also put up all "turn water off" signs at the faucets and placed liter water bottles in the back of the toilets to conserve water.

Element 1C: Waste management and product procurement

Describe your solid waste management plan and practices. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

In 2009 the school received King County Green School, Level One (waste reduction and recycling) recognition. The school has since been recognized as a Level Two and, finally, as a Level Three King County Green School, which involves maintaining Level One waste reduction and recycling practices each year. The school has reduced waste in the following ways:

Converted parent newsletters to paperless; staff are encouraged to print double-sided copies; students have "good on one side" paper bins in their classrooms; there are paper reuse boxes throughout the school for paper that has only been used on one side; snack leftovers are returned to kitchen for future use; children use reusable glass mason jars for water in class; durable metal utensils are used at meals; Waste Free Wednesdays encourage waste reduction; and some leftover food is fed to the many animals (goats and chickens) or worms in the worm bins; and all used paper towels are added to the yard waste bin which is collected and transported to a composting facility. Garden and animal wastes are composted on site.

The school's recycling rate, as calculated by a King County Green Schools Program representative, is 55 percent. The Green Team regularly shares information with students, staff, and parents to inform the community about how to correctly sort unwanted materials. Each classroom, office, and central area of the school includes a recycling and compost bin labeled with what items are accepted in each bin. A box to collect batteries for disposal and a printer cartridge exchange is set up in the office. Any hazardous materials, such as computer equipment and fluorescent lights, are handled by the maintenance staff and temporarily stored in a secure location until taken to an appropriate recycling center.

Classroom furniture is purchased from Community Playthings (certified by US Green Building Council), and the Hello Wood Company (which follows the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008). The elementary playground was built using all-natural wood, logs, and boulders to ensure the mission of sustainability continues outside the classroom.

The school has a Waste Management Plan that outlines what items go in which bin and why. We regularly share information with students, staff, and parents about the County's waste data, such as 97,000 tons of food waste, 43,000 tons of compostable paper, and 41,000 tons of recyclable paper being landfilled each year. MCH teaches that it is up to every one of us to make a difference in our everyday choices.

Element 1D: Alternative transportation

Describe alternative transportation options to driving in a single occupancy vehicle to and from school. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

MCH has a unique transportation situation. It is a private school without a public transportation system, located on the edge of suburbia. The school has strict driveway arrival and dismissal times that parents must adhere to in order to comply with the City of Redmond's traffic standards, as MCH traffic affects the highway near the school. MCH has a no-idling policy for parents dropping off and picking up their children; this is communicated in the newsletter quarterly, and daily in interactions during arrival and dismissal when teachers help get children out of or to their cars.

The Green Team is conducting a survey for parents and staff to audit school-related transportation. With the survey results, students will work on a carpool sign up system. This will

be a sustainable option to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help comply with driveway restrictions. There are several staff members who already carpool, and they are assigned to premium parking spaces. Some student families currently carpool, the survey will help capture this data. The campus is located just off a very busy highway without a bicycle lane, so bicycling to school is not a safe option.

Although location limits the ability to bike or use buses, school administration is aware of the school's transportation impact and reducing this impact will be a major focus for the Green Team this year. The new carpool system will provide opportunities to gather and track data to better improve sustainability efforts.

Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff

Element 2A: An integrated school environmental health program

Describe how your school implements and measures the success of your integrated environmental health programs and practices to ensure the health and safety of the school community. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

MCH is dedicated to the health of the students, staff, and community members. This includes maintaining a healthy environment in the classroom as well as outside.

The school's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program includes sanitation, rodent-proofing and using bait stations. Inside buildings all holes are patched, all crumbs from snacks and lunches are cleaned, and traps are used if necessary. Outside management consists of bait stations that are set by a professional rodent company. There are chickens and gardens on campus and so there is a need for bait stations. The school is currently reviewing its IPM to be as environmentally friendly as possible.

There are two school playgrounds. The Early Childhood playground consists of plastic play structures as well as one wood structure and garden beds. To maintain a healthy environment for children, non-pressure treated wood is used. The Elementary playground is quite amazing; it is full of actual felled trees, boulders and natural trails. The school's passion for a natural environment is overwhelmingly obvious in this beautiful space where kids can really learn about being outdoors.

The school focuses on keeping indoor areas free of asthma triggers, dusting daily, with deep cleanings four times per year. The school follows the licenser's advice by using a three-step process for cleaning tables after eating: soap, water, followed by a bleach solution. Cleaners come into school nightly to do a thorough cleaning of bathrooms, sinks, and floors. They use

homemade green cleaning products, and when the carpets need cleaning, a Greensteam product is used. The school tested for radon in 2019 and confirmed levels are below four picocuries per liter of air.

Element 2B. High standards of nutrition, fitness, and quality outdoor time for both students and staff

Describe how your school implements high standards of nutrition, fitness, and quality outdoor time for both students and staff. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

Providing a healthy environment is one of the school's biggest goals. Teaching students and staff to appreciate quality food, an active lifestyle, and a love for the outdoors is reflected in classrooms and throughout the campus. Surrounded by trees, a nature trail, a wetland trail and large garden areas, the school embodies the principles of a nature-based school. The natural playground encourages children to be active and safe, while having fun playing games.

The school has an extensive organic-based garden program where students discuss nutritional information such as: where does our food come from; fruits vs. veggies; cooking ideas; and many samplings of the garden's produce. The garden program provides outdoor time to students. Early childhood classrooms go to the garden in small groups once a week. Elementary and middle school students go to the garden once a week as well and have daily access to the garden for lessons with teachers, or a calming walk in the garden if needed. During the bounty of the season, the garden supplements the snack program with many vegetables such as green beans, carrots, cucumbers, kale, and lettuce.

All children on campus love their outdoor time. Depending on the student's daily schedule, early childhood, elementary and middle school classes receive .75-1.5 hours per day of free outside time. In addition to playground time, kindergarten children spend 45 minutes per week in Physical Education (PE) class and another 45 minutes in a Nature Club where students often hike or explore the nature trail. Elementary receive 60 minutes of PE a week in addition to their playground time. During summer months all children have access to sunscreen before playground time.

Does your school have a school nurse and/or school-based health center? (Y/N)

Describe your school's efforts to support student mental health and school climate (e.g. anti-bullying programs, peer counseling, etc.)

At MCH, an environment of community, acceptance, and understanding is fostered. Students are exposed to ideas of global citizenship and taking responsibility for their actions and emotions. All staff members are trained in Positive Discipline, offering a support system for students to discuss their needs.

Although there is not an official school nurse, safety support is provided by staff. All staff members receive extensive training and certification in the areas of First Aid and CPR, learning differences, emotional support of children, and assistance with conflict resolution. The staff participates in trainings presented by program directors of Infant and Toddler, Early Childhood, and Elementary, as well as by our head of school and outside specialist knowledge consultants. Leaders in each department share their knowledge, education, and passion on specific subjects. The head of school, Jennifer McConnell, recently presented a seminar on learning differences that was truly inspiring and informative. She covered everything from ADD to autism and how teachers can offer support to the child as well as helping other children understand a bit more about compassion for their fellow community members.

Teachers encourage children of all ages to speak up for themselves and truly advocate for what they need. If there is a disagreement between students, they are prompted how to best communicate their feelings and arrive at a resolution. This cultivates the ability for the children to self-soothe, emotionally process, and find confidence from within.

Pillar 3: Provide effective environmental and sustainability education which incorporates STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways

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

Describe how your school integrates and measures students' environmental and sustainability literacy at each grade level, including curriculum and outdoor learning. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

The Elementary program is a space where global citizens are cultivated and encouraged to be forward thinkers daily. Teachers and students have created an environment that fosters an understanding of human needs around the world. Integrated into each subject matter are underlying principles that outline how to best invest in the health of our world, love it, and sustain it to the best of our ability. This initial moral compass provides an umbrella under which teachers dive into each subject to help students find a deeper understanding.

The integrated curriculum covers social studies, history, science, math and art, connecting these subjects to sustainability concepts. From biomes to ecosystems, our job as citizens of this earth is to understand how human communities can meet their needs in the best possible way. Lessons on waste management, waste reduction, recycling, composting, food and water supply, energy usage, spiritual needs, physical needs, and microclimates around the world provides perspective about how we are all connected. At the elementary and middle school

levels, students regularly study environmental science. They study climate change, weather patterns, and more to understand the impact of human actions on nature.

MCH is proud to have a large Green Team. In the 2019-20 school year, over 25 students and five teachers are involved. During weekly meetings, students discuss everything from energy and water conservation, to waste reduction, to biodiversity and methods of transportation. Students are given time to reflect on their own choices as well as how the school operates. All voices are heard, and student suggestions help to grow the program. This year the team is implementing a carpool system and started a plastic bag recycling program. The plastic bag program yielded immediate results, with over 30 pounds of plastic bags collected as of the time of this application. Students apply math lessons to estimate how many pounds might be collected, how many bags go into the landfill daily, monthly, and yearly. Students made posters to inform the parent community and inspire more involvement.

The outdoor environment provides a wonderful canvas to explore these ideas. At the wetland on campus students periodically observe, record changes, and test water quality. During a yearly field trip to the nearby Mercer Slough, a formal tour and educational lesson presents how water supplies are connected, and why individual actions of sustainability are so important to the whole.

Teachers measure this learning via authentic formative assessment through project-based learning and peer feedback in weekly class meetings.

Describe professional development opportunities available to your teachers in environmental and sustainability concepts, and the number and percentage of teachers who participated in these opportunities during the past two years. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

The students have the opportunity to learn in a beautiful place called IslandWood on Bainbridge Island. Every year upper elementary students (grades 4, 5, and 6) and their teachers attend a 4-day field trip in which they are immersed in a sustainably focused 280-acre park and learning center. The experience covers lessons and discussions on predators vs. prey, identifying species of trees and mushrooms in the forest, garden exploration and compost evaluation, diving deeper into microorganism through microscopes, and an extensive daily discussion of waste management during all meals. Students and teachers leave this field trip inspired and full of new knowledge.

Separately, MCH began the 2019-20 school year with all staff attending a Green Team presentation led by Green Team coordinators. They discussed waste management, energy consumption, and information on why this is so critically important to our school goals and global sustainability. This is a training to be presented yearly going forward to ensure that all staff members understand and support the school's environmental goals.

For over ten years the school has been pursuing a Farm to Table experience. Recently, six teachers attended a day-long tour of a Chicago school that has mastered their garden program, which was offered as part of the American Montessori Society conference. During the tour, teachers discussed the basics of getting children involved in the garden program, how to introduce produce into the lunch or snack programs, and the role of parent involvement in sustaining school gardens and Farm to Table experiences.

Element 3B: Use of environment and sustainability concepts to develop STEM content knowledge and thinking skills to prepare graduates for the 21st century

Describe how environmental and sustainability education in your school supports the teaching of science and engineering practices and supports robust general science education that includes a deep understanding of life, physical, and Earth & space sciences.

Upper elementary and middle school students study and research environmental and sustainability topics, as well as conduct experiments related to the school's impact on the environment, meeting and even exceeding national STEM standards throughout the year. They focus learning units around climate change, weather patterns, alternative energy and the importance of reducing human consumption and impact.

Science lessons encompass ideas of how people all over the world handle limited resources. How do different cultures meet their individual needs? How do they sustain themselves? This thought process continues into project based learning which brings thorough understanding of different topics such as; how communities around the world get clean water, how people keep water clean, the best way to reduce and dispose of waste and why, the natural resources available in a given area and how systems here at MCH can be improved or changed to be more sustainable.

In addition, the Green Team inspires and educates the students and staff. The team's mission is to bring environmental and sustainability topics into the classrooms and further discuss the necessity of being conscious about our everyday choices. This team's enthusiasm for the environment stems from a deep respect for our earth and the people, animals, and plants inhabiting it.

In classrooms, students continue this learning about our natural world. The kindergarteners participate in Nature Club for 45 minutes each week. They study the natural environment, covering topics from trees to mountains, flowers to leaves, insects to birds, and moss to mushrooms. Students dissect plants and other non-animal objects, use magnifying glasses, take leaf rubbings, and spend time observing and recording what they find. This opportunity creates a deep love of nature. Guiding students to ask important questions and to find the answers themselves gives them intrinsic motivation to become the best sustainably conscious global citizens we could ever ask for.

Describe how your school's curriculum connects classroom content to career options that focus on environmental and sustainability field studies and/or careers.

Montessori Children's House connects classroom lessons to possible future career paths in environmental areas by fostering student's curiosity and deep love of the earth. The administration makes it a priority to hire staff with environmental backgrounds, such as farmers, native plant experts, former national park guides, and teachers with environment-focused educations.

Within specific lessons there are discussions about different jobs and what that means; for example, in a lesson about natural resources students learn about hydro engineers. While discussing food security teachers would cover political positions that might affect laws, and how farmers manage their limited resources.

Upper elementary students spend time exploring chemistry, testing pH levels, and observing and recording macro invertebrates and oxygen levels in the school's wetland. These in-depth science lessons are followed up with class conversations regarding how the learning fits into the bigger picture, and students think about how even the smallest action could cause a large reaction. Potential career paths discussed include wetland protection agencies, ways to better record and manage information, and how today's careers fit into protecting our environment.

We believe that by leading by example and encouraging conversations, we can provide insight into potential career paths for students to consider.

Element 3C: Development of civic engagement knowledge and skills, and students' application of these to address sustainability and environmental issues in their community

Describe students' civic and/or community engagement experiences integrating environmental and sustainability concepts, field studies, and community service at every grade level. Please cite data and/or give specific details in your answer.

MCH is a school dedicated to community near and far. The Green Team is active in sharing information about sustainability with students, parents, and our city government. They plan to do more community outreach as the team grows.

Occasionally school events are held offsite at the community center, the old Redmond schoolhouse or other local schools. The school takes our sustainable systems with us. When offsite, compost and recycling is still offered by the school. This demonstrates to these facilities and families in attendance that these principles are important and necessary even when extra

effort is required. By leading by example, teachers can show that everyone's actions and even seemingly small choices affect this beautiful world.

For years, a major goal of the garden program has been to provide excess produce to our local food bank. This year students were able to reach this goal and donated 225 pounds of pumpkins grown by the elementary students. The school organizes a food drive yearly in November and this year were able to donate 1,000 pounds of food to the local food bank. The teachers and students are extremely passionate about expanding these two programs give even more in years to come.

END OF APPLICATION