



## 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

Name of Principal: Ms. Meghan Troy

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

Official School Name: Scarsdale Middle School

(As it should appear on an award)

*\*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.

Date: 2/21/2021

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: Dr. Thomas Hagerman

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



District Name: Scarsdale UFSD

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

Date: 2/21/2021

(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: New York State Education Department

Name of Nominating Authority: Mrs. Sara Madison

(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: 2/21/2021

(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: December 31, 2023

**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.

## Scarsdale Middle School, Scarsdale, NY

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### Part II - Summary Narrative:

The Scarsdale Middle School is an integral part of the district's plan for an interdisciplinary approach in instruction, overall health and wellness, and facilities management. The plan includes a series of goals with an emphasis on global aspects of sustainability and equal access to ideas, skills and dispositions that empower students to meet the challenges of sustainability. Teachers are encouraged to use fewer resources and take careful consideration of the use of these resources in their curriculum. Students and teachers lead in developing and introducing innovative practices in energy production, conservation, lifestyle modification, food production, and building technology. In addition to these broad goals established, a 2007 Board Resolution enacted a three-part plan that specifically addresses curriculum and instruction, behavioral change, and institutional operations. Actions included professional education; developed units of study with a focus on issues of sustainability; print and digital resources added to libraries and classrooms; student activities supported with sustainable materials; and a sustainable facilities plan. The goals of an interdisciplinary approach and the 2007 Board Resolution created a long standing culture of responsibility in educating students about sustainability, as part of a broad liberal arts curriculum, and of maintaining a healthy environment for the whole child. The culture is evident in the Middle School's success in educating students on the Science, Math, Economics, Politics and Justice of Climate Science, as well as the building's facilities plan for sustainability and the overall health and wellness of the school community.

Thus the three pillars of the Green Ribbon School Award have been echoed in our policy since 2007. The major concepts outlined by the district encompass the sentiment of the Green Ribbon pillars as detailed in their description. Curriculum instruction is explicitly stated, reduced environmental impact and costs are detailed in the facility, grounds and transportation efforts, and the health and wellness of students and staff. Faculty and staff at the Scarsdale Middle School have developed relationships with local organizations such as The Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation (CELFL), Kaleidoscope Garden Design (KGD), as well as neighboring schools. As a result of the extensive professional development and effective partnerships teachers provide course content with dedicated units of study that reach all students. In the middle school passionate educators, committed facilities managers, and supportive administration work together to meet the district's mission in support of the next generation of stewards of our environment.

One hundred and twenty five middle school teachers have participated in over thirty professional development courses related to the integration of environmental studies, sustainability, STEM, green technology and civics into curricula offered over the past two years. As a result, curriculum was developed and implemented, and while the global pandemic created obstacles for our efforts this past year, we have endeavored to continue education practices that develop a deep understanding for students and the world around them. One particular emphasis in curriculum instruction and service learning has been around a continued understanding of our food systems. Students have been involved in growing their own food using conventional and innovative practices to consider local choices. They plan and develop space for seasonal growing; harvest and donate food unable to be shared in the classroom; and prepare ingredients for cooking. These efforts extend beyond the classroom to the community where they complete meal preparation. Additionally, after becoming well versed in the sorting of their waste, students participate and continue education with their families in the at home composting program. The program in the community offers weekly curbside pick up of food waste. This was established by community members, one of whom now serves on the board of education and continues to champion sustainability efforts.

The facilities team has maintained their sustainability efforts and shown their commitment to air quality, fresh water and reduced energy consumption in many of the physical spaces around the building. There has been a concerted effort in choosing environmentally friendly cleaning products, new advanced water and air purification systems. On a district level, with an identified site at the middle school, a relationship with Con Ed's solar energy division has been explored and plans laid out for future development.

Health and wellness efforts are directly addressed in sixth through eighth grade curriculum, the school food program's dietitian advises menu preparation, wellness committees are established, physical spaces are designed with a particular emphasis on the health and wellness of the entire school community and environmental impacts.

The Scarsdale Middle School community holds a shared vision of sustainability and places a particular emphasis on the whole student, as they grow into a stewardship for our interdependent world. The community of educators, students, parents, counselors, custodians, and administration prioritizes facilities plans that make a point of focus on health and wellness, overall health and wellness, and sustainability in the curriculum.

Scarsdale Middle School, Scarsdale, NY

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Part III - Documentation of State Evaluation of Nominee:

A sample of the reasons this candidate was selected by the New York State Green Ribbon Schools selection team is included below.

**Pillar I – Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs (Score 47.75 out of 90)**

**Q22: Can your school demonstrate a reduction in its facility-related Greenhouse Gas emissions?**

Yes - Using Energy Manager Facility CO2 Emmissions Ranking

Initial GHG emissions rate (MT eCO<sub>2</sub>/person): 263.8

Final GHG emissions rate (MT eCO<sub>2</sub>/person): 112.5

Percentage reduction: 57%

Time period measured (mm/yyyy - mm/yyyy): 12/2018 - 12/2020

**Q28: Has your school reduced its total nontransportation energy use from an initial baseline?**

Yes - Using Energy Manager

Percentage reduction: 45%

Time period measured (mm/yyyy - mm/yyyy): 12/2019 - 12/2020

**Q49: Please indicate which green building practices your school is using to ensure your building is energy efficient.**

- School has fully implemented the Facility Energy Assessment Matrix within EPA's Guidelines for Energy Management.
- School Building has been assessed using the Federal Guiding Principles Checklist in Portfolio Manager.
- We have a BMS program that we use to manage building operations, high performance windows. In 2008, we completed an energy performance bond where we installed new door weatherstripping, energy-saving film on windows, vending machine occupancy controls, and new boiler controls.
- 60% of our lighting is high efficiency. Fluorescent lighting in all of the hallways and most of the classrooms have been replaced with led fixtures.

**Q58: Describe your school's efforts to conduct annual audits of the facility and irrigation systems to ensure they are free of significant water leaks and to identify opportunities for savings. Please describe audit procedures. (Maximum 50 words)**

Efforts include 2 irrigation inspections annually. One in the spring and one in the late fall. Spring inspection includes turning all systems on and checking for leaks, pressure inefficiencies, and damaged heads. Fall inspection includes winterizing of systems along with similar checklist items as per Spring inspections. Fields are mowed weekly and all Groundsmen are instructed to check for wet spots in turf areas which could result in broken pipes, as well as visuals inspections of heads.

**Q59: Describe your school's landscaping and irrigation systems as related to water efficiency. Does the irrigation system adjust to weather conditions and/or use alternative water sources (grey water, rainwater, etc.)? What percentage of your total landscaping is considered water-efficient or regionally appropriate? Describe the types of plants used and where they are located, and if any plants are listed as an invasive plant species. (Maximum 100 words)**

Landscaping water efficiency includes gator-bags on all new plantings as opposed to water tank disbursement or watering from nearby water hoses. We do not install invasive species plants anywhere in our District. 90% of plantings performed by the district are typically water efficient, regionally appropriate and are perennial in nature (hydrangeas, rhododendrons, azaleas, liriopes, hostas).

**Q61: Please describe any other measures employed to increase water efficiency and ensure water quality. (Maximum 50 words):**

- We recently completed lead testing of our entire domestic water system. All potable drinking faucets that came back elevated had lead filters installed. Screens and aerators are cleaned on an as needed basis.
- The building's water system is flushed completely once a week. UV bottle fill stations have been placed throughout the building replacing existing water fountains.

**Q64: Describe what percentage of your school's grounds are devoted to ecologically beneficial uses (ex: school vegetable garden; wildlife or native plant habitats; outdoor classroom; environmental restoration projects; rain garden; etc). (Maximum 50 words)**

The garden space exists in the enclosed courtyard of the middle school. The space houses 10 raised beds and a walkway that connects two ends of the building. The garden space is approximately 1000 square feet. The middle school grounds also includes an outdoor challenge course, used by Physical Education and for some Professional Development classes. More recently, many outdoor spaces have been used as outdoor classrooms, including interactions with the natural world.

**Q6: What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfilling or incinerating due to reduction, recycling and/or composting (i.e. Recycling Rate)? Complete all the calculations below .**

A - Monthly garbage service in cubic yards (garbage dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected):

*Three 4 yd dumpsters collected 2X per week = 96 cu. yards per month*

B - Monthly recycling volume in cubic yards (recycling dumpster sizes(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected):

*Four 4 yd dumpsters collected 1X per week= 65 cu. yards per month*

C - Monthly compostable materials volume(s) in cubic yards (food scrap/food soiled paper dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected):

*0 cu. yards per month. Composting has been suspended during COVID-19*

Recycling Rate =  $(B + C) \div (A + B + C) \times 100$ :  $(65+0)$  divided by  $(96+65+0) \times 100=40.4\%$

Monthly waste generated per person =  $(A/\text{number of students and staff})$ :  $96/1300=.0738$

**Q73: Describe any other efforts made by your school to reduce solid waste and eliminate hazardous waste? (Maximum 50 words)**

Our school uses a composting program to minimize food waste. Waste is gathered, weighed, and placed in specific receptacles to be hauled away. Standard water fountains have been replaced by bottle fill stations throughout the building to promote the use of reusable water bottles. Hazardous materials are gathered and stored in a designated location until they can be properly disposed of. For example, depleted batteries are stored in a container in the main office until they can be shipped out for proper recycling.

**Q77: Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced environmental impacts.**

- Use routing system to reduce mileage and organize routes that are more direct. There has been a significant increase of students that now bike and walk to school, reducing the impact of the standard bussing and drop-off system.
- Our school has a well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all other vehicles and "no-idling" signs are posted.
- Our school participates in a "Safe Routes to School" program.

**Pillar II – Improved the Health and Wellness of Schools, Students, and Staff (Score 59.06 out of 90)**

**Q79: Describe the essential elements of your school's environmental health program, focusing on the following: • Describe the qualifications of the person who manages your school's program, including the title and contact information for your school's IAQ Coordinator. • Which committees participate in the program? • Does your program incorporate established environmental health programs (e.g. IAQ Tools for Schools, Integrated Pest Management)? • Has your school prepared written plans and procedures that document the essential actions of your school's environmental health program? • Does your school have a Health and Safety Committee that is comprised of district officials, staff (including health staff), bargaining units, and parents? Describe how frequently the committee meets and include a list of topics covered by the committee in the past year. • How does the school share Environmental Health information with students, staff and members of the public? (Maximum 400 words)**

- Follows state laws for pesticides, mercury, tobacco and other dangerous materials and contaminants
- Has an Integrated Pest Management plan
- Has an Indoor Air Quality program equivalent to EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools
- Code minimum ventilation is provided to all areas and the system is routinely inspected
- Follows state and local laws and guidelines for reducing and handling dangerous wastes
- Uses 100% "third-party certified" cleaning products (not including disinfectants).
- Has a green cleaning plan
- Compost and recycling programs in place

There are two separate District Safety Committees that are mandated and which meet on a quarterly basis; at a minimum. Both committees consist of administrators, directors, teachers, general support

staff, a board member, parents, a student representative and a representative from the Scarsdale Police Department (over 40 individuals in total).

The District has policies and procedures in place to protect our schools from a variety of threats, ranging from fires to flu. District and Building Emergency Response Teams meet regularly and debrief on both major and minor issues; conduct emergency drills of many sorts; respond to teacher and parent concerns; and plan for potential, larger scale issues. Administrators and counseling staff are prepared and equipped to support students through a wide range of social and emotional issues, including peer conflicts; family issues, such as separation/divorce; stress in its many forms; and appropriate decision-making, to name a few. The District also works closely with a number of community agencies, including the Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Service and the Village Police and Fire Departments.

We have a Health & Safety Committee with participants from all buildings. These participants are comprised of administrators, teachers, community members and meet at a minimum, 4 times per year.

The role of the Health & Safety Committee is as follows:

- to review general health and safety concerns brought forth by committee members from their constituents;
- to review and provide feedback regarding safety and security practices throughout the District;
- to review and provide feedback regarding any initiatives which may impact safety and security.

The role of the District Safety Team is as follows:

- to review and recommend any changes to the District Emergency Preparedness Plan;
- to review building level emergency training drill reports.

**Q80: Describe your school's practices for inspecting and maintaining the building ventilation systems to ensure they are operating so that all classrooms and other spaces have adequate outside air supply, focusing on the following: • How does your school manage/prevent indoor air contamination, including excess moisture, mold, and VOCs? • Has your school installed local exhaust systems to control major airborne contaminant sources? • Describe practices your school employs to control moisture from leaks, condensation, and excess humidity and promptly clean up mold or remove moldy materials when they are found. • Describe your school's practices for inspecting and maintaining the building's ventilation systems, including all unit ventilators, to ensure they are clean and operating properly. (Maximum 400 words)**

All of our building HVAC equipment is controlled by a BMS system that maintains healthy and comfortable humidity levels in the building. These units have dampers that adjust the amount of fresh air brought in depending upon outside temperatures. All HVAC units have filters that are checked regularly and changed quarterly to maintain air cleanliness. We advocate staff to keep windows open to help with cross-ventilation and allow air to freely circulate throughout the rooms. Our staff performs daily building checks for roof leaks, steam, and water leaks. Any issues found are reported to the facilities department who schedule the proper remediation. All paint used is low voc, and building cleaning chemicals, green certified.

We use a BMS program to monitor all of our HVAC equipment. In addition, our building crews conduct daily inspections of all mechanical units to make sure they are functioning properly. We conduct preventative maintenance work on all of our HVAC units quarterly. This work includes changing filters,



belts, checking oil levels, and making sure units are working to their full potential. Any issues that are found are addressed immediately.

**Q83: Describe how your school supports students with asthma to keep their asthma under control and keep the students fully active.**

The Physical Education Dept. and Nurses handle asthma management. The RN Team meets regularly with the PE Department and also the teachers who work with students who have these types of health conditions. The nurses are available to offer guidance on asthma. They are also connected to a larger team that they can get additional information from as well. There are 2 full-time RN onsite each day. They are available to administer asthma medication as necessary.

Students with asthma have written emergency action plans inclusive of known asthma triggers. School and outside physicians, families and nurses work together to create that plan.

Plans include; avoidance of triggers, air conditioning as needed, indoor modified PE when necessary, no smoking campus, encourage compliance with medications, extra medication in health office, encourage good nutrition, sleep habits and adequate hydration.

**Q84: Describe your school's practices for chemical management in classrooms, laboratories, art rooms, maintenance and cleaning, garages, cooking and other areas of your school.**

A committee of participants is established to go over all cleaning products as well as their effectiveness and green rating. Once the item is researched and sampled it would be put on the bid list for purchase throughout the year. Training of all Plant department members is conducted annually as to proper usage, storage and handling of all cleaning products. The district follows all recommended procedures for chemical storage and management as per the MSDS (manage material safety data sheets).

**Q85: Describe your school's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program.**

Buildings are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis. Maintenance work done by building and/or district staff as needed. Preventive maintenance is also routinely done. Buildings are thoroughly checked each morning for evidence of rodents, especially during the winter months, with specific focus on areas with food. Pest control is handled by a contracted vendor. Once evidence is found, the vendor is called in to remediate the issue. Monthly logs and records are kept of all inspections. Pesticides are not permitted to be used on school property.

**Q86: Describe your school's Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to promote overall school health.**

Wellness focuses in three main areas. These areas are BODY (Physical wellness), MIND (Positive psychology, mindfulness, grit) and SPIRIT (Thriving and flourishing children and students). Scarsdale is strongly committed to wellness and continue to meet at the building and district level to continue to support and sustain a strong culture of wellness. Wellness is implemented throughout the school and community in many ways. The wellness policy is part of the District Mission Statement, Scarsdale Education for Tomorrow 2.0

Wellness in our district and school can also be reflected in our:

-Shared focus and value on wellness for students, staff and local stakeholders

- Scarsdale Teachers Institute; courses promoting positive psychology and positive education
- Whole Child and Active Learning goals
- Awareness of Positive Psychology, PERMA and training opportunities
- Strategies to help students manage academic expectations and stress
- Advisory programming and access to Youth Outreach workers (social workers)
- Access to webinars, literature, data and mental health services for the community at large.
- Superintendents Days and speakers centered around positive psychology and child development
- Partnerships with experts, like Dominic Randolph, The Head of School at Riverdale Country Day School (RCD) and internationally recognized leader in the area of positive and character education.
- grade wide, team wide and school wide initiatives tapping into character strengths, philanthropy, mindfulness, sustainability and other relevant topics.
- Ongoing relationship with the Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Service
- Middle school committee representation on several local and district-based committees that focus on mental health and well-being

In April 2020, Scarsdale held a Wellness Week where both staff and students had opportunities to participate. The intention was to keep students connected to one another, their families, and the broader world.

In December 2020, Scarsdale Middle School participated in an international panel discussion with students around the world to share experiences in times of Covid-19.

The 8 critical inter-related components of coordinated school health and practices exists at the middle school.

- Healthy and Safe School Environment, board policies around expectations for staff, students and community
- Nutrition Services, partnership with Chartwells and integrated nutrition education into cafeteria and curriculum in grades 6-8
- Physical Education, provides opportunities for students to develop physical fitness and acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for successful participation in a variety of activities.
- Health Education, Grades 7 and 8 curriculum covers a variety of wellness fundamentals including but not limited to physical health and mental health. Lessons include exercise, diet, stress management, mindfulness. Health Education, Grade 6 includes a Mindfulness Initiative too.
- Health Services, policy in place to deal with staff and student health. For example, the school shall work closely with students' families to provide prevention and detection health services. In accordance with law, the school will provide vision, hearing, and scoliosis screening. Problems shall be referred to the parent(s) or guardians(s) who shall be encouraged to have their family physician provide appropriate care. There are other guidelines in the policy that deal with administering medications, illnesses and access to health information onsite.
- Staff Health Promotion, access to Professional Development in these areas, guest speakers, Superintendent's Day trainings, grants and other self-directed opportunities.
- Family/Community Involvement, joint committees with community members, access to training programs in area, literature shared from school

-Counseling/Psychological and Social Services, House Counselors that support each house at the MS, Psychologists, Social Workers [Youth Outreach workers], Positive Psychology training and coursework, curricula connections

**Q87: Describe practices your school employs to promote nutrition.**

Scarsdale employs a Dietician and has a partnership with Chartwell's. That relationship provides us with our food and nutrition needs. These parties meet regularly to provide feedback and reports about the status of the implementation of the district's programs to improve students' nutritional awareness and healthy diet. The MS also hosts annually, a Multicultural Foods event and several nutrition seminars and taste testing events.

We do not participate in a Farm to School program or other program to utilize local, fresh food in your cafeteria but we utilize our school garden and hydroponic growing towers to provide opportunities for students to eat and prepare foods they grow. We partner with a local gardening consultancy to help maintain our gardens. Some of this food is also used for special programming.

The middle school has an on-site organic food garden. The compost station does not always process organic food so some of our soil may contain inorganic matter.

Our school's garden does not supply food for the cafeteria but we use it for cooking and garden lessons in classes and offer opportunities for community members to participate in summer workshops where they can help maintain the garden and harvest crops.

The middle school includes nutrition education curriculum at all grade levels. The sixth grade curriculum focuses Healthy Decision Making Skills; and Nutrition, such as the 6 main nutrients. The seventh grade curriculum includes Food and Sustainability, Accessing Reliable health Resources Online, and Mental Health. The eighth grade curriculum allows students to explore Healthful Actions vs. Risky Behaviors, Stress Management, Media Literacy & Body Image and sports nutrition.

Our school lunch menu meets the USDA meal pattern requirements, provide fresh fruits and vegetables, and 100% whole grain-rich foods. We also follow the Smart Snacks guidance.

**Q88: Describe practices your school employs to promote physical activity.**

There are continuing efforts in place to reduce screentime both at school and in a virtual setting. There are things in place, like screen breaks and information shared about the concerns around screentime and brain development.

The middle school has participated in programs that challenge students to turn their phones off for 24 hours.

The middle school garden supplies food for cooking and garden classes. It also supplies food for some teacher lead and driven professional development courses. Anything leftover is donated to local charitable organizations.

Grades 6-8 students spend an average of 90-120 minutes per week in school-supervised physical education activities.

More than 50% of the students' annual physical education take place outdoors and it continues to increase.

The PE program teaches fitness activities that can be used throughout the lifetime. For example, students participate in yoga, mindfulness, and a ropes course that also emphasizes trust and team building.

Students participate in recess and have free time outdoors. This is offered on a daily basis.

The school includes an "Outdoor Education" unit or component in the physical education program in several ways. For example, a ropes course is part of the curriculum.

Some adjustments have been made during Covid-19.

- PE takes place outdoors 100%, weather permitting; virtual classes are encouraged to be done outdoors

- A food garden is maintained and food is harvested and packaged to prepare at home

- Outdoor spaces made available for students and teachers during school day, for lunch, mask breaks, mindful moments and curriculum work with students

- Lunch and recess offered outdoors daily, weather permitting

- Healthy, school-prepared lunches served fresh daily

**Q93: Describe your school's efforts to support student mental health and school climate (e.g. anti-bullying programs, peer counseling, etc.): (Maximum 100 words)**

- Regular meetings take place between teachers that work with shared students, as well as conferences with families to check-in on students, including their well-being.

- Documentation and updates are shared regularly for students who are struggling with these issues so the team of teachers working with the student(s) can be thoughtful in their planning and approach

- Speakers, seminars and course work available on positive psychology and other relevant content for students and staff

- Advisory programming for students; the middle school created a partnership with The Origins Program and their approach, Developmental Designs. Developmental Designs helps teachers integrate social and academic learning.

- The middle school has four House Counselors, two psychologists, two nurses, three Youth Outreach Workers, one Speech/Language Specialist, an OT/PT provider, and a Counseling Coordination Committee.

Each House at Scarsdale Middle School is guided and supervised by a House Counselor, a certified guidance counselor who gets to know each student in that House personally, and tracks individual progress over the course of three years. House Counselors fill multiple roles for parents, students and staff, as conduits of information, resolvers of conflicts, intermediaries among constituent groups and as the primary point of contact between home and school. The House Counselors exemplify the school's commitment to maintaining a vital and human connection between adults and young adolescents. They serve as models of professional and personal respect and dignity, extended to every student. They guide, counsel, re-direct and set limits for behavior, while helping students to channel their energies in productive and positive directions. The House Counselors understand that each year of middle school is unique, and that the changes from sixth to seventh to eighth grade are profound and must guide the nature of adult interactions with students. Counselors meet with students on an ongoing basis, individually, in small groups, and in formal classes or small assemblies in the House. Relevant topics such as cheating, academic responsibility, bullying, empathy and organizational and study skills are discussed.

The Youth Services Project, jointly funded by the Board of Education and the Village of Scarsdale, also provides crucial assistance to students. Three full time Youth Counselors serve the Middle School. Youth Counselors meet individually with students and also in groups centered on specific themes such as friendship, divorce, family illness or behavioral management. They offer parent support groups and serve as advisors for two after school clubs: Young Women in Leadership and Young Men in Leadership.

**Pillar III – Provided Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education (Score 82.25 out of 105)**

**Q96: Please describe your school's environmental or sustainability literacy requirement. (Maximum 200 words)**

The district recently updated the Strategic Plan to include several goals, including but not limited to:

- Balanced Literacy: Creating the Foundations of Learning
- Curricular and Co-Curricular Approaches to Health, Wellness & Well-Being; and
- Gardens & Biomechanical Innovation

These goals support the development of literacy skills and communicate to the staff, students and community, the importance of integrating sustainability across disciplines, while focusing on the environment and sustainability. Ways we have seen this in action are when students are given opportunities to choose books and articles that reinforce the thinking around the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

These choices challenge them to think about the world around them and their own interactions with the environment. In many classes and across disciplines, students explore the natural world and local outdoor spaces. In some instances, they are asked to journal daily observations while other teachers use creative ways to bridge ELA skills and the natural world, like captioning outdoor photography or developing poetry that focuses on an issue that touches on sustainability.

**Q97: Please describe professional development opportunities available in environmental and sustainability education. Include the percentage of teachers who participated in these opportunities over the past 2 years. (Maximum 200 words)**

The Scarsdale Teachers Institute has been regarded as a staff development model, giving teachers voice and authority to determine their own professional needs, while at the same time meeting district and state goals. This collaboration of teachers, administrators, and community has enriched the district, helped shape the careers of teachers and contributed to the excellence of the Scarsdale school districts. Teachers are given opportunities to teach and to learn through this model. Over the past two years, more than 75% of the middle school staff has participated in professional development coursework around environmental and sustainable education. Some of the courses taken include; Backyard Science, Sustainability In/Out of the Classroom, Garden Instruction, and Food Across the Curriculum.

**Q98: Please describe how your school implements environmental and sustainability throughout the curriculum and assesses student achievement emphasizing the importance of net zero environmental impacts and the relationship between the environment and personal health. (Maximum 200 words)**

The middle school implements environmental and sustainability throughout the curriculum and assesses student achievement emphasizing the importance of net zero environmental impacts and the

relationship between the environment and personal health. There are several ways this is done in grades 6-8.

Students come to the middle school with exposure and experiences from the elementary level. Each elementary school has at least one district sustainability committee member that meets with the larger district committee so information is shared. Meetings discuss facilities, food service, curriculum and other programs. The middle school teachers use that information to expand and enhance the MS curriculum across grades and topics. They expand their own learning by participating in Scarsdale Teacher Institute coursework or outside professional development opportunities.

The MS sustainability curriculum is interdisciplinary and we ask students to connect science, math, economics, politics, and justice of climate change issues. They also participate in Environmental Stewardship opportunities like garden maintenance, cleanups, compost workshops, recycling assemblies and programs, as well as, interact with guest speakers and other community partners. All grades touch on these areas and lessons are designed to cut across curricula and levels.

Students are challenged to examine their own carbon footprint and also their 'food print' to reflect on their own habits and practices. They are also tasked with projects and sharing information with their families.

Some students participate in clubs and can make choices to take this learning to the next level. Some of the work done centers around:

- Developmental Guidance Lessons that Promote Character Strengths and Growth Mindset
- Garbage patch and other environmental issues
- UN 17 Sustainable Development goals
- Recycling and compost practices
- Health, nutrition and well-being
- Mental health and psychology
- Mindfulness
- Positive Psychology
- Garden Club

**Q99: Does your school frequently use the environment and sustainability as a context for developing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) content knowledge, and thinking skills (such as asking questions, developing and using models, planning and carrying out investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, using mathematics and computational thinking, constructing explanations, and engaging in argument from evidence) when exploring environmental and sustainability issues?**

Middle school teachers across many disciplines, participate in professional development courses related to the integration of environmental studies, sustainability, STEM, green technology and civics into curricula. One particular emphasis in curriculum instruction and service learning has been around a continued understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and food systems. Students have been involved in growing their own food, developing spaces and tools for seasonal growing, harvesting and donating overflow, and sharing preparations of these ingredients for cooking. Additional curriculum highlights are below. The science 6 curriculum includes compost workshops with our Partners at Kaleidoscope Garden Designs. Students attend a trip to participate in Maple Sugaring and Climate

Change workshops at Teatown. They also complete a Webquest on climate change, understanding ecosystems and human impact on the natural environment. Other coursework centers around UN Goals for Sustainability, Earth Day, carbon footprints and sharing images of opportunities for sustainability. There are also projects that focus on plastics for a fish feeder STEM project that involves on engineering [from the technology curriculum] and trout feeders (look at ecosystems and food webs). The science 7 curriculum includes units, lessons and experiences that include: preserving our natural resources, balanced ecosystems; evolution and survival of the fittest, organisms competition and maintaining homeostasis. The science 8 curriculum includes a project that challenges students to explore how the power of sun can be used to create a cooker or power a home (as an alternative to burning fossil fuels). On or around Earth Day, they host a competition that challenges students use of resources, reducing energy sources, etc. Within the Social Studies 6 curriculum, lessons have been created around UN themes and sustainability. These areas are woven throughout curriculum and discussed while covering many topics. Students also visit Wilkens Farm (farm to table) to explore recycling/food scrapping as well as workshops around environmental stewardship. Technology courses offered to middle school students are given access to sustainable materials and offered sustainable challenges, like using recycled materials to create a new product. They are also immersed in entrepreneurial experiences, utilizing hands-on and online technologies to support their projects. In the 7th grade health curriculum, students learn about the 17 Sustainable UN goals, square foot gardening, plant/maintain/harvesting in the outdoor and indoor (hydroponics) gardens, and participate in a presentation around recycling/composting by local experts. They connect with the 8th grade social studies classes to create a Victory Garden, connecting the two courses. Students in 8th grade art, create sustainable pieces of art that combine artistry and thoughtfulness about the environment. Family and Consumer Science students in 8th grade study the 17 UN Sustainability goals, hydroponics through the Tower Garden, and eating and preparing foods from "root to shoot" "tower to table" and "farm to table." This class focuses on systemic sustainable practices, food deserts, food miles, and offers opportunities to explore entrepreneurship and innovation with a focuses on the food system. The middle school has an alternative learning program called, CHOICE. Since its inception in 1974, the CHOICE program has provided an alternative learning experience for seventh and eighth graders. In this smaller-school atmosphere, students and teachers can work together to create a positive, supportive community. CHOICE develops a close-knit community of learners over a two-year period. In addition to its academic focus, the program especially seeks to foster personal growth and development. Group process, community service and self-governance help students form a sense of community that is special and meaningful. The curriculum includes mathematics, science, Humanities and CHOICE Studies. Science classes emphasize hands-on laboratory learning and science applications. The two-year program includes life science, earth science and chemistry with a focus on the garden in year one and the study of the Catherine Road stream [local stream on campus] in year two. The CHOICE Studies period allows students to explore individual interests, typically through interdisciplinary study of major social, political, scientific and economic issues of our times.

**Q101: Please describe students' civic/community engagement projects integrating the environment and sustainability topics: (Maximum 200 words)**

Student volunteers assist in the proper disposal of trash in the cafeterias and around the building. Some stand near our compost and recycling bins to help other students figure out what to do with their trash. Other students have created signage to help others with their disposables.

Students have participated in many projects that show their commitment to the environment and sustainability. For example, students grades 6-8 participated in the Daffodil Project. Each student planted one daffodil to show their connection to "growing together" - a former monthly theme. They were able to visit their plant throughout the seasons to observe the plant life cycle.

An annual event that takes place is Human Rights Day. The school moves away from the regular curriculum and focuses on human rights activities, including but not limited to, guest speakers, philanthropic endeavors like donations and creating items for those less fortunate, and small seminars touching on this topic.

Garden/hydroponic donations are made seasonally to several local organizations. Most recently, we have partnered with Caritas. A food pantry in Port Chester, NY where we can donate items they will prepare and cook for their guests. Students have visited the local beaches and shoreline to assist in the cleanup.

Students participate in many charitable drives throughout year. Some of those are coat drives, canned drives, hygienic supplies, and holiday gifts for those in need. Our active student government hosts many of these and also makes visits to local hospitals and organizations that need our help.

CHOICE students work on connecting with local charities and organizations for a year end project. In the past, they focused on engineering and technology, entrepreneurship and service learning in order to build animal crates that were donated to an animal shelter.

**Q104: Please share how outdoor learning is used to teach an array of subjects in context, engage the broader community, and develop civic skills. (Maximum 100 words)**

Outdoor learning is used to teach an array of subjects. As part of our health-wellness initiative, all students were afforded the opportunity to participate in the middle school Daffodil Project. The goal was for each student to plant one daffodil and over the course of the year, we will help students think about all the ways we "grow together" as individuals and as a community. Students, staff and stakeholders watch the daffodils bloom and reflect on growth throughout the year.

All grades participate in our annual Human Rights Day Conference. This annual event encourages students to "stand up and be the change". We discuss ways they can make a positive difference every day in their families, schools, communities and the world. Guest speakers, hands-on activities, seminars, workshops and philanthropic events take place, with the help of community members and other guests. Students are engaged throughout the day in many ways, some of the sessions that take place include the following activities: Sixth graders organize thousands of cans that are donated, seventh grade students engage with speakers of books or articles they read, and eighth graders make bagged meals for Midnight Run, an organization that supports feeding those in need in NYC. These partnerships have extended beyond this one day and we continue to work with many of them throughout the year.