

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

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

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

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Public Charter Title I Magnet Private Independent Rural

Name of Principal: **Ms. Stella Nwanguma**

Official School Name: **Winslow Township Middle School**

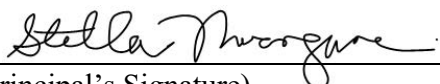
Official School Name Mailing Address: **30 Cooper's Folly Road, Atco NJ 08004**

County: **Camden** State School Code Number *: **07-5820-020**

Telephone: **856-767-7222 ext 7011** Fax: **856-767-5411**

Web site/URL: **https://www.winslow-schools.com/** E-mail: **nwangust@winslow-schools.com**

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



(Principal's Signature)

Date: **January 19, 2021**

Name of Superintendent: **Dr. H. Major Poteat**

District Name: **Winslow Township School District**

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



Date: **Jan. 19, 2021**

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

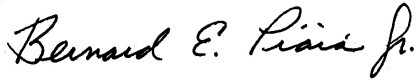
The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

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 Jersey Department of Education**

Name of Nominating Authority: **Bernard E. Piaia, Jr.**

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



Date: **March 1, 2021**

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

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

SUBMISSION

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

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.



District and School Contact and Other Information

School Name: Winslow Township Middle School District: Winslow Township School District

Street Address: 30 Cooper Folly Rd

City: Atco State: NJ Zip: 08004

Website: https://middleschool.winslow-schools.com/ Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/winslowschools

Principal Name: Ms. Stella Nwanguma

Principal Email Address: nwangust@winslow-schools.com Phone Number/Ext.: 856-767-7222

Lead Applicant Name (if different): (Same as above)

Lead Applicant Email: (Same as above) Phone Number/Ext.: (Same as above)

| Level | School Type | How would you describe your school? | District Name |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK - 5 or 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural | <u>Winslow</u> <u>Township</u> Largest 50 Districts in the nation? ()Y (X)N # FTE Enrolled: <u>741</u> # Buildings: <u>1</u> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes () No | % receiving FRPL <u>57.1%</u> % limited English proficient <u>.4%</u> % minority <u>78.9%</u> | Graduation rate: <u>NA</u> Attendance rate: <u>92.7%</u> |
|--|---|---|

Winslow Township Middle School

Narrative - Documentation of Sustainability Achievement

Pillar I: Your Efforts to Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

Winslow Township Middle School is located in Winslow Township, in Camden County, NJ with a school population of 741 students. The Winslow Township School District motto for all eight schools is Preparing our Students for Tomorrow...Today and the Winslow Township Middle School has been at the forefront of innovation and environmental protection for many years.

The Winslow Middle School established a Green Team during the 2016-17 school year, composed of staff throughout the school, working together to plan and implement programs and activities to support students and staff in achieving a higher level of sustainability. The Green Team has been incredibly active, holding meetings on a regular basis to discuss Sustainable Jersey for Schools efforts and other related initiatives. The Green Team greatly expanded its membership last year and has established sub-committees attend additional meetings focused on specific areas including marketing to showcase Sustainable Jersey efforts to the school and community, grants to manage existing grants and look for new opportunities, actions/points to track progress on gathering documentation toward securing more points, and gardens to oversee the maintenance of the school's many gardens and incorporate gardens throughout the school's curriculum.

The school's Green Team worked diligently over the past 5 years to achieve recognition in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. The school earned a Bronze Level Certification in 2017-18 and 2018-19 and Silver Level Certification in the 2019-20 school year. The school was recognized as the 2020 Sustainability Champion Award for earning the highest level of points by any middle school.

The school building was constructed in 1958 with a total building area of 186,300 square feet and has placed a strong focus on reducing environmental impacts and costs through a variety of initiatives. In 2014, the Winslow School District installed solar panels on all buildings. The District adopted an Energy Conservation policy which is also available on the District website stating that the Board of Education is committed to the conservation of natural as well as fiscal resources and directs the Superintendent to develop and implement regulations for the conservation of energy in the management of school buildings. The Board further directs all employees of this district to cooperate in the program of energy conservation.

The Winslow Middle School is partially operated on solar power and the panels cover a large portion of the building's roof. National Energy Partners (NEP) currently owns and operates a 2.61 Megawatt project across the Winslow School District's 8 school buildings. NEP handles the operation and maintenance of the system including preventative maintenance, emergency response, billing and SREC management. The solar power system at Winslow Middle School is a 820.54 kW roof mounted system, with 3,360 modules and a production of 1.02 MW. The energy generated by these solar panels over the course of one year (calculated for the 2017-18 school year) offset an average of 34% of the building's energy usage per month.

To further improve the District's carbon footprint, during the 2018-19 school year, the Winslow Township School District entered into an agreement to purchase renewable energy through the Alliance for Competitive Energy Services (ACES) program with a signed a resolution on Nov 28, 2018 and officially opted-in on Dec 5, 2018. As per the agreement, the Winslow Township School District receives a minimum of 40% of its purchased energy from renewable sources.

Energy conservation has been an important focus within the Winslow Township Middle School. During the 2019-2020 school year, the Middle School building underwent upgrades to significantly improve energy efficiency including replacement of all hallway lights with high-efficiency LED lighting, installation of motion sensor lights, and replacement of old windows to be more energy efficient. The transition occurred over several years, and the entire school is now outfitted with dual-glazed windows with built-in blinds to help regulate room temperature and energy usage. In addition, exterior lighting was replaced with LED lighting for energy efficiency and increased safety. The Food Service Department has a start-up and shut down procedure for all equipment to reduce the amount of electricity and water waste. These practices reduce energy usage, increase the brightness of the hallways, and cut the costs of building operations. These actions resulted in a reduction of 283,598KWH and an annual cost savings to the District

of \$55,737.

Science, Math and STEM teachers have found ways to incorporate the solar panel energy generation into classroom lessons including the implementation of the NJ EmPower Schools program led by the 7th and 8th grade Environmental STEM teacher, Mr. Ross Cruz. Weekly, classes trained 60 students as Energy Ambassadors to help promote energy conservation throughout the school. Through this program, staff and students learned about energy saving measures and signed a pledge to conserve energy. Students created videos to explain the program and its benefits and completed energy audits in various classrooms. Students created two logos to get students involved; "Last out lights out" which was placed on light switches and "Shut em down when not around" was placed on computers to get students throughout the school involved. Winslow Township Middle School won the EmPower Schools competition in the 2019-20 school year and was the first participating school to earn over 1000 points.

The Winslow Township School District is very supportive of environmental initiatives and enacted a District Sustainability Policy also available on the District's website. This policy was approved in September 2017 and has been shared with the administration at each school. As stated in the policy: The Board of Education desires to conduct its operations and make decisions with identified sustainability priorities that include at a minimum: protecting students, staff, and community from environmental harm; preparing students for the future by educating for sustainability knowledge of concepts and practices of environmental, social, and economic responsibility and sustainability; and included an intent to preserve current and future resources.

The Board believes by incorporating sustainable practices into school policies and operations it can make an immediate impact on student health, academic performance, and teacher retention while decreasing operational costs and demands on natural resources. The District adopted a Green Cleaning Plan and Policy as part of the District Sustainability Policy. This Policy applies to all schools within the District and allows Winslow Township School District to ensure that all students, staff, and visitors are in a cleaner and healthier environment, helping to reduce exposure to harmful cleaners and fumes. Currently, 80% of the cleaning products used at the school are Green Seal Certified. This includes all cleaning products aside from the disinfectant, because there are no disinfectants that can be Green Seal Certified. All other products meet Green Seal Standard GS-37 based on effective performance, concentrated volume, minimized/ recycled packaging and protective limits on VOC's and human and environmental toxicity.

The District also adopted a Green Purchasing Policy as part of the District Sustainability Policy. Green purchasing, also known as Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP), is the coordinated purchasing of goods and services to minimize impacts on human health and the natural environment. Alternatives exist for many products used by schools that are less hazardous, save energy and water, and reduce waste. Through this policy: The district will attempt to purchase, in

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accordance with the provisions of applicable purchasing laws: green cleaning supplies; green cleaning equipment; recycled paper; energy efficient appliances; and/or equipment purchases and green cleaning training.

As part of this commitment to Green Purchasing, Winslow Township Middle School was successful in switching the school's copy paper purchase for the 2019-20 school year to recycled paper. The Middle School has significantly reduced use of paper in general, through a school-wide effort to move most classwork to Chromebooks and Google Drive instead of using paper copies. However, prior to this school year, the school's copy paper was non-recycled content. To remedy, no additional paper orders were placed until the following year and made of recycled content.

Recycling and material reuse are areas where Winslow Township Middle School demonstrated a commitment to environmental conservation and waste reduction. The Middle School participates in the Crayola ColorCycle marker recycling program. The ColorCycle program has repurposed more than 70 tons of expended markers in the United States and Canada since 2013, and uses the most advanced plastic conversion technologies available today to create wax compounds for asphalt and roofing shingles as well as to generate electricity that can be used to heat homes, cook food, and power vehicles.

All around Winslow Township Middle School, students and teachers are collecting used markers that are ready to be

discarded and students are encouraged to bring in old markers from home. Any brand of marker can be recycled including highlighters and dry erase markers. Drop-off boxes are located around the school to deposit the markers. Flyers were sent home and teachers continued to remind students to bring in their old markers for recycling. There is a posting on the website that invites parents, community, and students to utilize the Middle School drop off location.

The Middle School is also participating in the Ricoh toner cartridge recycling program. This program picks up the used toner cartridges and sends them back to the company for recycling. The company recommends sending back the cartridges in the boxes in which they came to prevent the need for new boxes to be made. There is a collection near the copy machines and staff were notified via email and in a staff meeting about the recycling program. The Middle School is also currently collecting tabs for the Ronald McDonald house. The tabs are collected and sent out to the company to be recycled. The money gained from the tabs is then used to help seriously ill children. The program is also advertised with in a flyer and email and there are collections spots throughout the building.

To reduce food waste, the Food Service Department collects and reviews production records to reduce the amount of food prepared, therefore reducing the amount of food that ends up being discarded. The school also collaborates with Waste Management to reduce the amount of waste going to landfills. In 2020, the school diverted about 30% of the overall waste generated through recycling. This included 55.2 tons of paper, 5.5 tons of plastic, 5.5 tons of aluminum, 19.3 tons of glass, and 165.7 tons of cardboard, totaling 251 tons of diverted waste.

This year the Middle School began advertising a collection of dresses and suits for students to use for the semi-formal dance for anyone unable to afford these items. Unfortunately, the dance was cancelled due to Covid-19, however during the early phases of the collection process, there were about 40 dresses and 10 suits collected.

The Winslow Township School District instituted a uniform policy in recent years to 1) assist families who may face financial hardship to help cover the cost of uniform pieces, and 2) prevent clothing items that may not fit a child from being discarded. Each school within the Winslow Township School District participates in a Uniform Recycling program. The program allows the school community to recycle uniforms among community members and helps families save money and resources, making this a financial and an environmentally beneficial program. Parents are notified through flyers sent home with all students, as well as through the District Facebook page. Although the main collections happen in the summer and spring, donations are accepted throughout the year to continue to support students. This school year, over 100 families participated in the donation of uniforms to be used for other students. These uniforms helped over 250 students and over 1,500 articles of clothing were collected.

Water conservation is accomplished through the purchase and use of several rain barrels in the school's garden and pond courtyards. While these rain barrels are not currently connected to the downspouts to collect roof drainage, they are open and collect rain throughout the year for watering plants. The decision to not connect them to the roof downspouts was due to the extremely large volume of water that would come from the roof areas during weather events and were too much for the barrels. The water captured in the barrels during rain events is a sufficient quantity to be used to water plants in these courtyard gardens, which eliminates the need to use the school's water source for this purpose, thereby helping to conserve water.

In addition, the Middle School Athletic Fields utilizes a well sprinkler system for about 30% of our total Athletic fields. Sprinklers are run for a shorter time than average to be more water efficient. The school's drinking water comes from a public water source and recently conducted lead water testing found the schools water to be safe for drinking. Results are posted on the website and water fountains contain water filters that process and remove impurities from the water for improved health of students and staff. The pipes have backflow preventers at all connections and fountains are properly maintained through monthly maintenance. The school is also compliant with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Air Quality Permit requirement and has permits through the Bureau of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Compliance, New Jersey Uniform Construction Code.

Pillar 2: Your Efforts to Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

Facility maintenance is conducted on a regular basis to ensure a high level of safety and environmental health for all students and staff in Winslow Township Middle School. The school has exhaust fans, air dampers, and Unit Ventilation systems that work in accordance with the Building Automated System Plan to support healthy indoor air quality, and a maintenance schedule has been developed and is maintained by the Facilities Department. The Facilities Department completes annual State of New Jersey Annual Health and Safety Evaluation of School Buildings, changes air filters quarterly, and conducts regular preventive maintenance of the HVAC systems to further support healthy indoor air quality. Moisture and mold control are addressed by immediately assessing and fixing any leaks that occur, replacing ceiling tiles, and ensuring the repairs have been inspected. Condensation pans and lines are checked consistently to eliminate accumulation of moisture or water damage. An outside company abates or remediates any known contaminants. In addition, the facilities staff conducts other periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to identify any other environmental health and safety issues and take the appropriate corrective actions.

The Green Team championed several student and staff wellness initiatives including the Winslow Middle School Garden Program. Gardening and agricultural education has become a large focus of the Middle School, as evidenced by the Bernzomatic IDEA Courtyard Garden funded through a grant from the Bernzomatic Corporation, indoor hydroponic gardens funded through grants from Lowe's Toolbox for Education, and vertical tower gardens funded by Sustainable Jersey for Schools. There are a variety of crops that are grown in the Bernzomatic IDEA Courtyard Garden and the indoor vertical tower gardens throughout the growing seasons. Herbs grown include basil, cilantro, mint, oregano, chives, dill, and parsley. Vegetables grown include kale, tomatoes, broccoli, spinach, swiss chard and a variety of lettuce. Students and staff manually pull weeds and mulch to manage weeds environmentally friendly as opposed to using herbicides. Plant-based food waste from the cafeteria is used to create compost in the garden compost and vermicompost bins. Organic fertilizers are used to feed plants and students monitor soil moisture and weather to determine when to water the plants. Food produced is used to educate students on healthy and tasty alternatives to highly processed and fatty foods. Food challenges based on the popular cooking show "Chopped" are have students create healthy plant-based dishes. The recipes are shared with the students' families to promote healthy eating habits. The school has continued to build upon the success of this program and is working on incorporating the garden efforts into other courses as well.

The District is constructing a large green house on the Middle School grounds to expand gardening capabilities and it is anticipated to be completed by the end of the 2020-21 school year. This new building will support science, STEM, math, and other areas of study and will introduce many more students to the art and science of growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs in addition to topics related to healthy eating, cooking, and nutrition for overall well-being. The greenhouse is being constructed by funds provided from the District and funding to provide supplies, a greenhouse curriculum, and staff professional development was received from Sustainable Jersey for Schools and the NEA Foundation.

The Winslow Township School District has an approved Local Wellness Policy – Nutrient Standards for Meals and Other Foods which includes established goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The Principal or School Wellness Policy Coordinator will encourage food products that meet the nutrition standards of the Healthy Hunger Free Kid Act (HHFKA) when used as an incentive or reward for student accomplishments, club or activity achievements, and/or success in competitions within the school. All schools within the District have eliminated birthday celebrations and all snacks should be healthy and nutritious.

Winslow Township School District works with Sodexo to provide food service for all 8 schools in the district. Sodexo has a policy of providing local, fresh produce in the school cafeteria, requiring that local distributors source their produce locally whenever seasonally possible. Sodexo has 8 local farm partners Winslow and Camden County which is surrounded by agriculture. One of the District's aims has been to help reconnect students to the local farming tradition. Sodexo purchases all produce fresh from J. Ambrogi Foods in Thorofare, an independent family-owned company that strives to deliver fresh produce with a focus on local farms right in our backyard. Sodexo purchases local produce for weekly deliveries and creates menus at each school that highlight local produce when in season. Weekly menus provide a variety of fresh local produce included in the daily selections, as well as the Daily Thrive Bar (Monday: carrot sticks, Tuesday: Chilled Corn salad, Wednesday: Romaine Salad, Thursday: Bean Salad & baby carrots, Friday: Celery sticks). A minimum of 6 healthy sides are offered per day.

Winslow Township Middle School modified their bell and school breakfast schedule in recent years to help address

timing issues which were causing students to not have adequate time to eat a nutritious breakfast. To deal with this issue, the school principal, Ms. Stella Nwanguma, and her staff adjusted the morning bell so that the first bell for homeroom rings at 8:10am to signal the official start of the school day. All buses arrive in advance of the breakfast period, and all students who arrive via parent drop off are required to be in the building by that time. The length of homeroom was extended to 20 minutes, and students have the option of going to the cafeteria to get breakfast or going directly to their homeroom. Winslow Township Middle School has about 54% of its students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, so it is important to address this issue and ensure that all students have access to a healthy breakfast at the start of the school day. Scheduling breakfast for after the homeroom bell helps to ensure that students have breakfast to provide them with adequate energy and nutrition to focus on their studies regardless of the availability of food at home.

The Winslow Township School District has a comprehensive Health and Wellness Policy to promote physical activity throughout the schools in our district. The District has also approved a comprehensive Sustainability Policy, which includes Promoting Physical Activity in students. In addition to high-quality physical education classes in the school district taught by certified and well-supported physical education teachers, multiple opportunities exist before, during, and after school to enable young people to achieve the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' recommended sixty minutes of physical activity per day.

The Board of Education promotes a comprehensive school-based physical activity program in accordance with Board policy that will permit students to safely walk to and from school, to ride bicycles to and from school, and participate in other activities to promote physical health: Physical Activity Breaks: Teachers may periodically conduct three to five minute physical activity breaks or brain energizers and incorporate physical activity into academic lessons to help improve student performance and on-task behavior including intramural sports, physical activity clubs and use of school facilities outside school hours for recreation programs offered by municipal or parks and recreation commissions, outside agencies, and/or youth-serving organizations on evenings, weekends, and during breaks in the school calendar.

In addition, each student must receive at least one presentation per school year that promotes good nutrition and nutrition education. These presentations are provided through classroom visits from school staff members trained in nutrition, school-wide or group assembly programs or during health/physical education classes during the school year. This requirement may be provided as part of nutrition education provided to students as part of the district's curriculum. Winslow Township Middle School partners with Rutgers University to provide a nutrition education program to students. This program has moved to a virtual format that meets 2 times per week and includes all 7th grade students, who participate through their health class. This program focuses on helping students improve the quality of their diet, improve their level of physical activity, and improve food safety awareness and practices.

The Winslow Middle School established a School Wellness Council which promotes healthy habits and participates in the AtlantiCare Healthy Schools Healthy Children Program, which involves regularly scheduled meetings throughout the school year to provide information and resources which can then be brought back and shared with the rest of the school staff to improve student and staff health and wellness. This program includes incentives for participating in a variety of activities throughout the year. During the 2019-20 school year, staff completed a green mustache challenge where teachers made green smoothies and took pictures with their green mustaches to promote healthier food options. The school partners with the AtlantiCare Healthy Schools Healthy Children Program to provide presentations in the Life Skills Classroom for the students in the Self-contained Multiple Disabilities Program and the Future Leaders After-School Mentoring Program. The program covered thinking about food choices and how to make a recipe, and students had an opportunity to taste the food that was made by the guest speaker.

Other AtlantiCare Healthy Schools challenges completed by Winslow Middle School include Heart Health Education's Caught Eating Healthy program, rewards, food drives, and staff attending AtlantiCare training sessions on student health related topics such as vaping and the importance of learning to cook healthy foods.

Our School Wellness Council also initiated a Staff Wellness competition where staff members made teams and tracked progress such as water intake, servings of fruits and vegetables, amount of exercise, and weight loss.

The Green Team launched a Student/Staff Weight Training and Stress Reduction program in 2020. Through funding provided by Sustainable Jersey for Schools, kettlebells, exercise balls, weighted resistance bands, and a CrossFit-type weighted rope system anchored to the wall were purchased and installed, along with posters/signage demonstrating proper use of this equipment. Students can use the weight room during after school hours for fitness and stress reduction, and staff will be able to use the weight room before/after school and during lunch.

In recent years, the Middle School has incorporated yoga as part of the physical education program for all students to learn about stretching, developing core strength, stress management, and focus.

Winslow Middle School offers students the opportunity to participate in sports programs including field hockey, boys and girls soccer, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls track, wrestling, baseball, and softball. These programs encourage participating in physical activity as well as team building.

Winslow Middle School has instituted a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program throughout the school. Teachers were provided with SEL Professional Development at the start of the 2019-20 school year, and SEL lessons are incorporated in classes throughout the year. As part of this effort, the Middle School provided an assembly program by Winceyco that used music and skits to teach about anti-bullying, why it is important to not judge people, and to always treat people the way you would want to be treated.

Winslow Middle School also implemented a new Student Advising period during the 2018-19 school year, which has become a continuing part of the school culture. Students are assigned to a small group with a staff member as an adviser and meet 2 times a month to talk about SEL topics and cover issues like coping with stress and general well-being. This program helps students navigate the challenges that many young people face during the formative Middle School years. To accommodate this program into the schedule, the school day is adjusted during Student Advisory days to allow for a 9th period class which is the Student Advisory period. Every student in the school is assigned to a Student Advisory group composed of a small number of students in their grade and a teacher/staff member to serve as the group's advisor. Students meet with this same group of students throughout the year, working with their assigned teacher, to discuss a variety of relevant topics. The small group setting allows students to form bonds within the group, and open up about topics that they might not feel comfortable doing in a larger classroom or assembly setting. Staff and students suggest topics that are of interest to them, which are then the topics of future sessions across the school. In addition, the staff member assigned to the group can talk with the students about other issues that may arise on a group-by-group basis if needed. Issues presented in the Student Advisory Program meetings include topics ranging from deeper discussions about Harassment, Bullying and Intimidation (HIB) to managing stress through adopting calming breathing techniques, to better studying methods to reduce the stress of taking tests, to team building activities to enhance the level of trust and openness within the small group. This project has helped our school to further support programs that increase student knowledge related to Emotional and Mental Health/Mindfulness, Bullying/Cyber Bullying, and Violence Prevention.

Winslow Middle School operates the Eagles Nest, a place where students can go for support and counseling throughout the year when needed. This calming, restful space provides students with a safe place to go to receive help and support their overall wellness and success. Students are identified by the Guidance Department; however, parents can also request that their child be considered for Eagles Nest's services.

The Middle School initiated a Male and Female Mentoring Program, as well as a program called Girls CHAT. The programs involve a group of students who are selected to participate in each and through the program they are provided with additional support and resources to help them succeed not only in the school environment, but also outside of school and in their future. This includes lessons, guest speakers, and activities to strengthen skills.

Each week, students participate in Mindful Monday and Wellness Wednesday. The Guidance Department creates messages that tie into the ongoing Social Emotional Learning that the students receive through the Student Advisory Program every Monday. On Wednesdays, students watch videos in their homeroom on topics related to health and wellness.

The Winslow Township School District incorporated a Safe Routes to School component of the District Sustainability

Policy and has an approved Transportation Policy to help ensure the safety of all students as they travel to and from the school building.

Pillar 3: Your Efforts to Ensure Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Winslow Township Middle School is committed to incorporating sustainability and environmental education throughout the school's curriculum. The Middle School Green Team, Science Department staff and STEM teachers participated in a full day professional development session, touring the school and learning about opportunities to expand STEM learning through the school curriculum. The afternoon session was classroom based and included training related to various aspects of sustainability, including EcoSchools, school gardens and gardening related lessons, biodiversity projects, energy conservation, school gardens, eco challenges, recycling efforts, and ways to weave sustainability concepts throughout all activities at the Middle School. A representative from Rutgers Master Gardeners held a professional development workshop for all science teachers and Green Team members on native plants. The focus was to educate and increase the native plant varieties in both the IDEA garden and pond courtyard. In fall 2020, the Middle School staff participated in a greenhouse professional development program, to learn ways to incorporate the new greenhouse into various areas of the school curriculum.

The Middle School has an incredibly active school gardening program, which includes a courtyard garden, hydroponic growing systems maintained by Environmental STEM students, and vertical gardens. The school garden program, which began as part of the Environmental STEM course, has expanded to include a large portion of the school's students during their time at the Middle School. Students from the Environmental STEM class explore some of the environmental issues facing our country and the world through the study of the campus environment, and develop/test solutions to address those issues. One area of focus for the course is sustainable agriculture, soil and water health, and food supply. Winslow Township is surrounded by a farming community, however, many of the students coming into the school have limited knowledge about the farming industry. The courtyard garden is available for other teachers in the district to use to augment their classroom lessons. The school's goal is to help create the next generation of environmental scientists, engineers, and problem solvers by teaching lessons focused on raising awareness of local and global environmental issues, and challenging students to develop real-world solutions to address these issues

School gardening has expanded beyond the Environmental STEM program, and vertical gardens are now incorporated into many science and special education classrooms in the school. The students start by designing soda bottle hydroponic systems to understand the basic concepts of hydroponics as well as looking at alternative ways to repurpose trash. A variety of crops are grown in the hydroponics systems throughout the year including basil, cilantro, parsley, mint, microgreens, kale, tomatoes, spinach, peppers, and several lettuce varieties.

Winslow Middle School has developed two outdoor classrooms for use by teachers throughout the school. The first is the garden classroom, which is overseen by the Environmental STEM classes as part of their curriculum. Students in the Environmental STEM class start the school year by cleaning up the garden and planting cool-season crops. They continue to maintain the space through weeding, mulching, watering, composting, and fertilizing several times a week. Two seasonal displays, fall and winter, are created to highlight specific plants during the holidays. After being closed for the winter, it is reopened for spring where seasonal plants are planted. Throughout the year, students utilize the garden to learn about biodiversity, seasonal plants, native plants, plant care, and sustainable practices.

The second garden is a pond courtyard where students can learn about pond ecosystems, native plants, birds, and much more. The area features an elevated platform with benches at one end of the pond, and students can leave the platform area to venture into other areas of the courtyard for additional learning opportunities. Both outdoor classrooms are available and utilized by several classes. Below are just a few uses of the spaces. Math: coordinate grids and geometry; Science: biology, and units of measure; Language Arts: descriptive writing and reading novels; Social Studies: living off the land during colonial times; Art: Drawings, paintings, and design elements; PE: physical activity through gardening and healthy foods.

The District is constructing a greenhouse building, as an extension of the Middle School's STEM and Science programs. Recently, curriculum was developed for the new greenhouse, to ensure that when the greenhouse is fully and

operational, that it can be seamlessly integrated into the school's academic offerings. Large-scale greenhouses are not a common feature on public school campuses, and this new initiative showcases the dedication of our District and School administration to providing our students with an opportunity to advance their education and expose them to learning methods that are not typically available in most schools. This project is even more meaningful in a community with over 50% of students categorized as having economic need. This project will have a tremendous impact on the school's students, exposing them to hands-on learning activities and imparting problem solving and critical thinking skills that will benefit them for years to come.

Examples of sustainability in classroom lessons can be found throughout the school, in a variety of subject areas extending well beyond STEM and science classes. Provided below are examples from several areas of study:

Eighth grade students completed a sustainability lesson utilizing the vertical tower garden. This lesson utilized ingredients from the tower garden to create butter. The students made observations, recorded data, and drew conclusions. Since September, students have been responsible for checking growth as well as water and pH levels. In addition to the butter, students also created salads and were given the opportunity to taste their healthy creations once complete. This authentic experience gave students the opportunity to explore healthier food options and seeing that healthy food can also taste good.

An integrated sustainability unit has been incorporated into science classes to provide students with a unique hands-on experience to drive home the importance of sustainability in society. This unit requires students to think about how gardening has evolved and how it may continue to develop. Students have access to systems that allow them to extend growing seasons and garden in non-traditional ways. Taking the plants from indoors to outdoors is also emphasized and allows students use of different mediums. Students also compost which allows them to rethink how items are disposed of and find alternative ways for things considered waste to be used.

Students completed lessons on nutrition and the importance of physical activity. Students were then required to log their food choices and exercise to reflect and see the impacts that their healthy habits are having on them. In this time of remote learning, it is especially important for students who are not seeing their teachers to be able to make healthy choices.

Winslow Middle School Math teacher incorporated principles of healthy eating through a lesson about the sugar content of various popular drinks. In this lesson, students used proportions to better understand the amount of sugar in the drinks they consume, converted from grams on the nutritional label to the equivalent amount of solid sugar. The final step of the lesson was to get that equivalent amount of solid sugar in a bowl or cup to really see what they were consuming.

Social Studies teachers completed a 2020 Census lessons on apportionment. The lesson reviewed the importance of the census being accurate as this data is used to determine the number of representatives each state gets. This lesson was interdisciplinary as students were also required to compare data and calculate percent change. Students also had to analyze tables and maps and draw conclusions based on the data.

Students completed a computer science lesson called Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Oceans. This tutorial is designed to quickly introduce students to machine learning. Students explored how training data is used to enable a machine learning model to classify new data. First students classified objects as either "fish" or "not fish," to attempt to remove trash from the ocean. Then, students expanded their training data set to include other sea creatures that belong in the water. In the second part of the activity, students chose their own labels to apply to images of randomly generated fish. This training data is used for a machine learning model that should then be able to label new images on its own.

In English class, students were assigned to write essays on the plastic problem. Students conducted research and utilized the research in their essays. This allowed students to show the impact that everyone has on the environment and how changes can be made in daily life that has a positive impact. Students then presented infomercials in class that showed ways to reduce, reuse and recycle plastic bottles to keep plastic out of our waterways.

The Winslow Middle School Environmental STEM students have participated in Longwood Gardens educational programs for the past 2 years. This opportunity has exposed students to careers in horticulture, agriculture, and other STEM based fields, and has built upon the gardening and agriculture work that students have done both in class and in the gardens. In addition, Middle School students recently participated in a virtual visit to the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome as part of a program provided by the United Nations.

Students in multiple classes were challenged to create a logo that brought awareness to a sustainability topic of their choosing. Multiple classes partook in this challenge. The students designed and created original logos and had to explain how it would make an impact. The designs were voted on by peers. The logos that had the most votes were uploaded and printed and placed onto clothing so that the students could show their winning design. The clothing that was selected to print on was all gently used to promote the use of already existing materials.

Art students were given the challenge of representing the effects of the plastic problem. Students learned about their use of plastic products and how their actions could cause a ripple effect for a positive change by making the change to use reusable water bottles, straws, etc. Students discussed the connection between what we consume and what we dispose daily.

Summary Narrative: An Overview of Your Work Encompassing All Three Pillars

Winslow Township Middle School is located in Winslow Township, Camden County, NJ. As one of 8 schools in the Winslow Township School District, the school shares the District motto of Preparing our Students for Tomorrow...Today. The school has been at the forefront of innovation and environmental protection for many years.

Winslow Township Middle School established a Green Team during the 2016-17 school year, composed of staff throughout the school to plan and implement programs and activities to support students and staff sustainability initiatives. The Green Team greatly expanded its membership last year with sub-committees focused on specific areas. The school's Green Team worked diligently over the past 5 years to achieve Sustainable Jersey for Schools Bronze Level Certification in 2017-18 and 2018-19, Silver Level Certification in the 2019-20 school year, and the 2020 Sustainability Champion Award for earning the highest level of points of any Middle School.

Winslow Middle School is partially operated on solar power and the panels cover a large portion of the building's roof. National Energy Partners (NEP) currently owns and operates the system, which is a 820.54 kW roof mounted system with 3,360 modules and a production of 1.02 MW. The energy generated by the Middle School solar panels over the course of one year (calculated for the 2017-18 school year) offset an average of 34% of the building's energy monthly.

Winslow Township School District entered into an agreement to purchase renewable energy through the Alliance for Competitive Energy Services (ACES) program. Participation in the ACES program is part of the district's efforts to increase sustainability practices. As per the agreement, the Winslow Township School District receives a minimum of 40% of its purchased energy from renewable sources.

Energy conservation has been an important focus within the Winslow Township Middle School. All hallway lights were replaced with high-efficiency LED lighting and windows were replaced with dual glazed windows with built in blinds to help regulate room temperature and energy usage. In addition, exterior lighting was replaced with LED lighting for both energy efficiency and increased safety. This resulted in a savings of 283,598KWH of energy and an annual cost savings to the District of \$55,737.

Science, Math and STEM teachers have found ways to incorporate the solar panel energy generation into classroom lessons including the implementation of the NJ EmPower Schools program led by the 7th and 8th grade Environmental STEM teacher, Mr. Ross Cruz. Weekly, classes trained 60 students as Energy Ambassadors to help promote energy conservation throughout the school. Through this program, staff and students learned about energy saving measures and signed a pledge to conserve energy. Students created videos to explain the program and its benefits and completed energy audits in various classrooms. Students created two logos to get students involved; "Last out lights out" which

was placed on light switches and “Shut em down when not around” was placed on computers to get students throughout the school involved. Winslow Township Middle School won the EmPower Schools competition in the 2019-20 school year and was the first participating school to earn over 1000 points.

The Middle School participates in the Crayola ColorCycle marker recycling program. Middle School students and teachers are collecting used markers that are ready to be discarded. Students are encouraged to bring in old markers from home, and classrooms throughout the school recycle used markers as well. The Middle School is also participating in the Ricoh toner cartridge recycling program.

Working through Waste Management, our school diverted about 30% of the overall waste generated at our school through recycling efforts in 2020. This includes about 55.2 tons of paper, 5.5 tons of plastic, 5.5 tons of aluminum, 19.3 tons of glass, and 165.7 tons of cardboard, totaling 251 tons of diverted waste.

The Green Team has been the champion of several student and staff wellness initiatives including the Winslow Middle School Garden Program. Gardening and agricultural education has become a large focus of the Middle School, as evidenced by a courtyard garden, indoor hydroponic gardens, and vertical tower gardens. There are a variety of crops that are grown in the Bernzomatic IDEA Courtyard Garden and the indoor vertical tower gardens throughout the growing seasons. Herbs grown include basil, cilantro, mint, oregano, chives, dill, and parsley. Vegetables grown include kale, tomatoes, broccoli, spinach, swiss chard and a variety of lettuce. The gardens are maintained through environmentally friendly practices. Students and staff manually pull weeds and mulch to manage weeds instead of using herbicides. Students and staff use plant-based food waste from the cafeteria to create compost in our garden with the compost and vermicompost bins. Soil moisture and weather is monitored to determine when to water the plants using water collected from rain barrels.

The food produced from the garden educates students on healthy and tasty alternatives to highly processed and fatty foods. Food challenges based on the popular cooking show “Chopped” encourage students to create healthy plant-based dishes based on the foods in the garden. The recipes are shared with the students’ families to promote healthy eating habits. The school has continued to build upon the success of this program and is working on incorporating the garden efforts into other courses as well.

The District is in the process of constructing a large green house on the Middle School grounds to support science, STEM, math, and other areas of study, and introduce many more students to the art and science of growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs, as well as topics related to healthy eating, cooking, and nutrition for overall well-being.

The Green Team launched a Student/Staff Weight Training and Stress Reduction program in 2020 with the purchase of kettlebells, exercise balls, weighted resistance bands, and a CrossFit-type weighted rope system, along with posters/signage demonstrating proper use of this equipment.

Winslow Middle School has instituted a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program throughout the school. Teachers participated in SEL Professional Development at the start of the 2019-20 school year and SEL lessons were incorporated in classes throughout the year.

Winslow Middle School also implemented a new Student Advising period beginning in the 2018-19 school year. Students were assigned to a small group with a staff member as an adviser to meet twice monthly to discuss SEL topics and cover issues like coping with stress and general well-being. This program helps students navigate the challenges that many young people face during the formative Middle School years. The small group setting permits students to form bonds within the group and open-up about topics that they might not feel comfortable doing in a larger classroom or assembly setting.

Each week, students participate in Mindful Monday and Wellness Wednesday. The Guidance Department creates messages that tie into the ongoing Social Emotional Learning that the students receive through the Student Advisory Program every Monday. On Wednesdays, students watch videos in their homeroom on topics related to health and wellness.

Winslow Township Middle School is committed to incorporating sustainability and environmental education throughout the school's curriculum. The Middle School Green Team has coordinated several professional development opportunities for staff including programs related to sustainability, gardens, and greenhouse education. The courtyard garden is available for teachers to use as a way to augment their classroom lessons. Students from the Environmental STEM classes explore some of the environmental issues facing our country and the world through the study of the campus environment and develop/test solutions to address those issues. One focus for the course is sustainable agriculture, soil and water health, and food supply. Winslow Township is surrounded by a farming community, however, many of our students coming into the school have limited knowledge about the farming industry. They start off by designing soda bottle hydroponic systems to understand the basic concepts of hydroponics as well as looking at alternative ways to repurpose trash. A variety of crops are grown in the hydroponics systems throughout the year including basil, cilantro, parsley, mint, microgreens, kale, tomatoes, spinach, peppers, and lettuce varieties.

The courtyard garden is available for other teachers in the district to augment their classroom lessons. The overall goal is to help create the next generation of environmental scientists, engineers, and problem solvers by teaching lessons focused on raising awareness of local and global environmental issues, and challenging students to develop real-world solutions to address these issues.

A pond courtyard is also available as an outdoor classroom space where students can learn about pond ecosystems, native plants, birds, and much more. The area features an elevated platform with benches at one end of the pond, and students can leave the platform area to venture into other areas of the courtyard for additional learning opportunities. Both outdoor classrooms are used with multiple disciplines. Math classes coordinate grids and learn geometry; Science classes explore biology and units of measure; Language Arts practices descriptive writing and uses the tranquility of the space for reading novels; Social Studies examines living off the land during colonial times; Art classes create drawings, paintings, and design elements; and health education includes the physical activity of gardening while experiencing healthy foods.

Examples of sustainability in classrooms lessons can be found throughout our school, well beyond STEM and science classes. Provided below are examples from several areas of study:

- Eighth grade science students monitored the water, pH levels and growth of the tower garden, made observations, and recorded data to draw conclusions.
- Art students were challenged to represent the negative impacts of the plastic problem and how their actions could cause a ripple effect for a positive change by making the change to use reusable water bottles, straws, etc.
- Engineering students were challenged to create a logo that brought awareness to a sustainability topic of their choosing. The students designed and created original logos and had to explain how it would be important and make an impact. The designs were voted on by peers. The logos that had the most votes were then uploaded and printed on a cricket device and placed onto clothing so that the students could show their winning design.
- An English Language Arts teacher had students write essays on the plastic problem. Students had to conduct research and utilize the research in their essays. This allowed students to show the impact that everyone has on the environment and how changes can be made in daily life that has a positive impact. Students then presented infomercials in class that showed ways to reduce, reuse and recycle plastic bottles to keep plastic out of our waterways.
- A math teacher incorporated principles of healthy eating through a lesson about the sugar content of various popular drinks. Students used proportions to better understand the amount of sugar in the drinks they consume, converted from grams on the nutritional label to the equivalent amount of solid sugar.
- Students completed a computer science lesson called Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Oceans. This tutorial

introduced students to machine learning, a type of artificial intelligence. Students used training data in a machine learning model to classify new data. First students classify objects as either "fish" or "not fish" to attempt to remove trash from the ocean. Then, students expanded their training data set to include other sea creatures that belonged in the water. Students then choose their own labels to apply to the images of randomly generated fish. This training data could then be used by a machine as a learning model to label new images on its own to help remove trash from the ocean.