



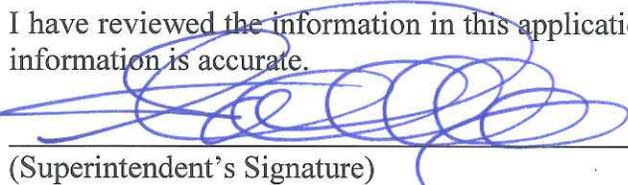
U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2013 – District Sustainability Award

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Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Steven Webb  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name\* Vancouver Public Schools Tel. (360)313-1000  
(As it should appear on an award)

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

  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date January 30, 2014

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## **PART II – SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Instructions to District Superintendent**

Provide a concise and coherent "snapshot" that describes how your district is representative of your jurisdiction's highest achieving green school efforts in approximately 800 words. Summarize your strengths and accomplishments. Focus on what makes your district worthy of the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Award.

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## **PART III – DOCUMENTATION OF STATE EVALUATION OF DISTRICT NOMINEE**

### **Instructions to Nominating Authority**

The Nominating Authority must document the district's high achievement in each of the three ED-GRS Pillars and nine Elements. Please attach documentation in each Pillar and Element. This may be the Authority's application based on the Framework and sample application or a committee's written evaluation of a school in each Pillar and Element.

### **Nominating Authority's Certifications**

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

1. The district is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental education.

## **Vancouver School District – Summary of Achievements**

The Vancouver Public Schools Sustainability and Conservation Plan helps create a culture to address how our schools and our District can educate and build individual and organizational capacity in students and staff, and improve our sphere of educational influence in natural, human, and social capital.

The District initiated conservation efforts over the past several years. The start began with slow turns of the flywheel and has substantially progressed until June 2009 when the Board of Directors approved a Policy and Regulation supporting natural resources management and conservation. During the 2009-2010 school year, all schools embarked on establishing a school based green team. At the school level we build programs for sustainability based on the Department of Energy and Washington Green Schools philosophy for sustainable programs. From there, we build a framework for success in Green Teams at each school site as we built upon our community and school based strengths. The teams have been working diligently to identify educational opportunities and implement sustainable procedures into daily operations while cultivating a culture of conservation.

In 2010, we reviewed individual school sites conservation guiding principles and from this evaluation we provided energy and waste management data to all schools, effectively incorporating Utility Manager, an on-line utility tracking program. In the winter of 2010 all schools were given access and training for the web-based Utility Manager program to help monitor and reduce their consumption.

Today, 100% of our schools (37) are working toward conservation in one form or another – either thru an official green team, offering career and technical education and career tracts, or embedding green practices throughout their day. Through the efforts of students, teachers, principals, building operators and support from the district maintenance, custodial support services, and operations team several schools are operating at an exceptional level of efficiency. It is our goal to have 100% of our sites achieving energy star equivalent status.

The list of partners working with students to integrate operational best practices varies from site to site and year to year, however it is important to recognize that Energy Trust (E-Trust), Energy Smart, Waste Management, Clark Public Utilities (CPU), Bonneville Power Administration, Clark County, and Washington Green Schools have been long standing district wide partners providing support and funds to advance our conservation efforts. These organizations recognize that students will become adults who may own property, own or manage businesses, or simply live, work and recreate in Clark County. New in 2013 was the completion of our first retro-commissioning partnership with CPU and the start of our second retro commissioning partnership with CPU and E-Trust.

Retro commissioning with partners is a process whereby we identify a building in need of retro commissioning due to aging equipment, inefficiencies and clear opportunities for improved indoor comfort, kilowatt hour and therm reductions. CPU and E-Trust provide a joint building evaluation by contracting, and paying for a trade ally to perform a Building Conditions Report. This report identifies specific Facility Improvement Measures (FIMS) for reduced kilowatts and therms. From this report, VPS, CPU and E-Trust develop partnership agreements for rebates based on future reduced utilization. VPS self performs the work identified and after a post evaluation, the partners provide rebates to VPS

helping us off-set the cost of the energy saving projects. VPS intends to retro-commission all sites across the District with this partnership.

VPS has implemented a number of successful progressive sustainable practices across multiple disciplines over the past decade; however, the power of our conservation plan lies in multiple congruent synergistic approaches to achieve sustainability framed by support from the Board of Directors. For school sites, the Plan seeks to harness the desires of students and staff around resource conservation education and sustainability, and, allow these champions for green practices to have a well-supported voice in their school. For support staff, the plan emphasizes the alignment of best practices, retro commissioning, general maintenance, major maintenance and capital improvements schedules. Throughout the Plan we anticipate measurable outcomes by creating connections with people from varied backgrounds, reinforcing, and conducting our work through sharing of information, building relationships, and creating identity. The work will provide common experiences between all staff, and community partners while seeking to build positive, motivated, successful teams that are committed to conservation. The essence of the plan is about building a culture to support resource conservation and sustainability.

Sacajawea Elementary School, a 2013 Washington Green Ribbon winning school exemplifies our districts commitment to conservation. By encompassing sustainable practices in our work and daily lives, we are engaging more than 22,500 students, over 2,700 employees, and seven key partner organizations our community every day.



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2. The district meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Name of Nominating Authority: Gilda Wheeler, Program Supervisor, Science and Sustainability  
(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 district meets the provisions above.

Gilda Wheeler Date 1.31.14  
(Nominating Authority’s Signature)

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](mailto:green.ribbon.schools@ed.gov) according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509  
Expiration Date: February 28, 2015

# 2014 Green Ribbon Schools District Application

Response ID:45 Data

## 3. New Page

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### District Information

#### District and Code

Vancouver School District - 06037

#### District Website

www.vansd.org

### Application Team Information

#### Lead Applicant First Name

Jennifer

#### Lead Applicant Last Name

Halleck

#### Lead Applicant Title

Planner

#### Lead Applicant Email

jennifer.halleck@vansd.org

#### Lead Applicant Phone Number

360.313.1048

### Application Team Members

	Name (First and Last)	Title/Department
1	Todd Horenstein	Assistant Superintendent/Facility Support Services
2		
3		
4		

## 4. New Page

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### 1. Summary Narrative

**Provide a narrative of your district's comprehensive efforts to meet or exceed the goals of the Green Ribbon Schools program. Include how these efforts were started and what impact they have on the teachers, staff, students, parents, and other members of the community. Focus on unique and innovative practices and partnerships. (Maximum 800 words)**

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## 5. New Page

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### 2. Is your district participating in a local, state, or national program which asks you to benchmark district-wide progress in any or all of the pillars?

Yes

#### List the program(s) you participate in and the corresponding level(s) in progress and/or achieved.

	Program	Level in progress	Level achieved
1	Washington Green Schools	17 participating schools	varies at each school
2	Clark County Waste Connections Composting Program	100% participation	90-100% varies each week based on % contamination of compost
3			
4			
5			

### 3. Has your district received any awards for facilities, health or environment?

Yes

#### Please list the awards and corresponding years.

	Award	Awarded to (whole district, department, etc.)	Awarded by	Year received
1	Pillar 2, Green Ribbon Leadership	District	e3, OSPI	2013
2	Pillar 3, Green Ribbon Leadership	District	e3, OSPI	2013
3	IPM Star Certification	District	The Indoor Pest Management Institute of North America	2004
4				
5				

## 6. New Page

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### 4. Pillar 1: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs.

Describe how your district is reducing environmental impacts and costs associated with:

energy use

greenhouse gas emissions

water use and quality

stormwater run-off

## **solid waste and recycling**

### **paper use**

### **transportation**

#### **(Maximum 800 words)**

The District Green Teams role is to help realize the vision for sustainability and execute work plans that address the District needs. Further each school site has a green team or green-leader. The green teams champion efforts for conservation. Site based initiatives allows the schools to harness the human energy around topics of conservation that fuel their passions.

Energy: During the 2005/2006 sy, the district used 209,820 mBtu's compared to the 174,598 mBtu's used in the 2012/2013 sy equating to a 16.79% reduction in utilization. This mBtu reduction has translated to an accumulative savings for the district of approximately \$2,761,729 in energy cost avoidance all while adding an additional a net 120,781 square feet of operational spaces. Of notable accomplishment in 2013 was the reduction in natural gas therms by 8.26% over the 2011/12 sy. VPS benchmarks each eligible school site with the Department of Energy's Energy Star Program thru their website Portfolio Manager. Although we do not formally participate in the program due to cost of certified evaluations VPS believes that if we fully participated, we would have 80% Energy Star recognized sites. It is our goal to continue seeking partnership opportunities to offset the costs and become a part of the formal program.

Waste/Recycle: VPS waste reduction measures are a combination of recycling, reducing and off site composting. In addition to district wide paper and aluminum recycling in January 2005, we worked with Clark County staff to implement collection of food for composting. By 2009, the Save Organic Scraps program was fully operational in 32 schools. Together with Clark County annually we send roughly 680 fewer tons to the landfill, 250 tons of food scraps off site for composting and 405 tons are being recycled.

Water: Most District sites treat their stormwater on site prior to dispersing into local collection areas. In the summer of 2012 the District, made a commitment to cleaner water by implementing a preventative maintenance program for water swales at each site. Each year every building operator at school sites are re-trained on best management practices for clean water and storm water. Our partnership with Clark County Clean Water Commission provides a fee waiver for County stormwater charges in exchange for clean water education. This partnership waives \$42,000 in charges to VPS annually.

Water: Our school green teams and leaders are making great progress with water quality. An example that is replicated in many of our schools is that of Columbia River HS (CRHS). CRHS has been testing water quality at their local stream for 16 years. Students work within their science curriculum to test, evaluate and trend water quality issues. Their dedicated staff and students are looking for funds and exploring ways to treating runoff before it reaches the stream.

Paper: In addition to paper recycling and paper composing throughout the district, VPS passed a technology levy in 2013 and will expand providing content to students electronically with one to one devices. We anticipate a greater amount of digital output from students and staff. Alki Middle school piloted the one-to-one devices during the 2012/13 sy, it has been anecdotally reported from teachers that they are spending "less time in line at the copier". The district will be tracking the reduction of paper purchasing as we expand one-to-one devices. The district also adopted an open source middle school science text book and as one-to-one devices are strategically deployed across the grades/district, this electronic text book will be used and evaluated for future open source text book options.

Transportation: VPS uses VersaTran, a special bus routing systems to achieve maximum route efficiency aimed at creating efficiencies such as using less fuel and thus reduced emissions. VPS transportation department has a no idle standard operating practice and they use a 2010 GPS system. This GPS system identifies critical elements of service necessary to optimize operational efficiencies in our bus and vehicle fleet. Optimizing efficiencies in our vehicles ensures we are not over or under servicing the fleet while keeping them from

producing excessive emissions and waste. VPS has one school site that deploys no school busses; this site however has several “walking bus routes”. Other elementary schools are following their lead in developing their own walking school bus initiative.

Operationally, the district green team continues to look closely at how we build sustainability into our everyday processes, thus making our Sustainability and Conservation Plan truly sustainable and not dependent upon a single group or individual efforts.

## 7. New Page

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

**Describe how your district is improving the health and wellness of students and staff by integrating a school environmental health program and promoting nutrition and fitness. Address the following topics:**

**integrated pest management**

**contaminant controls and ventilation**

**asthma controls**

**indoor air quality**

**moisture control**

**chemical management**

**amount and types of outdoor activity available to students and staff**

**types of fresh, local and organic food available to students and staff**

***optional: health education, health services, counseling psychological and social services, staff health promotion, and family and community involvement***

**(Maximum 800 words)**

Over the past decade Vancouver Public Schools has implemented a series of policies and practices intended to improve Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) in schools and support facilities. An independent audit conducted in 2004 by Dr. Thomas Green of The Indoor Pest Management (IPM) Institute of North America resulted in VPS becoming the 17th school district in the nation to receive the institutes’ IPM Star Certification. As a result, the use of pesticides in Vancouver has been sharply curtailed. When used at all....pesticides selected for use must meet strenuous criteria as the “least toxic” pesticide option available.

Vancouver Public Schools adopted the US, EPA’s IAQ-Tools for Schools (US EPA –TFS) program in 2003-05. This involvement led to the development of a draft Policy and Regulation on IAQ, participation by Vancouver Schools’ Maintenance personnel in the EPA -TFS Annual Symposium in Washington D.C., direct involvement with Washington State Department of Health IAQ study pilot projects, and participation by VPS staff in the Washington State School Environmental Assessment Technical Advisory Committee commissioned by the Department of Health Committee to develop IAQ recommendations to address the growing incidence of childhood asthma in schools. VPS implemented formal certification training of all district custodial staff in the adoption “green cleaning” products and practices intended to promote healthier school environments. All products used at VPS have been evaluated using Green Seal.

All VPS Building Operators are required to obtain Building Operator Certification (BOC). BOC certification encompasses competency based training specifically in Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and building operating systems that affect IEQ. Competency and consistency in best practices is monitored by continuous quality improvement inspections. VPS uses the U.S. EPA’s Healthy Schools Environmental Assessment Tool. (Healthy SEAT) to evaluate & monitor compliance with the entire range of national school safety/health requirements. VPS continues to participate within the Washington State Children’s Environmental Safety Network to monitor and respond to emerging health and environmental issues through continued annual participation in policy

development and educational forums and we address school ventilation issues, moisture control and other conditions impacting building IEQ within 24-hours.

In addition to fresh fruits and vegetables available at all school lunches, VPS Nutrition Services has obtained fresh fruits and vegetables grants to help educate and explore fruits and vegetables to students living in low income parts of our community. A specific school example of VPS dedication to nutrition shines at Harney Elementary. Last year a joint effort went underway between Piece Health and VPS to provide hands on healthy cooking experiences for students with the ultimate goal of fighting childhood obesity. Students taste and tried new foods by being “food explorers” and learned about using fresh ingredients instead of prepackaged foods. View Harney’s story at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrzAQs339-E>

In partnership with public and non-profit health, education, and social service providers and community leaders in Clark County, Family-Community Resource Centers (FCRC) have achieved success in helping stabilize families, closing the achievement gap for children in poverty, and increasing support for the most vulnerable children and families in our community. FCRCs are a place where families can access a range of support including academic and early learning programs, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. Community partners work together to provide support and services such as the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington. VPS is committed to establishing FCRCs in our high-needs schools. To date centers are located at 11 district schools. To learn more see our website at: [http://portalsso.vansd.org/portal/page/portal/VSD\\_Home\\_Public/VPS\\_Community/VPS\\_Family\\_Community\\_Resource\\_Centers](http://portalsso.vansd.org/portal/page/portal/VSD_Home_Public/VPS_Community/VPS_Family_Community_Resource_Centers) . To see specifically where our FCRC’s are located, services they provide and achievements we have accomplished go link above, click on “onsite programs and services” in the upper right corner of that page

The District practices a holistic approach to health in the schools with such process and activities varying by site. Indoor and outdoor Physical Education, health, and outdoor recess are still pillars in the educational day with a few schools leading the way with walking school busses, running clubs, outdoor learning labs, learning gardens (rain and food) and greenhouses that utilize the organic foods grown by student in their culinary arts programs.

## 8. New Page

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### **6. Pillar 3: Provide effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways.**

**Describe how your district provides effective environmental and sustainability education by incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways.**

**Provide examples of interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy and human systems.**

**Demonstrate how your district uses the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge and thinking skills.**

**Discuss how your district develops and applies civic knowledge and skills to environmental and sustainability education.**

**(Maximum 800 words)**

In addition to each school working toward an active “green team” or club, the district incorporates curriculum connections at various grade levels:

1st-Organisms

2nd-Soils

4th-Land/Water

5th-Ecosystems with outdoor education

6th-Earth Science

7th-Life Science

High Schools: STEM, Physical Science, Earth Science, Biology, Environmental Science, and AP Environmental Science, ACES (Architecture, construction, environmental services); Horticulture, Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation.

Although ACES, for example, is offered at one site, any HS student from across the district can participate through Program of Choice. Each program option allows students to participate in a specialized program of focus, designed to enhance the learning of core curricular areas, challenge students to achieve higher-level thinking and contextual application, and prepare them for success in their future, whether it be post-secondary education or immediate employment in the workforce. For an overview at our programs of choice that include green career pathways and STEM magnet schools visit

[http://portalsso.vansd.org/portal/page/portal/VSD\\_Home\\_Public/VPS\\_Parent\\_and\\_Families/VPS\\_Programs/VPS\\_Programs\\_of\\_Study](http://portalsso.vansd.org/portal/page/portal/VSD_Home_Public/VPS_Parent_and_Families/VPS_Programs/VPS_Programs_of_Study)

VPS provides opportunities to explore green careers in our career cruising software with specifically diagrammed integrated courses showing students educational pathways to become qualified for a variety of jobs. Students also are exposed to jobs in conservation thru opportunities such as: speed networking, guest speakers, company tours, job shadows, internships, and working with mentors. Students and staff were offered professional development and hands on civic skills and connections through their participation in Vancouver's first annual STEM-fest in September 2013. <http://stem-fest.com> Stem-Fest was a three day community celebration of STEM hosted by Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC) and connecting nearly 50 local community organizations with students and teachers. A video clip can be seen at: [http://old.cityofvancouver.us/cvtv/cvtvarchive2/We\\_Are\\_Vancouver/2013\\_Events/10-13-13/3\\_STEM\\_Fest.mp4](http://old.cityofvancouver.us/cvtv/cvtvarchive2/We_Are_Vancouver/2013_Events/10-13-13/3_STEM_Fest.mp4) . VPS is a key partner in the establishment of the SW Washington STEM Network with the purpose of promoting STEM education and jobs across the community.

In our Advanced Natural Resources course offered at Hudson's Bay HS, the greenhouse is part of a larger outdoor science lab on campus. This sustainable demonstration area includes a water reclamation/biofiltration pond, sustainable gardening with lawn techniques and a garden, converted to permaculture with an orchard, berry patch, vegetables, and insectary. In 2013, this program was awarded a grant for a solar demonstration panel from <http://www.solar4rschools.org/> Installation will begin in 2014. Hudson's Bay teachers participate in Personalized Learning Communities (PLC), of which include teachers from Fort Vancouver High School. At Fort, teachers are expanding their Horticulture and Natural Resources programs by adding Aquaponics and urban aquaculture. They will explore system design, water chemistry, fish husbandry, and plant selection with the implementation of a Tilapia farm and by growing produce hydroponically in a closed loop system. VPS is looking forward to their development and progress, as they share their ideas with their PLC.

Vancouver is advancing our community knowledge of sustainability thru curriculum, professional development and partnerships in the iTech Preparatory school, a STEM school, where we have excelled at integrating environmental concepts throughout the curriculum. The following is an example of iTech Preparatory projects, showcasing how the curriculum is thematically based and transcend multiple curricular areas. Students learn how to restore environmentally sensitive areas that have been impacted by community growth and past agricultural practices. Students analyzed ways to improve crop production at Washington State University Heritage Farm which grows produce for the local food banks. From this experience, students began exploring hydroponics as a way to provide sustainable crops to address world hunger. While in math class, students learn basic surveying techniques with support of a professional surveyor, as well as the impact of agricultural societies on the history of the world in social studies. These topics branched out to health class and the impact of disease on societies which brings students full circle to the understanding of the need for clean water and sustainable natural resources throughout the world. Students will continue to learn and appreciate the complexity and balance between the demands a society has on natural resources and the need to sustain a

healthy environment.

At McLoughlin Middle school, in 2013, a group of 6th grade students participated in the Council of Educational Facility Planners International and US Environmental Protection Agencies "School of the Future Design Competition". "High performing, healthy, safe and sustainable school facilities and their connection to learning are the focus of School of the Future Design Competition each year. This competition challenges student teams to design their schools to enhance learning, conserve resources, be environmentally responsive and engage the surrounding community."-CEFPI website: <http://www.cefpi.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3338> . Five teams were formed at McLoughlin and they worked with mentors in the community to design and build models both physical and electronic. Students then presented their schools to a panel of judges from the community. This 2013/14 sy, VPS will engage over 35 teams to participate in this competition.

## 10. Thank You!

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### Email Confirmation

Jan 06, 2014 16:15:46 Success: Email Sent to: [Invalid question ID: \"41\". Check your merge code.]

### Response Location

<b>Country:</b>	United States
<b>Region:</b>	WA
<b>City:</b>	Vancouver
<b>Postal Code:</b>	98660
<b>Long &amp; Lat:</b>	Lat: 45.724701, Long:-122.745903