

## 2012-2013 School Nominee Presentation Form

### **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

#### **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 one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
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.
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.

# GreenRibbonSchools



U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2013

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For Public Schools only: [ ] Charter [ ] Title I [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

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

Official School Name Racine Montessori School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address: 2371 Howe St.  
Racine, WI 53402

County: Racine State School Code Number\* N/A

Telephone (262) 637-7892 Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL www.racinemontessori.com E-mail rlewisrms@tds.net

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

Rita C. Lewis Date Feb. 11, 2013  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* N/A  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name\* N/A Tel.( ) \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate. This is one of the highest performing green schools in my jurisdiction.

N/A Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

**PART II – SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS**

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# GreenRibbonSchools



## Instructions to School Principal

Provide a concise and coherent "snapshot" that describes how your school 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 school worthy of the title U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School.

## PART III – DOCUMENTATION OF STATE EVALUATION OF NOMINEE

### Instructions to Nominating Authority

The Nominating Authority must document schools' high achievement in each of the three ED-GRS Pillars and nine Elements. For each school nominated, 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 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 one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
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

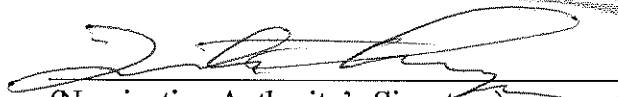
Agency Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Name of Nominating

Authority State Superintendent Tony Evers, PhD  
(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.

# GreenRibbonSchools



(Nominating Authority's Signature)

Date

2/8/13

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

### 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.

**U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools  
Summary of Achievements  
for  
Racine Montessori School**

Racine Montessori is an urban private school serving grades K-8. Racine Montessori has made significant progress toward achieving all three pillars of the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools program due to an environmental ethic deeply rooted in the Montessori philosophy. By being recognized as a Green Ribbon School, students will achieve a sense of pride in their continuing efforts to maintain a green school and campus.

**Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact**

Racine Montessori completed a Focus on Energy Audit in September 2009, which resulted in the installation of solar panels. The campus is proud to have a nature center, peace garden, rain garden, compost site and a greenhouse.

Racine Montessori has done a fantastic job implementing conservation measures to reduce environmental impact. Lights are turned off when a room is not being used. Outdoor teaching reduces the need for using lights in classroom. New ballasts have been installed in light fixtures, including energy efficient bulb usage. The school dishwasher is only used when it is full and the coils on the refrigerators are cleaned regularly. Computer monitors are turned off when not in use or put in "sleep mode" when not in use.

The school installed programmable thermostats, and the HVAC system can be controlled remotely during periods of non-occupancy. The HVAC equipment is regularly serviced and filters are frequently changed. The central air conditioner is not in direct sunlight, and trees provide shade and a wind break for the building. Racine Montessori properly disposes light bulbs. Classroom assistants check water and plumbing fixtures on a daily basis.

The school installed rain gardens and water barrels on the campus. The bathroom faucets have spring shut offs which shut down after use. The building's excess water leads to a rain garden, and the school has a plan for managing and reducing runoff from school grounds.

**Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness**

Racine Montessori has standards for an acceptable cleaning level and follows a cleaning schedule. The school implemented a program to encourage frequent hand washing, and sets a schedule to wash hands prior to food consumption.

Students are encouraged to bring healthy food for snacks and lunch. Students spend time outdoors everyday for at least 60 minutes, during recess, physical education class, and other activities including the use of the compost site and greenhouse. The school has a licensed nutritionist who is also the physical education teacher. Personal healthy lifestyle goals are set and observed. Physical education is taught once each week and recess takes place for 30 minutes

each day. The school does not have vending machines and there is a constant discussion with parents about the importance of providing nutritious lunches and a healthy lifestyle. Organics, food pyramids and nutrition are taught as part of the curriculum at all levels.

The school received grants for building a greenhouse and plants for their native gardens. There are butterfly, rain, herb, vegetable, fruit and flower gardens. The lawns have shade trees and attract a variety of birds and small mammals on campus. There is a short grass native prairie consisting of switch grass, goldenrods, coneflowers, butterfly weed and shooting stars. Students and staff collect prairie seeds in the fall and replant them to enlarge the existing prairie.

### **Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education**

Racine Montessori believes and strives for quality education for their students and as a result, it instills love and respect for their environment. After being recognized as a “Green & Healthy School” by the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Racine Montessori continues to strive to teach children an appreciation for the world they live in. They believe that by teaching children about energy and water conservation, recycling, and land and natural resource management, they will become effective stewards in maintaining the world we live in. All classes discuss energy and water conservation practices and health and safety measures from age three until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are active green participants in the community where they attend field trips to a local farm, a power plant, a wind farm, volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, and spend a week at a nature preserve. They care for plants and trees in their nature center. They not only learn about the environment in the classroom, but also engage in hands-on school projects that foster a green environment. Each class participates in an Earth Day celebratory program each year.

The school partners with the education and science departments at Carthage College where students learn hydroponics. Hydroponics is used in science to grow plants for water conservation in grades four through eight. Water conservation is taught as part of the school's curriculum with the use of its rain garden (built by students), rain barrels and hydroponics. The students visited Growing Power in Milwaukee and worked there to learn water conservation. Classes discuss the importance of keeping sewers free from chemicals.

Racine Montessori is a private elementary school located in urban Racine, Wisconsin serving grades K-8.

The summary of their achievements as reported in their application is presented in each pillar and element below. The focus area is in reference to Wisconsin's application structure.

**Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact**

**Element 1A: reduced or eliminated green house gas (GHG) emissions**

**Focus Area: Energy**

- The school completed a Focus on Energy Audit in September 2009, which resulted in the installation of solar panels.
- The school is not Energy Star Certified, but reports meeting requirements for Energy Star Certification.
- The school reports using solar thermal (air/water) energy and comments that "Solar panels were installed in the spring of 2010."
- The school reports installing energy saving devices including:
  - Switched to energy efficient lighting
    - Comment: Changes light ballasts, Lights are sometimes turned off during class hours and at all times when room is not in use
  - Other:
    - Comment: Solar panels installed in spring of 2010
- The school reports reducing its total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline but does not provide additional data.

*Describe any additional progress your school has made towards energy conservation and/or efficiency of the school facilities.*

In the spring of 2010, solar panels were installed on the pole barn of the building to sell energy back to WE Energies. Lights are always turned off when a room is not being used, always during lunch and at times even during use. On many occasions outdoor teaching takes place resulting in the turning off of lights in classrooms for non-utilization. New ballasts have been installed in light fixtures, along with energy efficient bulb usage replacing older bulbs. The school dishwasher is only used when it is full. Computers are turned off when not in use. Programmable thermostats have been installed in the building.

*In what ways do your students and/or staff help identify and/or implement behavioral changes to reduce energy consumption?*

All students observe the policy of staff turning off lights in classrooms that are not in use and participate in outdoor classroom activities. The staff is aware of the requirement to turn off computers and lights when not in use. Our school properly disposes light bulbs. The coils on the school refrigerators are cleaned regularly.

We utilize programmable thermostats, and the school's HVAC system can be controlled remotely to allow it to be turned off during periods of non occupancy. Computer monitors are turned off when not in use and have a "sleep mode" in place that allows them to "sleep" when not in use. Our HVAC equipment is regularly serviced and filters are changed regularly. The central air conditioner is not in direct sunlight all day long, and trees provide shade onto the building. Trees are placed on the north and west sides of the school to break the wind.

*If energy is taught in the curriculum, please describe how and at what grade levels.*

Energy conservation is taught at all grade levels, from age 3 through the 8th grade. Renewable energy is also taught in the upper level classes. Students have toured the local power plant, and the school has an energy plan for students and staff that places an emphasis on conservation and energy. All students and staff are encouraged to save energy, and school newsletters emphasize conservation. The classes are all involved in learning about solar energy and all other forms of energy. Class field trips have included a trip to Charles Heise windmill to learn about alternative energy sources.

### **Element 1B: Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation**

#### **Focus Area: Water**

- The school's drinking water come from a municipal water source.
- The school reports the following practices to increase water efficiency and ensure quality:
  - Our school conducts annual audits of the facility and irrigation systems to ensure they are free of significant water leaks and to identify opportunities for savings.
    - Comment: The City of Racine performs a monthly audit of our water for contaminants
  - Taps, faucets, and fountains at our school are cleaned at least twice annually to reduce contamination, and screens and aerators are cleaned at least annually to remove particulate lead deposits.

*Describe any additional progress your school has made towards improving water quality, efficiency, and conservation.*

Our school has installed rain gardens and water barrels on the campus. The bathroom faucets have spring shut offs which turn off after use. The school water contains fluoride. We have implemented a program to encourage frequent hand washing, and have time built into the school schedule for washing hands prior to food consumption. Our school maintains adequate supplies for hand washing as well. Our water pipes are insulated. The building's excess water leads to our rain



garden, and the school has a plan for managing and reducing runoff from school grounds.

*In what ways have students and staff identified and implemented water conservation and increased water quality in your school?*

In grades 4 through 8, hydroponics is used in science to grow plants for water conservation. Water conservation is taught as part of the school's curriculum with the use of our rain garden (built by students), rain barrels and hydroponics. We plan to remodel our bathrooms in the near future to result in even more conservation of water. Classroom assistants check on water and plumbing fixtures in the classrooms on a daily basis. Our common area bathrooms are checked on a weekly basis.

*If water topics are taught in the curriculum (i.e., water conservation, water cycle, local watershed and/or school water supply and discharge) please describe how and at what grade levels.*

The school partners with the Education and Science Department of Carthage College to have the students learn hydroponics. The students have visited Growing Power in Milwaukee and have worked there to learn water conservation. Classes discuss the importance of keeping sewers free from chemicals. Students are encouraged to wash their hands to the tune of "Happy Birthday" in order to completely rid them of germs.

### **Element 1A: reduced or eliminated green house gas (GHG) emissions**

#### **Focus Area: School Site**

- The school indicates having and using the following on their school site:
  - A habitat garden.
    - Comment: There is a peace garden on campus and a greenhouse.
  - A food garden
    - Comment: The students have planted fruit trees on campus
  - An arboretum
- The school uses the existing site, lawns, parking areas, playground, etc. for outdoor teaching. The students regularly use an outdoor classroom, weather permitting
- The school has integrated natural features into the playground area.
- Gym class takes place outside weather permitting

*Describe any additional progress your school has made to maintain or improve safe, healthy, and environmentally sound grounds.*

Our school has standards for an acceptable cleaning level, and we have a cleaning schedule in place. We have entryway mats in place to catch dirt, wide enough to

cover 5 full steps, and they are regularly cleaned. We feature playground equipment and outdoor learning areas. Water runs off into a storm drain and our rain garden. We have bird houses, feeders, and a garden area. We have rakes, hoes and shovels to be used in our outdoor study area. We have received grants for building our greenhouse and plants for our native gardens. We have a butterfly, rain, herb, vegetable, fruit and flower garden. Students and staff are responsible for maintaining the gardens, and all students learn in the gardens. We utilize lawn, playground, garden and prairie space for outdoor learning. Lawns are mowed once a week if necessary and the clippings are left on the lawn. The lawns have shade trees and we attract a variety of birds and small mammals on campus. We have a short grass prairie consisting of switch grass, goldenrods, coneflowers, butterfly weed and shooting stars. We collect prairie seeds in the fall and replant them to enlarge the existing prairie, which is visited by all students.

### **Element 1C: Reduced waste production**

#### **Focus Area: Recycling & Waste Management**

- The school recycles the following materials: paper, glass, metals, plastics, ink cartridges, cell phones, milk cartons, and batteries.
  - Comment: Our school recycles everything and encourages parents to drop off their used ink cartridges, aluminum, and cell phones.
- Recycling bins are located in: classrooms, staff lounge, and main office.
- Recycling bins are placed next to a trash can in all locations.
- Recycling bins are clearly labeled.
- The school composts and reports:
  - Our school has a small scale, compost demonstration site used primarily for educational opportunities.
    - Comment: We have a compost site and have purchased a composter
  - Our school composts our cafeteria food waste.
  - Our school composts school landscape waste material.
- The school does not provide a recycling rate calculation, but comments: Waste and recycled materials is collected once a week.
- The school reports having no hazardous waste.

*Describe any additional progress your school has made to reduce waste, increase recycling/composting, or eliminate hazardous waste.*

- The school previously engaged in “Waste Free Wednesdays” but now implements waste free days everyday. Lunches are waste free for students and staff, and we have a relatively new composter. There is not a lot of waste generated as a result. We have in door and outdoor storage areas for recyclables, and the school receives income from recycling. We compost dead flowers, leaves, tree limbs, and

lunch refuse such as orange and banana peels. All students walk their waste out to the compost bin. Finished compost is then used in the school's greenhouse completing the recycling "circle." We purchase recycled paper as well as recycled paper towel, tissues and spray bottles. Our school also buys items in quantity to reduce the amount of packaging and save money, including items such as paper towels, copy paper and toilet paper. We save paper by emailing our school newsletter, and by emailing staff and parents. We also manage finances electronically print on both sides of paper and reuse scrap or paper written on one side. We reuse kitchen storage containers, serve food on reusable trays, use metal silverware, recycle cans and bottles used on field trips.

*Describe how your school encourages waste reduction, reuse and recycling behaviors in your school.*

All students are encouraged to recycle and compost waste materials and participate in activities including placing lunch waste such as banana and orange peels in the compost area. Recycling containers are located inside and outside of the school.

*Describe how waste reduction and recycling are part of the curriculum in some/all grades.*

Waste and recycling are taught in most grades as it is part of the Montessori philosophy.

### **Element 1D: Use of alternative transportation**

Focus Area: Transportation

- The school reports that bus services have been eliminated.

*Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact.*

There is no longer bus exhaust due to idling buses as bus service has been eliminated. We have installed signs in our parking lot reminding drivers to drive cautiously and have installed "Exit only" signs and designated areas as "no parking". We have painted parking space lines on our blacktop.

### **Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness**

#### **Element 2A: Integrated school environmental health program**

Focus Area: Environmental Health

- The school has CO alarms that meet the requirements of the National Fire Protection Association code 720.

- The school prohibiting smoking on campus and in public school buses.
- The school reports that all classrooms with ground contact have been tested for radon within the last 24 months.
- The school has a chemical management program that includes storage and labeling; training and handling; hazard communication; and spills.

*Describe how your school controls and manages chemicals routinely used in the school to minimize student and staff exposure (including chemicals used in science labs).*

Goggles, gloves and labcoats are used by adolescent students. All laboratory chemicals are kept in a locked cabinet and are properly marked, labeled and stored. Labels include date of receipt, name of chemical or solution, and the labels are tightly secured on containers and are legible. They are stored in a locked container, accessible to 2 teachers and the administrator.

*Describe any additional progress your school has made towards improved environmental health specifically on the school building and grounds.*

MSDS sheets are located in the chemical cabinet. The school maintains an inventory of the chemicals stored and the storage area is identified. Chemicals are disposed of as outlined by their MSDS sheet, and chemicals are purchased in small quantities. Less hazardous substitutes are considered when purchasing chemicals. The school participates with the city of Racine chemical disposal program. We have no mercury containing equipment in the school. We have chemical and safety awareness taught in the adolescent curriculum. Finally, lessons in mercury dangers are taught as part of the curriculum.

*Describe how chemical safety and awareness and mercury information are part of the curriculum in some/all grades.*

Dangers of mercury are taught as part of the curriculum.

- The school reports students and staff wear appropriate protection equipment when working with chemicals.
  - Comment: Gloves, labcoats and goggles are utilized.

## **Element 2B: Nutrition and fitness**

### **Focus Area: Health & Wellness**

- The school has a health, nutrition, and/or wellness policy:  
The school provides milk for lunches. The students are encouraged to bring healthy food for lunch and snacks. Students spend time outdoors everyday for at least 60 minutes, during recess, physical education class, and other activities including the use of the compost site and greenhouse. There are also several

outdoor field trips including visits to a local farm and a week long visit to a nature center. The school has a licensed nutritionist as the physical education teacher, and personal healthy lifestyle goals are set and observed. Physical education is taught once each week and recess takes place for 30 minutes each day. We have no vending machines to entice students to buy junk food. We discuss with parents at parent meetings the importance of nutritious lunches and a healthy lifestyle for our students. Organics and food pyramids are taught as part of the curriculum, and we have cooks in the classroom, student gardens, and nutrition education at all levels. We have an Earth Day celebratory program each year and each class participates.

- The school has a school garden that supplies food for students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class, or to the community.
- The school has a harassment and bullying policy:
  - As part of the Montessori policy, bullying is not permitted. We observe Peace Day each year with a full school program.
- The school has the following practices to promote nutrition, physical activity, and overall school health:
  - Participation in Farm to School program
  - At least 50% of students' annual physical education takes place outdoors
  - Health measures are integrated into assessments
  - School promotes hand washing for students and staff

*Describe the type of outdoor education, exercise and nature-based recreation available.*

Weekly physical education classes take place, and recess is outdoors everyday unless the temperature is below 10 degrees. Children participate in an outdoor classroom weather permitting and engage in planting activities. The upper level students participate in a week-long visit to Nature's Classroom, an outdoor Montessori school in Mukwonago.

*Describe how your school encourages educational use of the school grounds, school forests, and outdoor teaching sites.*

The students in the upper level spend a week at Nature's Classroom in Mukwonago. The younger students participate in field trips to a local farm. All students have outdoor lessons in the learning circle outside on campus, our outdoor classroom.

*Describe additional progress your school has made to encourage educational use of the school grounds, school forests, and outdoor teaching sites*

The adolescent children care for the plants and trees in our nature center and school gardens.

**Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education**  
**Element 3A: Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems.**

**Focus Area: Environmental and Sustainability Education**

- The school reports having a K-12 scope and sequence that integrates environmental and/or sustainability coursework at all grade levels.
  - Comment: As stated above, the environmental is part of the Montessori philosophy by way of outdoor classroom usage, gardens, greenhouses, composting, and recycling as part of the daily focus at school.
- The school reports that environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated in all grades, pre-kindergarten through seventh.

*Explain the environmentally and/or sustainability focused clubs students have the option of joining.*

The school sponsors a girl scout troop that teaches the importance of the environment including teaching the girls how to plant flowers.

*Describe outdoor learning experiences offered to the students at the school each year.*

Elementary students work with students from Carthage College to prepare worm bins and tend the gardens. They are currently constructing rain barrels made from large vinyl garbage cans for an inner city school's outdoor environment in Kenosha. The students also raise flower and vegetable plants in the greenhouse to raise funds for these and other projects.

Nature's classroom, local farm field trips, planting on the school campus of trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables, and maintaining the same. Usage of an outdoor classroom.

**Element 3B: Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills**

**Focus Area: Environmental and Sustainability Education**

- Students participate in composting and campus beautification, such as planting, which require critical thinking skills and hands-on science application.

**Element 3C: Development and application of civic knowledge and skills**

**Focus Area: Community Involvement**

- School reports that students participate in civic/community engagement projects related to school site:

We encourage and receive assistance from volunteers in the community in helping with our nature center and with planting native plants and seeds. Several community members attended a “Here Comes the Sun” celebrate to celebrate the installation of our solar panels.

- School reports staff contribute to community-based projects related to environmental and sustainability education:  
The students participate in volunteering for Habitat for Humanity.

#### **Cross Cutting Questions**

- The school reports being recognized by Wisconsin DPI and DNR in April 2012 as a Green & Healthy School.
- The school received the Sierra Club Green Award in May 2010.
- The school is a member of the Wisconsin Green Schools Network.