



## 2013-2014 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 Pre-K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a Pre-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.

### U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2014

Public

Name of Principal : Mr. Jimmie Pearson

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

Official School Name : Homewood Middle School

(As it should appear on an award)

School

Mailing Address 395 Mecca Avenue

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

Homewood AL 35209  
City State Zip

County Jefferson State School Code Number\* 0030

Telephone ( 205 ) 870-0878 Fax ( 205 ) 877-4573



Web site/URL: http://www.homewood.k12.al.us/hms/ E-mail: jpearson@homewood.k12.al.us

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Bill Cleveland

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

Jennifer A. Pearson Date 1-17-14  
(Principal's Signature)

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name\* Homewood City Schools Tel. (205) 870-4203

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.

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.

Bill Cleveland Date 1/21/14  
(Superintendent's Signature)

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

### **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.

Homewood Middle School (HMS) in Homewood, Alabama has a dedicated population of staff, students, and community members that are working to develop a culture of environmental education and green living practices to match an incredible facility. HMS was the only Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver-certified middle school in the nation in 2008 and the first LEED-certified building in Alabama. Within the school, a number of programs contribute to an overall mission to create a school where teachers and students are working to better themselves, their school, their city, and their planet. Among the 900 students and approximately 90 staff members there were multiple contributors to this Green Ribbon Schools application. Administrators, teachers, parents, community members, secretaries, and custodial staff were interviewed by students to discover the characteristics of Green Ribbon schools that were in place at HMS. There are a number of programs that have grown and continue to grow in recent years that align with the Green Ribbon Pillars.

#### 1) The HMS Recycling Program

In February of 2012, a team of teachers organized a school wide recycling program that taught important skills to students with special needs. The students advertise the recycling program, work to make the program more efficient, and manage the materials that are recycled. The middle and high school recycling programs have effectively worked with local nonprofits to ensure the continuing success of the program. WastePro provides the pickup for the middle school paper recycling program every two weeks. The Alabama Environmental Council and RecycleAL.com provide resources that align with the Alabama Course of Study. This school year, in addition to paper, plastic bottles and cans are being recycled. At lunch, students have been asked to keep their milk or water bottles. The HMS PTO has recently provided uniform, reusable bags with the "HMS Recycles" logo. The custodial staff has commented on their reduced trash loads as a result of the school recycling program. The calculations for the recycling rate in the GRS application were conducted by the gifted education class, students who enjoyed the complexity of the applied problem.

#### 2) The HMS Community Garden

The goal of the school garden is to equip students to become informed adults, capable of making healthy



environmental decisions that balance cultural perspectives, the economy, public health and environment. The US census cites Homewood as one of the most population dense cities in AL. In fact, 42% of students reside in apartment complexes. The garden provides the only chance for many students to get close to nature and actively watch plants grow. HMS garden is also home to the only community garden in the city of Homewood. Community members have learned new techniques for rainwater harvesting from the students while the students have learned about the importance of planting flowering plants from the local garden club. Special education students harvest herbs and vegetables, English language learners do language lessons in the garden and participate in the environmental club, while gifted and general education students study the complexities of planning and maintaining a garden. The new central office (under construction) will overlook the garden. The garden is a model for what can be accomplished when a community and a school system work together.

3) “The Movement”

The Movement promotes healthy lifestyles and provides an opportunity for employees to not only improve fitness for themselves but also model wellness for students. The SOS/FIT employee wellness program started five years ago with Spin classes available for students during school and employees of HHS after/before school hours. Year two of The SOS/FIT program expanded to include a system-wide employee wellness program designed to promote healthier lifestyle choices for employees in the Homewood City School System. Year three of the SOS/FIT program exploded to include a wider variety of choices and a new slogan, “The Movement”. Year four of “The Movement” continued to expand including a total 3.2 years of continuous exercise, Birmingham Business Journal's Healthiest Employer Award and expanded programming. Teachers who focus on personal health model those behaviors for students and empower students to succeed. Students are now registering for local races, coming to school early and staying late to focus on fitness and improve wellness. The Return On Investment (ROI) from *The Movement* can be measured in several areas such as school climate improvement, reduced absenteeism and improved performance in the classroom.

The HMS recycling program, the community garden, and “the Movement” are the highlights of initiatives that are growing and expanding to become permanent elements of the HMS culture. As these programs grow, the Green Ribbon Schools Award recognizes the hard work and dedication to continuous improvement of the many professionals working to provide environmental and civic education opportunities for students.

**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. **See principal’s summary above.**

**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 Pre-K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a Pre-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 Alabama State Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority Dr. Thomas R. Bice, State Superintendent of Education



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

Thomas R. Bice Date 1/31/14

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.

## ED-GRS Application for Schools

**School Contact Information**

School Name: Homewood Middle School  
 Street Address: 395 Mecca Avenue  
 City: Homewood State: AL Zip: 35209  
 Web site: www.homewood.k12.al.us  
 Principal Name: Mr. Jimmie Pearson  
 Principal Email Address: jpearson@homewood.k12.al.us Phone Number: 205-870-0878  
 Lead Applicant Name (if different): Dylan Ferniany & Briana Morton  
 Lead Applicant Email: [dferniany@homewood.k12.al.us](mailto:dferniany@homewood.k12.al.us); [brmorton@homewood.k12.al.us](mailto:brmorton@homewood.k12.al.us) Phone Number: 205-870-0878

Level [X ] Middle (6 - 8 or 9)	School Type (X ) Public	How would you describe your school? (X ) Suburban	District Name <u>Homewood City Schools</u>
			Total Enrolled: <u>901</u>
Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households? ( ) Yes (X ) No	% receiving FRPL <u>31</u> % limited English proficient <u>.04</u> Other measures _____		Graduation rate: <u>100%</u>  Attendance rate: <u>98.59 ADA</u>

*Summary Narrative:* Provide an 800 word maximum narrative describing your school’s efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Focus on unique and innovative practices and partnerships.

Homewood Middle School (HMS) is a unique school with a dedicated population of staff, students, and community members that are working to develop a culture of environmental education and green living practices to match the incredible facility. HMS was the only Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver-certified middle school in the nation in 2008 and the first LEED-certified building in Alabama. Within the school, a number of programs contribute to an overall mission to create a school where teachers and students are working to better themselves, their school, their city, and their planet.

Among the 900 students and approximately 90 staff members there were multiple contributors to this Green Ribbon Schools application. Administrators, teachers, parents, community members, secretaries, and custodial staff were interviewed by students from all grade levels to discover how many of the characteristics of Green Ribbon schools that were in place at HMS. There are a number of programs that have grown and continue to grow in recent years that align with the Green Ribbon Pillars.

#### 1) The HMS Recycling Program

In February of 2012, a team of teachers organized a school wide recycling program that taught important skills to students with special needs. The students advertise the recycling program, work to make the program more efficient, and manage the materials that are recycled. The middle and high school recycling programs have effectively worked with local nonprofits to ensure the continuing success of the program. WastePro provides the pickup for the middle school paper recycling program every two weeks. The Alabama Environmental Council and RecycleAL.com provide resources that align with the Alabama Course of Study. This school year, in addition to paper, plastic bottles and cans are being recycled. At lunch, students have been asked to keep their milk or water bottles. The HMS PTO has recently provided funds for uniform, reusable bags with a "HMS Recycles" logo. The custodial staff has commented on their reduced trash loads as a result of the school recycling program. The calculations for the recycling rate in the GRS application were conducted by the gifted education class, students who enjoyed the complexity of the applied problem.

#### 2) The HMS Community Garden

The goal of the school garden is to equip students to become informed adults, capable of making healthy environmental decisions that balance cultural perspectives, the economy, public health and environment. HMS garden is also home to the only community garden in the city of Homewood. Community members have learned new techniques for rainwater harvesting from the students while the students have learned about the importance of planting flowering plants from the local garden club. Special education students harvest herbs and vegetables, English language learners do language lessons in the garden and participate in the environmental club, while gifted and general education students study the complexities of planning and maintaining a garden. During the winter holidays the HMS environmental club, the city of Homewood, and Recycle Alabama partner to recycle Christmas trees that go back to the garden and city parks for mulch. The new central office (under construction) will overlook the garden. HMS is creating a model for what can be accomplished when a community and a school system work together.

#### 3) "The Movement"

The Movement promotes healthy lifestyles and provides an opportunity for employees to not only improve fitness for themselves but also model wellness for students. The SOS/FIT employee wellness program started five years ago with Spin classes available for students during school and employees of HHS after/before school hours. Year two of The SOS/FIT program expanded to include a system-wide employee wellness program designed to promote healthier lifestyle choices for employees in the Homewood City School System. Year three of the SOS/FIT program exploded to include a wider variety of choices and a new slogan, "The Movement". Year four of "The Movement" continued to expand including a total 3.2 years of continuous exercise, Birmingham Business Journal's Healthiest Employer Award and expanded programming. Teachers who focus on personal health model those behaviors for students and empower students to succeed. Students are now registering for local races, coming to school early and staying late to focus on fitness and improve wellness. It has brought the community closer together as students, teachers, and community members can be seen exercising together. The Homewood Police Chief can be seen at spin class on occasion as an example of the reach the movement has had on the Homewood community.

The HMS recycling program, the community garden, and "the Movement" are the highlights of the environmental initiatives that are growing and expanding to become permanent elements of the HMS culture. The Green Ribbon Schools award would validate and recognize the hard work of individuals who are making the city of Homewood a better place.

1. Is your school participating in a local, state or national school program, such as EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio



Manager, EcoSchools, Project Learning Tree, or others, which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars?

( ) Yes ( X ) No Program(s) and level(s) achieved: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Has your school, staff or student body received any awards for facilities, health or environment?  
( X ) Yes ( ) No Award(s) and year(s) Birmingham Business Journal's Healthiest Employer Award and the silver winner of the 2011-2012 School Employee Wellness Awards Program sponsored by the Directors of Health Promotion and Education

### **Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs**

#### **Energy**

1. Can your school demonstrate a reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions? ( ) Yes ( X ) No
2. Do you track resource use in EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager? ( ) Yes ( X ) No
3. Has your school reduced its total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline? ( ) Yes ( X ) No
4. What percentage of your school's energy is obtained from:  
On-site renewable energy generation: 0% Type \_\_\_\_\_  
Purchased renewable energy: 0% Type \_\_\_\_\_
5. In what year was your school originally constructed? 2005/ LEED - NC v2 Silver  
What is the total building area of your school? 180,000 square feet
6. Has your school constructed or renovated building(s) in the past ten years? ( X ) Yes ( ) No  
**For new building(s):** Percentage building area that meets green building standards: 28% recycled content and 29% regional materials (Energysmart Schools Case Study)

Certification and year received: LEED-Silver, 2005 Total constructed area: 3 stories, 180,000 square feet

#### **Water and Grounds**

7. Can you demonstrate a reduction in your school's total water consumption from an initial baseline? No.
8. What percentage of your landscaping is considered water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate? The school utilizes drought-tolerant plants (Energysmart Schools Case Study)
9. Describe alternate water sources used for irrigation. (50 words max)  
The school uses drip irrigation and water-efficient low-flow and waterless plumbing fixtures. (Energysmart Schools Case Study). The community garden uses a rainwater collection and cistern system.
10. Describe any efforts to reduce stormwater runoff and/or reduce impermeable surfaces. (50 words max)  
The community garden is located on the old school building site, which was compacted land with runoff issues. Runoff from the parking area has been redirected and is used to water the community garden through the rainwater cistern.
11. Our school's drinking water comes from:  
( X ) Municipal water source ( ) Well on school property ( ) Other:
12. Describe how the water source is protected from potential contaminants. (50 words max)  
Backflow prevention devices are installed

13. Describe the program you have in place to control lead in drinking water. (50 words max)

No program currently

14. What percentage of the school grounds is devoted to ecologically beneficial uses? (50 word max)

The community garden takes up 8 acres of land and features 13 raised beds. The garden features a rain water harvesting system utilizing a 3000 gallon cistern. Rainwater is collected from an overhang used for student drop off and funneled down a central gutter which connects to PVC pipe underground.

**Waste**

15. What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfills or incinerations due to reduction, recycling and/or composting? Complete all the calculations below to receive points.

A - Monthly garbage service in cubic yards (garbage dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): 624 cubic yards per month of regular waste (not lunchroom) 363 cubic yards from lunchroom, total of **986.8 cubic yards** monthly garbage service

B - Monthly recycling volume in cubic yards (recycling dumpster sizes(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): Total cubic yards recycled: 18.6 cubic yards per month paper, cans, and plastic bottles

C - Monthly compostable materials volume(s) in cubic yards (food scrap/food soiled paper dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): We do not compost.

Recycling Rate =  $((B + C) \div (A + B + C)) \times 100$ : 1.85

Monthly waste generated per person =  $(A/\text{number of students and staff})$ : .98 cubic yards

16. What percentage of your school's total office/classroom paper content is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed and/or chlorine-free? None

17. List the types and amounts of hazardous waste generated at your school:

Flammable liquids	Corrosive liquids	Toxics	Mercury	Other:
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How is this measured? Not measured

How is hazardous waste disposal tracked? Not measured

Describe other measures taken to reduce solid waste and eliminate hazardous waste. (100 word max) Aside from the recycling program there are no other measures taken to reduce solid waste.

18. Which green cleaning custodial standard is used? N/A

What percentage of all products is certified? 0%

What specific third party certified green cleaning product standard does your school use?  
None

**Alternative Transportation**

19. What percentage of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 + student in the car) to/from school? (Note if your school does not use school buses) Homewood city schools do not use school buses, so the majority of students walk or carpool.

How is this data calculated? (50 word max)

At this point we do not have data on the percentage of walkers and carpoolers. We estimate that 30-40% of students walk based on the proximity of apartment complexes within very close walking distance. On any given day this will change depending on the weather. Few students bike to school.

20. Has your school implemented?  
[X ] Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.  
[X ] Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School  
Describe activities in your safe routes program: (50 word max)  
Adults at all intersections around the school. SRO officer speaks to students about safe walking practices.
21. Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact. (50 word max)  
HCS has 6 traditional school buses that are used for student transportation for events. This allows students to walk or carpool to school more often reducing the environmental impact from transportation.
22. Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max)  
Since HCS does not have regular bus routes, we do not have a large amount of transportation that is impacting the environment.

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

### **Environmental Health**

1. Describe your school's Integrated Pest Management efforts, including IPM/green certifications earned, routine inspections, pest identification, monitoring, record-keeping, etc.:  
Pest control in the schools is contracted by an outside vendor.
2. What is the volume of your annual pesticide use (gal/student/year)? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which of the following practices does your school employ to minimize exposure to hazardous contaminants? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice.  
[X] Our school prohibits smoking on campus and in public school buses. There are signs at each school and students who smoke on campus or have tobacco on campus are held to strict disciplinary action. We have no school buses.  
[X] Our school uses fuel burning appliances and has taken steps to protect occupants from carbon monoxide (CO)  
Natural gas appliances in kitchen are located beneath exhaust hood.  
[X] Our school does not have any fuel burning combustion appliances This applies in classrooms  
[X] Our school has identified any wood playground or other structures that contain chromate copper arsenate and has taken steps to eliminate exposure. No playground structures.
4. Describe how your school manages and controls student and staff exposure to chemicals (including pesticides) routinely used in the school. (100 word max) \_  
The custodial staff schedules cleaning around times that students are not in classes, so students are not exposed to cleaning materials throughout the day.
5. Describe actions your school takes to prevent exposure to asthma triggers in and around the school. (100 word max)  
Approximately 13% of students in the school are diagnosed with asthma. In order to minimize the students' exposure to triggers school custodial staff does any cleaning with harsh chemicals during the summer, at night, or on weekends when students are not in the facility.
6. Describe actions your school takes to control moisture from leaks, condensation, and excess humidity, and to promptly cleanup mold or remove moldy materials when it is found. (100 word max)  
Periodic roof inspections are performed. We have HVAC systems in place which control humidity, and we have not experienced any problems with mold.

7. Has your school installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources?  
( )Yes ( X)No No known major airborne contaminant sources.
8. Describe your school's practices for inspecting and maintaining the building's ventilation system and all unit ventilators to ensure they are clean and operating properly. (100 word max)  
Periodic maintenance is performed on all ventilation systems, and all systems are monitored thru a DDC control system for problems and alarms.
9. Describe actions your school takes to ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation standards. (100 word max)  
Air distribution system is designed in accordance with ASHRAE 2001 Fundamentals Handbook Ch. 32 to attain ventilation effectiveness by meeting air diffusion performance index guide that helps ensure effective delivery of air. (Energysmart Schools Case Study) All systems were designed by a mechanical engineering firm to meet the latest code requirements. All systems are monitored by a DDC control system. All HVAC systems measure outdoor air intake, ventilation and control to design specifications. Gymnasium HVAC systems monitor CO2 levels and control ventilation system based on CO2 levels.
10. Describe other steps your school takes to protect indoor environmental quality such as implementing EPA IAQ Tools for Schools and/or conducting other periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to identify environmental health and safety issues and take corrective action. (200 word max)  
All HVAC systems are periodically inspected by both on-site and central maintenance staff. Operable windows provide outside air for classrooms, and most classrooms have two windows that can be opened to let air in from outside. Large glass windows provide high indoor quality with natural sunlight rather than the fluorescent lighting available in most schools. The media center is almost entirely lit with sunlight, providing a peaceful learning space for students. Natural daylight in 82% of the building has resulted in a 36% energy reduction when compared to a similar-size code compliant school (Energysmart Schools Case study)

### **Nutrition and Fitness**

11. Which practices does your school employ to promote nutrition, physical activity and overall school health? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max each)
- Our school participates in a Farm to School program to use local, fresh food.  
We use our use food from our own garden in the cafeteria.
- Our school has an on-site food garden.The HMS Outdoor classroom and Community Garden produces a number of edible plants that are used in Family and Consumer Sciences, classrooms, and in the school cafeteria. The garden has 13 raised beds, including some that are raised higher for students who are in wheelchairs. Community garden work days each month bring students, parents, teachers, and community members together to improve and maintain the garden.
- Our school garden supplies food for our students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class or to the community.  
When the garden vegetables and herbs are ready they are taken to the school cafeteria, where the cafeteria director incorporates the garden harvest into the menu for the day. Herbs are used frequently, while lettuce, cabbage, turnips, and collards are put in the food line when they are able to use them along with the daily menu. Samford University Chef, Chris Vizzina, provides healthy food demonstrations and lessons to students.
- Our students spent at least 120 minutes per week over the past year in school supervised physical education.  
Each student spends 45 minutes a day, or 225 minutes a week in physical education classes. We also have an extremely active athletic program. Track and cross country, basketball, football, volleyball, cheerleading, and dance team, keep many students active after the school day ends.

[X] At least 50% of our students' annual physical education takes place outdoors.

The physical education class is held outside on the large field on nice days. All of the classrooms can see these activities outside so it is exciting for the students to see what they may be doing later in P.E. that day. In physical education students are exposed to new sports such as lacrosse, golf, handball, and floor hockey that they may not be able to participate in otherwise.

[ X] Health measures are integrated into assessments. Students have physical fitness assessments frequently in their Physical Education classes.

12. Describe the type of outdoor education, exercise and recreation available. (100 word max)

The environmental club meets on Wednesdays outside in the community garden. Grade levels host outdoor activities in the spring. The 6th grade conducts a kickball tournament and the 7th grade does a Hunger Games themed field day where students participate in relays that are themed around quotes from the Hunger Games book. The 6th grade does an immigration simulation that takes place on the field and is designed for students to develop empathy for those who immigrated to the United States through Ellis Island.

13. Describe any other efforts to improve nutrition and fitness, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max)

The Movement is an innovative program that promotes nutrition and fitness among both students and staff. Each week, teachers in Homewood log "Patriot Points" into a database. The school with the most Patriot Points each week gets to host The Movement trophy. HMS awards teachers with red, blue, or gold stars that are displayed on the doors of each classroom. Students ask about the stars and encourage teachers to keep moving. Homewood also hosts a 5K, the Spirit Scamper, in the spring where teachers, students, parents, and administrators run through Homewood together.

#### **Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety**

14. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues? (X ) Yes ( ) No

If yes, describe the health-related initiatives or approaches used by the school:

The Life Skills Training Program has helped to educate students about safety, social skills, mental health, and a number of other factors that face teenagers today. The program is taught by P.E. and elective teachers that are well-respected by the students.

15. Does your school partner with any postsecondary institutions, businesses, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and/or safety? ( X) Yes ( ) No

If yes, describe these partnerships:

Homewood middle school has a number of partnerships to support students. Samford University Chef, Chris Vizzina, provides healthy food demonstrations and lessons to students. Impact Family Counseling provides resources and trained staff to work with at-risk students. Homewood Middle School has a full time school resource officer who educates staff on potential dangers to watch for with students (drug and alcohol trends, weapons, and other safety factors). The Safe and Healthy Homewood Coalition is another partnership in which community organizations and the schools work together to reduce substance abuse.

16. Does your school have a school nurse and/or a school-based health center? (X ) Yes ( ) No

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

Students in grades 6-7 are enrolled in a Life Skills Training Program, a substance abuse prevention program successful in reducing the risks of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse, and violence by targeting the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors. At-risk students are also selected to participate in Impact Counseling, which provides time for students to discuss issues at home and at school.

and develop coping skills to manage these issues. In addition, we have a full time Behavior Interventionist that works with families to support student and parent mental health.

### **Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education**

1. Which practices does your school employ to help ensure effective environmental and sustainability education? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships.  
 Our school has an environmental or sustainability literacy requirement. (200 word max)  
At this time there is not an environmental or sustainability literacy requirement, but many teachers incorporating these skills into their classrooms.  
  
 Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated throughout the curriculum. (200 word max)  
Science curriculum in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade incorporates environmental and sustainability concepts. With 7<sup>th</sup> grade life science concepts of ecological preservation are addressed, while in 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will study renewable energy utilizing wind. Many teachers in the school and extracurricular programs have incorporated environmental and sustainability into their curriculum. The JUNA team, sponsored by the enrichment teachers did a community service project with the Aga Khan Foundation, where they created exhibits that taught about the foundation's work in improving the environment in developing countries. The special education classrooms work in the community garden and manage the recycling program. Family and Consumer Sciences and Career and Technology classes create eco-friendly products, such as deodorant and frames for the garden beds. While there is not a written sustainability curriculum at HMS many teachers have incorporated environmental learning into their classrooms.  
  
 Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated into assessments. (200 word max)  
The projects described above are measured with assessments ranging from labs, projects, life-size exhibits, usable products (cold frames, deodorant), written responses, and a number of traditional assessments (worksheets, quizzes, tests) to accompany the curriculum.  
  
 Students demonstrate high levels of proficiency in these assessments. (100 word max)  
Student engagement in the project-based elements of these assessments results in high levels of proficiency among students. Because the learning is oftentimes applied and different from the usual classroom learning that students encounter, they often rise to the challenge and produce amazing projects as a result of the interesting curriculum.  
  
 Professional development in environmental and sustainability education is provided to all teachers. (200 word max)  
Professional Development is not offered to all teachers but in Homewood select teacher leaders are often sent to conferences to bring back and share what they have learned. Garden director and 8th grade science teacher Molly Knudsen was sent to the National Science Teachers' Association conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. There she attended Project Learning Tree and KidWind sessions, as well as some on school gardens. She presented what she learned at district professional development in a session about teaching engineering skills in science class.
2. For schools serving grades 9-12, provide:  
Percentage of last year's eligible graduates who completed the AP Environmental Science course during their high school career:   n/a        Percentage scoring a 3 or higher:
3. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning science, technology, engineering and mathematics thinking skills and content knowledge? (200 word max)  
The 7<sup>th</sup> grade science teachers conduct labs outdoors, recording data and then writing it up in lab reports. In Mr. Crawford's career and technology class the students designed, tested, and constructed cold frames that protect raised beds in the winter. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade science there is an upcoming STEM investigation on wind that will promote science, technology, engineering, and mathematics thinking skills.

4. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning green technologies and career pathways? (200 word max)

In the career technology class students are designing and building covers for the community garden beds to help them last through the winter. These are made from PVC pipe that was recycled from that used in the robotics team this year. Students developed prototypes that were tested in the garden and then proceeded to make one for each of the 13 garden beds. This project is in progress. The upcoming wind investigation in 8<sup>th</sup> grade science will also teach students about green technologies.

The robotics team utilized reclaimed computers for the BEST award portion of the competition. Approximately 15 CPU's, 5 keyboards, and other computer accessories were donated for the project. Students took them apart, created the booth design and even created our usual "giveaways" out of the parts. Jewelry, small chess sets, buttons and magnets were made out of the many small computer parts. This was both a learning experience for the students and provided a way for local companies to recycle electronics.

5. Describe students' civic/community engagement projects integrating environment and sustainability topics. (200 word max)

- A former middle school student came back and earned his Eagle badge by building raised beds, a compost bin, and a learning wall. The chef we partner with also donated the funds to build 3 beds now used by the FACS class. The boy scouts are also building a tool shed in the garden.
- The community helps support the garden by having organized work days every month. This has been a great way for people interested in the garden to come out and get a closer look. It is also a great time for student to earn service hours.
- The environmental club helps to recycle Christmas trees and use them as mulch in the garden. This is done with a partnership with the high school environmental club and the city of Homewood.
- Elementary school art classes designed an art project for the community garden that is a permanent fixture and contributes to the overall aesthetics of the garden.

6. Describe students' meaningful outdoor learning experiences at every grade level. (200 word max)

- Family and Consumer Sciences students create chemical-free cleaning products and homemade deodorant using recycled deodorant containers.
- Enrichment students designed the Global Village at the Aga Khan Foundation's Partnership Walk including exhibits on the Bujagali Valley Dam, which provided electricity to thousands of Ugandans, the planting of mangrove trees and micro-forestry in Kenya.
- Physical Science classes conduct STEM investigations in which students create wind turbines and learn about alternate, sustainable energy sources as they study concepts of energy conversions, work, power, and machines.
- English Language Learners study the ecology of herbs. They study geology through the rock formations near the creek and work on science vocabulary outdoors.
- Life Science classes have done two outdoor labs this year. In one they created a list of biotic and abiotic organisms and then come up with the 6 characteristics of living things. They also completed a scientific method lab to test the effect of arm swing on jump distance outdoors.
- Special Ed students work in the garden by pulling weeds from their raised beds, watching plants grow and picking herbs and vegetables from the garden.
- Career/Technology students are building cold covers for the garden beds for winter.

7. Describe how outdoor learning is used to teach an array of subjects in context, engage the broader community, and develop civic skills. (200 word max)

As evidenced by the wide variety of classes that use the community garden and outdoor learning space at HMS, there are a number of outdoor learning experiences that allow students to learn about their community, both the school campus and the city of Homewood. Many of the programs, such as the special education program, encourage students to beautify and better their own campus. The weekend work days are attended by a variety of students, parents, and community members. These work days are a great model for civic engagement and an opportunity for the various stakeholders to work together toward common goals.

8. Describe your partnerships to help your school and other schools achieve in the 3 Pillars. Include both the scope and impact of these partnerships. (200 words max)

Elementary schools did the artwork in the community garden. The boy scouts have been involved in building the garden facilities such as a tool shed. Local community members are involved in many aspects of the garden, headed by parent Julie Gentry. A rainwater collection system is currently being assembled to water the gardens. The environmental commission, the high school environmental club, and HMS environmental club work together each year to recycle Christmas trees in the community. The “Movement” includes partnerships with the Trak Shak, Iron Tribe, and other local fitness vendors to enhance the wellness of the staff and students. The Recycling program involves partnerships with the PTO, Recycle Alabama, WastePro, and the Alabama Environmental Council. Homewood Middle School utilizes every community resource available to ensure that programs flourish.

9. Describe any other ways that your school integrates environment, sustainability, STEM, green technology, and civics into curricula to provide effective environmental and sustainability education, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (200 words max)

A select group of students participate in the Technology Student Association (TSA) each year in career/technology. These students are often charged with a STEM, green technology, or environmental challenge. For instance this year, the TSA conference has challenges such as agriculture and biotechnology design, energy sources, environmental focus, Go Green manufacturing, Junior Solar Sprint, and water infrastructure to name a few.

The true innovation of the green living programs at HMS is the collaboration between groups of students and teachers who rarely interact in many schools. The community garden has provided a central project that special education, gifted education, career/technology, English Language Learners, and general education classrooms can benefit from. Because of these interactions, students, teachers, and parents are developing relationships that improve the school culture and climate. As these programs continue to grow, the partnerships that have resulted from the community garden, the recycling program, the integrated curriculum, and the wellness program, could provide a model for middle schools with similar resources and facilities. This Green Ribbon proposal has provided us with an opportunity to highlight and consolidate these practices, which will be beneficial to the growth of each program as they continue to garner support.

10. Submit 5 number of photos (with appropriate permissions) or up to 5 minutes of video content.

<http://www.videosprout.com/video?id=6ae86337-8b57-fa51-a18c-0000b0a853ab>

### **References**

U.S. Department of Energy: Energy Efficiency “Energysmart Schools Case Study: Homewood Middle School”, October 2009

### **Green Ribbon Application Team Members:**

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Julie Gentry- Parent and Director of HMS Community Garden

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