



2014-2015 School Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

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

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental education.
3. Neither the nominated public school nor its public school district is refusing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review.
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 2014-2015

Charter Title I Magnet Private Independent

Name of Principal: Mr. John Campin

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

Official School Name: Edward Babe Gomez Heritage Elementary School

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: 5101 South 17th St, Omaha NE 68107

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

County: Sarpy State School Code Number *:

Telephone: 402-898-2801 Fax: 402-989-1854

Web site/URL: <http://www.gomezheritage.ops.org> E-mail: john.campin@ops.org

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

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

John Campin

(Principal's Signature)

Date: 1/30/15

Name of Superintendent: Mr. Mark Evans
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)

District Name: Omaha Public Schools

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



Date: 1/30/15

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

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

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. The school meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: Nebraska Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: Sara Cooper
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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



Date: 01/30/2014

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Provide a coherent "snapshot" that describes how your school is representative of your jurisdiction's highest achieving green school efforts. Summarize your strengths and accomplishments in all three Pillars and nine Elements. Then, include documentation and concrete examples for work in every Pillar and Element.

Edward Babe Gomez Heritage Elementary School is located in the southeast area of the Omaha Public School District. We are the second largest elementary school in the district and our population includes many immigrant families that speak both English and Spanish. Our doors opened to welcome students on August 25, 2004. Gomez Heritage was designed as a state of the art teaching facility with an emphasis on blending into the natural landscape. The school utilizes up to date technology including three specialized technology labs. Each classroom is equipped with smartboards, elmos, and projectors to reduce paper consumption. The building design also includes a geothermal well field and use of natural light. In fact, there is such an abundant amount of natural light that we are able to implement "Lights Out" days. The community of Gomez Heritage has implemented many projects and activities to promote environmental awareness and maintain a healthy staff, student and parent body.

Our nationally accredited Jan Gilbert Memorial Outdoor Classroom is utilized by every student throughout the year. It provides a multi sensory approach to learning with open ended activities that can be adapted to children's individual interests and needs, empowering them to become problem solvers and critical thinkers. This alternative learning environment helps foster a love of nature, stewardship and facilitates an understanding of the interconnectedness of resources. Our outdoor classroom is a sense of pride for our school, parents and community. Extensive training for staff continues to be provided through the Nature Explore Program.

Gomez Heritage provides ample opportunities for parent involvement. Parents played an integral role in establishing the outdoor classroom. Through mentor/mentee programs, parents and students are responsible for the upkeep of the outdoor classroom. Together, mulch was laid, native trees, grasses and flowers were planted, stations were built, planter beds raised, bird houses constructed and stepping stones and benches were designed.

Our "D.O.G.S.", Dads of Great Students, help with campus clean up projects and our yearly can drive along with our Student Leaderstars. The money raised goes to the expansion of the outdoor classroom. The "D.O.G.S." also assist in the classroom to build positive relationships with students. Every week "The Super Moms" can be seen collecting our classroom recyclable material from all classrooms and offices. "The Super Moms" also organize recycling for the end of the year picnic celebration. They deliver produce to classrooms for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program twice a week.

Gomez Heritage participates in the Woodhouse Backpack Program. Based on parent income, select students are given healthy food for the weekend. Students can participate in cooking classes using produce from our twelve garden planters. The intention is for students to continue a healthy lifestyle at home. Our staff lounge is equipped with Magic Bullets and juice/water vending machines. The Gomez Heritage Administration also provides healthy food choices for staff inservices. A schoolwide weight loss program, Zumba and Yoga classes are offered to parents and staff in the hopes that they will also adopt a healthy lifestyle.

In addition to biweekly physical education classes, students have the opportunity to participate in numerous recreational sports to promote physical, mental and social well-being. Through our partnerships with the Screaming Eagles and The Kroc Community Center, students participate in flag football, wrestling, basketball, volleyball, and soccer. Students also take part in Morning Walking Club, Timberwolf Park Recreation Area and Jump Rope for Health.

The Community of Gomez Heritage realizes how vitally important it is that our children grow up to be the next generation of environmental stewards. We realize that the best way to protect the future of our world is to help them grow up with an admiration for the earth today.

SUBMISSION

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

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 and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

2015 NEBRASKA APPLICATION

Level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK - 5 or 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K - 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10 - 12)	School Type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter	How would you describe your school? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural	District Name <u>Omaha Public Schools</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Largest 50 Districts Total Enrolled: <u>860</u>
--	--	--	--

environment helps foster a love of nature, stewardship and facilitates an understanding of the interconnectedness of resources. Our outdoor classroom is a sense of pride for our school, parents and community. Extensive training for staff continues to be provided through the Nature Explore Program.

Gomez Heritage provides ample opportunities for parent involvement. Parents played an integral role in establishing the outdoor classroom. Through mentor/mentee programs, parents and students are responsible for the upkeep of the outdoor classroom. Together, mulch was laid, native trees, grasses and flowers were planted, stations were built, planter beds raised, bird houses constructed and stepping stones and benches were designed.

Our "D.O.G.S.", Dads of Great Students, help with campus clean up projects and our yearly can drive along with our Student Leaderstars. The money raised goes to the expansion of the outdoor classroom. The "D.O.G.S." also assist in the classroom to build positive relationships with students. Every week "The Super Moms" can be seen collecting our classroom recyclable material from all classrooms and offices. "The Super Moms" also organize recycling for the end of the year picnic celebration. They deliver produce to classrooms for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program twice a week.

Gomez Heritage participates in the Woodhouse Backpack Program. Based on parent income, select students are given healthy food for the weekend. Students can participate in cooking classes using produce from our twelve garden planters. The intention is for students to continue a healthy lifestyle at home. Our staff lounge is equipped with Magic Bullets and juice/water vending machines. The Gomez Heritage Administration also provides healthy food choices for staff inservices. A schoolwide weight loss program, Zumba and Yoga classes are offered to parents and staff in the hopes that they will also adopt a healthy lifestyle.

In addition to biweekly physical education classes, students have the opportunity to participate in numerous recreational sports to promote physical, mental and social well-being. Through our partnerships with the Screaming Eagles and The Kroc Community Center, students participate in flag football, wrestling, basketball, volleyball, and soccer. Students also take part in Morning Walking Club, Timberwolf Park Recreation Area and Jump Rope for Health.

The Community of Gomez Heritage realizes how vitally important it is that our children grow up to be the next generation of environmental stewards. We realize that the best way to protect the future of our world is to help them grow up with an admiration for the earth today.

1. Is your school participating in a local, state or national school program which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars?

Yes No Program(s) and level(s) achieved:

OPS Green Schools Initiative, benchmarking Energy, Waste & Recycling, Paper Use, Water and Green Teams

2. Has your school, staff or student body received any awards for facilities, health or environment?

Yes No Award(s) and year(s):

As a district, OPS received EPA's National Excellence Award for Indoor Air Quality in 2006, EPA's Model of Sustained Excellence Award for Indoor Air Quality in 2009 and the 2014 U.S. Department of Education District Sustainability Award.

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Energy

1. *Can your school demonstrate a reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions?

Yes No *Percentage reduction: -3.9 over (m/yy - m/yy): 8/2010-7/2014

*Initial GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person): .98

Final GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person): .85

Offsets: none

How did you calculate the reduction? Energy Star Total Emissions

12. Describe how the water source is protected from potential contaminants. (50 words max)
The municipal water source, Omaha's Metropolitan Utilities District (MUD), provides water that meets or exceeds every federal and state requirements for safe drinking water. MUD uses chloramines in the water treatment process to kill bacteria.
13. Describe the program you have in place to control lead in drinking water. (50 words max)
Water was tested by the District in all schools in 1989 when the EPA mandated testing water coolers for lead. Testing was done to the first draw of water after a weekend when lead concentrations would be highest. Two water coolers were removed from services in OPS after testing.
14. What percentage of the school grounds are devoted to ecologically beneficial uses? (50 word max)
Gomez Heritage has devoted 35% of its grounds to be beneficial for wildlife. We have butterfly bushes to attract bees and butterflies. The outdoor classroom has numerous birdbaths and mentor/mentee made birdhouses. All portables have planters and birdfeeders. All birdseed is provided by our Adopt a School Partner, For the Wild Birds.

Waste

15. What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfilling or incinerating 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): 87.3 cubic yards.
 B - Monthly recycling volume in cubic yards (recycling dumpster sizes(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): 46.4 cubic yards
 C - Monthly compostable materials volume(s) in cubic yards (food scrap/food soiled paper dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): 0
 Recycling Rate = $((B + C) \div (A + B + C) \times 100)$: 34.7
- Monthly waste generated per person = $(A/\text{number of students and staff})$: .09

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? 35%

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

Flammable Liquids N/A	Corrosive Liquids N/A	Toxics N/A	Mercury N/A	Other: N/A
--------------------------	--------------------------	---------------	----------------	---------------

How is this measured? Using OPS Safety Protocols

How is hazardous waste disposal tracked? Using OPS Safety Protocols

Describe other measures taken to reduce solid waste and eliminate hazardous waste. (100 word max)

OPS recycles waste as much as possible, employing methods such as mercury reclamation (for industrial use) and energy recovery from spent paint. Existing processes facilitate the reuse of chemicals and chemical products by offering the products for reuse by another school, rather than disposal. Unwanted or unusable chemical products become hazardous waste when there is no other option but disposal.

Hazardous waste disposal is tracked by use of waste manifests, which are written documentation containing the identification of the contents, quantity, and final disposal location as well as the signature of all who took possession of that material.

18. Which green cleaning custodial standard is used? ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standards
 What percentage of all products is certified? 25%
 What specific third party certified green cleaning product standard does your school use? ISSA

Alternative Transportation

19. What percentage of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 + students in the car) to/from school? (Note if your school does not use school buses) 89%

How is this data calculated? (50 word max) The information is provided through bus and van occupancy and staff observations.

20. Has your school implemented?

- Designated carpool parking stalls
- A well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses)
- Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors and windows
- Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School

Describe activities in your safe routes program: (50 word max)

OPS Transportation Division has well-documented School Bus Idling Procedures located within the Handbook for Transportation Employees. OPS Transportation works to identify hazardous streets, number of students assigned to routes, and implementing a safe walk to school zone that is less than two blocks away from the school site.

21. Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact. (50 word max)

OPS bus idling procedures state buses should be turned off for loading, unloading or waiting for students, except in extreme weather. Buses don't start until all students have boarded. The bus fleet is fueled by liquid propane and is estimated to reduce 2.3 million pounds of CO₂ per year for the entire District.

22. Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max)

Approximately 430 of the OPS buses used are fueled by liquid propane instead of diesel. OPS has the largest school fleet of liquid propane buses in North America which has a tremendous impact on the OPS Green Schools Initiative. This change is estimated to reduce 2.3 million pounds of CO₂ per year for the entire District.

Gomez Heritage has two bike racks for students to use.

Pillar II: 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.:

OPS personnel are among the founding members of the Nebraska IPM Coalition and have been actively implementing IPM practices in the District for more than ten years. All pest management professionals employed by OPS are instructed to use IPM methods and must secure permission from the IPM program manager and the IPM program committee before any pesticide application is permitted. The OPS IPM program does not include antibacterial or antifungal cleansers.

All OPS schools are practicing IPM methodologies. No routine application of pesticides is allowed in OPS schools. Pests must be captured and identified. Only then is a specific pest management strategy developed for the control of that pest population.

Insect pest populations are monitored by use of sticky traps some of which may have been impregnated with pheromones which are regularly monitored and the findings recorded by the PMP vendor.

OPS personnel are not allowed to purchase or bring from home over-the-counter pesticides for use in OPS buildings.

2. What is the volume of your annual pesticide use (gal/student/year)? Describe efforts to reduce use:

0 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.

Our school prohibits smoking on campus and in public school buses. Smoking is prohibited on OPS property (including all buildings and grounds) and on any OPS student transportation vehicle.

Our school has identified and properly removed sources of elemental mercury and prohibits its purchase and use in the school. OPS has implemented a program of voluntary elimination of mercury policy since 1997. Elemental mercury is sent for distillation and industrial reuse.

Our school uses fuel burning appliances and has taken steps to protect occupants from carbon monoxide (CO). Carbon monoxide monitors have been placed in all school boiler rooms, kitchens or rooms where gas fired appliances are in use since 2010. Prior to that time, the district used portable carbon monoxide and multi-gas monitors to test for potential CO exposure.

Our school does not have any fuel burning combustion appliances.

Our school has tested all frequently occupied rooms at or below ground level for radon gas and has fixed and retested all rooms with levels that tested at or above 4 pCi/L or our school was built with radon resistant construction features and tested to confirm levels below 4 pCi/L.

All frequently occupied rooms are tested for radon following EPA guidelines, and retested after significant remodeling projects or ventilation system changes.

Our school has identified any wood playground or other structures that contain chromate copper arsenate and has taken steps to eliminate exposure. The use of wood structures containing preservatives is not an OPS standard practice. Any landscaping lumber suspected to contain chromate copper arsenate is protected by polyurethane.

4. Describe how your school controls and manages chemicals routinely used in the school to minimize student and staff exposure. (100 word max)

OPS provides information, procedures and support to control/manage chemicals used. These measures include locked storage areas, safety manuals/presentations, laboratory waste stream directions, inventory spreadsheets, disposal information, established spill procedures, educational videos, as well as pick up services to recycle science lab chemicals, cleaning chemicals, art/other paints, and other chemicals. In addition to program support and pick up services, there are individuals at the district level to answer questions regarding the proper handling of chemicals. The chemical program goal is to substitute chemical or chemical products with the least toxic product available and to reuse chemicals, when possible, to avoid disposal.

5. Describe actions your school takes to prevent exposure to asthma triggers in and around the school. (100 word max)

Our schools work to minimize or eliminate major asthma triggers such as second hand smoke, pollen/mold spores, dust mites, cockroaches and animal dander. For example, smoking is prohibited; one-inch pleated filters are used in HVAC systems to reduce pollen/mold spore concentrations; mold remediation and prevention is a priority; indoor humidity is expected to be below 60% to minimize dust mites; an Integrated Pest Management Plan with an emphasis on cockroach control is fully implemented, and classroom pets are allowed only in rooms without sensitive individuals and must be kept in cages and food is stored in air tight containers.

6. Describe actions your school takes to control moisture from leaks, condensation and excess humidity and promptly cleanup mold or removes moldy materials when it is found. (100 word max)

Building engineers and custodians are trained to look for water leaks and condensation and to work with the OPS Environmental Department to prevent mold growth in all schools. Any leak or condensation is reported immediately and repairs are completed promptly to prevent mold growth if possible. If the presence of mold is suspected but cannot be found, mold spore sampling may be performed. The OPS Environmental Department has specialized training to assess mold issues. It is standard practice to dispose of any porous material that has supported mold growth and properly remediate any mold growth on hard surfaces.

7. Our school has installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources. Yes No

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)

Custodial staff is responsible for changing filters on air handling units on a quarterly basis or more frequently if needed. The District heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) technicians provide crucial technical support to determine the proper operation of all ventilation systems as needed. The HVAC technicians have also upgraded filters with a 6% efficiency rating to pleated filters with a 30% efficiency rating. Any response to an indoor air quality complaint includes an inspection of the HVAC system to verify the equipment has been properly maintained.

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)

As a new school is designed or old school remodeled, architects and mechanical engineers work with District staff to ensure close adherence to the ASHRAE Ventilation Standard. Pre-construction design considers the placement of outdoor

air intakes (preferably away from loading docks); refuse containers, student drop off lanes, dedicated exhaust systems, interior relative humidity control and temperature control. The OPS HVAC technicians also recommend upgrades or retrofit systems to achieve ventilation rates and air quality as recommended by the current ASHRAE Ventilation Standard.

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)

The District uses the EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools program to monitor indoor air quality (IAQ), and has been recognized for its program by EPA – National Excellence Award for IAQ (2006) and Model of Sustained Excellence Award for IAQ (2009). Annual IAQ baselines are collected at each school to monitor IAQ and are used to detect early issues in the building. This data is also used to determine ENERGY STAR eligibility. The District works regularly with building personnel to educate them in the recognition of environmental health and safety issues and where they can receive assistance with any corrective actions needed.

The District provides support for potential mold problems, asbestos management, lead testing of paint, toys, soil and water, mercury spills clean-up by use of a special vacuum and two direct read mercury vapor analyzers, chemical management for spills and proper storage, and proper disposal of potentially hazardous materials.

Other safety issues are managed by the Risk/Safety Management Office by providing training and corrective actions related to safety; including fire safety, occupational safety, traffic safety, extreme weather, playground and other safety issues to all schools.

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 the USDA's HeathierUS School Challenge. Level and year: _____
- Our school participates in a Farm to School program to use local, fresh food.
- Our school has an on-site food garden. Gomez Heritage has 13 planting beds that students use to grow fruits, vegetables and herbs. Many are foods that students would not normally get to experience at home. Employees from Wells Fargo Bank helped in the fall harvest creating an opportunity for a school/community connection.
- Our school garden supplies food for our students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class or to the community. _____
- Our students spent at least 120 minutes per week over the past year in school supervised physical education.

At least 50% of our students' annual physical education takes place outdoors. _____

Health measures are integrated into assessments. _____

At least 50% of our students have participated in the EPA's Sunwise (or equivalent program).

Food purchased by our school is certified as "environmentally preferable."

Percentage: _____ Type: _____

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

Gomez Heritage has a blacktop area with soccer goals and basketball hoops. It has a playground equipped with climbing, crawling and jumping apparatuses. Students also have access to jump ropes, various balls and other sport equipment.

The Jan Gilbert Memorial Outdoor Classroom has a designated music/movement area with scarves, ribbon rings and other creative props promoting purposeful movement and dance. The PreKindergarten students have their own nationally certified outdoor classroom in The Timberwolf Park. It is supplied with tricycles, ride on scooters, wheelbarrels and building blocks. This equipment aids in the development of visual/spacial and gross motor skills.

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

OPS is a member of the School Food Focus (Food Options for Children in Urban Schools), to make school meals more healthful, regionally sourced and sustainably produced. OPS is an active participant in the Midwest

Regional Learning Lab.

The Gretchen Swanson Center for Human Nutrition is a partner in actively promoting Farm to School Activities. The newsletter, *Nutrition Connection*, is sent to all parents; *Daily Nutrition Tips for Schools* on our website; monthly *Taste It! Try It! Fruit & Veggie Day!* - introduces new and different items, and "*Cheese Nugget*" of the month, which features a locally produced cheese nugget.

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? Yes No

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

Gomez Heritage has wellness information posted throughout the school. Wellness tips are also presented to the students in the morning announcements and during PE classes. Wellness information is shared with parents at Principal's Coffee and in the monthly newsletter.

All students are eligible to receive free breakfast every day. Most students receive a free or reduced nutritionally balanced lunch. Meal nutrition information is available on line and families are encouraged to review the menu each week. Our cafeteria has numerous visual aids to help students make good food choices.

The school nurse, social worker, counselors and school psychologist work closely with our families to provide services. We also have a close partnership with numerous community based health organizations. Our family room liaisons play an important role in this process.

The school nurse presents curriculum to fourth grade students in the area of Human Growth and Development. She presents various health care tips to all classrooms and performs health screenings for all students. She also facilitates dental care, which is provided by Creighton University Medical Center.

All staff are encouraged to participate in the annual free flu shot clinic and take a course for CPR training.

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

If yes, describe these partnerships:

Every month Gomez Heritage has Coffee with Principal in which various organizations present health/safety and parenting classes. Some topics include lead safety presented by Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance, Common Sense Parenting through Boystown, Health and Safety through the Child Saving Institute, Breast Cancer Awareness through the Olsen Center for Women's Health and Fire Prevention through the South Omaha Firestation.

Gomez Heritage partners with Creighton University Dental Program for students needing dental screenings and follow-up procedures. Area firefighters have provided classroom presentations on fire safety. Our Partnership with The Kroc Community Center, Boys and Girls Club of the Midlands and Screaming Eagles Organization provide support in the areas of health and safety.

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

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

Omaha Public Schools has a strict anti-bullying policy and procedure in place. Documents are available for students to report bullying behavior, and administration can assign consequences to students who participate in bullying behavior according to the Code of Conduct. Students who bully and students who are bullied are also able to receive followup counseling through the school counselor and the Community Counseling Program.

School counseling curriculum includes a personal/social component which is taught in classrooms to all students. The Physical Education department also teaches the concepts of families, peer relationships, puberty, and personal health care during their Human Growth and Development coursework.

Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

model for the school district, so other schools will be able to implement their own effective cafeteria recycling program.

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

Students in all grade levels have opportunities to actively plant, cultivate and harvest various fruits and vegetables in our classroom garden beds. Through this process, students learn about lifecycles and plant biology. All grade levels take an annual field trip to Fontenelle Forest Nature Center and primary students also go to the Lauritzen Gardens and Bellevue Berry Farm.

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

The outdoor classrooms provide authentic learning opportunities for all students in all domains such as English, History and Vocational Agriculture and offers deep connections between curriculum and the natural world. Teachers utilize the outdoor classrooms as a setting for all subjects. The stage lends itself to language arts and theater performances, the instruments encourage music composition and the digging area provides opportunity for visual and spacial activities. Future careers in art, engineering and architecture are molded by these experiences.

Our outdoor classroom construction began with a unique partnership with the surrounding farming community. Gomez Heritage staff and parents tore down barns to harvest the wood needed for fencing. Parents spent many hours routing, staining and painting signs and benches. They constructed bridges, retaining walls, bird houses, stage and loom. They hauled in stumps for seating.

The "Step Out Program", involving area churches, also assisted in building fences and garden beds using recycled composit ties. The volunteers also spent time laying mulch and continue with the upkeep of the grounds throughout the year.

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

Partnerships have enabled our school to create an alternative educational setting that has greatly impacted our students. Through the support of the partnerships we have received recognition throughout the nation for our Nationally Accredited Outdoor Classrooms. Gomez Heritage has been featured in Partners N Health (newsletter) which is a statewide partnership formed around the implementation and evaluation of the Nebraska Physical Activitiy and Nutrition State Plan. We have been highlighted in Nature Explore and Exchange Early Childhood Leader Magazines. We have appeared in The Omaha Public Power District Heart and Soul Newsletter. Through these publications, others are able to implement the necessary steps and requirements to create their own outdoor classrooms.

Our six year partnership with Nature Explore is vital for the development and success of our nationally accredited outdoor classrooms. They provided us the opportunity to work with a certified design consultant and donated over eight thousand dollars in start up funds. The staff from Nature Explore spent over sixty hours designing and working with our administration. Gomez Heritage staff development opportunities were provided free of charge. Thanks to this unique partnership, Nature Explore endorses our principal, John Campin, as a reference to assist with outdoor classrooms throughout the country. Mr. Campin is recognized as a global leader for Early Childhood and attended the World Forum Conference in 2011.

We have an ongoing partnership with Wells Fargo Bank. They provided us with a master gardener from the State Extension Office. They donated one thousand dollars for the establishment of the gardens and to purchase seeds and plants. They not only planted these seeds and vegetables, but also routinely maintain the garden beds. In total they have donated over thirty-five hours on this project.

To help facilitate The Gomez Heritage Success Story, we have received numerous grants from Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts, The Sherwood Foundation, The Omaha Schools Foundation, Omaha Public Power District and Home Depot.

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

The nationally accredited Jan Gilbert Memorial Outdoor Classroom and The Timberwolf Park are a sense of pride for our school, parents and community. The learning that takes place in these unique environments sets us apart from other schools. The Gomez Heritage philosophy is that learning is an active adventure and without continuous hands-on experiences, it is impossible for children to acquire a deep, intuitive understanding of the natural world that is the foundation of a sustainable environment. Using ten years of direct research from Dimensions/Nature Explore, we have created an unrivaled, innovative educational environment that fosters the well being of all.

Whether through the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, The Woodhouse Backpack Program, fitness programs, usage of our outdoor classrooms, recycling efforts, parents and community partnerships, mentor/mentee relationships, care of the campus or our school curriculum, our students are learning their important role in the preservation of our earth.

10. Submit up to 20 photos or up to 10 minutes of video content.



Yes, even the little ones participate in Campus Cleanup. The Caterpillar Crawl on our blacktop area.



These second graders are participating in a teamwork activity,



Fourth grade boys recycling their lunch waste.



This group of fourth graders is responsible for filling and caring for our bird feeders.



Capturing some of our Gomez Heritage Timberwolves in action, on defense.



These third grade boys are composing music on the xylophone, while onlookers enjoy their tunes.



Two of our Super Moms emptying our classroom recycling bins.



First graders using nature to create patterns and shapes.



Students hear a farmer speak about the importance of farming and growing organic vegetables.



Kindergarten students excavating in the digging area of The Outdoor Classroom.



First graders exploring compost - they can even touch it!
Thank you Kelly's Carpet, for the "Going Green" presentation.



Teachers and Administration taking part in a Nature Explore staff development opportunity.



Students are awaiting the receipt of their weekend backpacks, thanks to the Woodhouse Backpack Program.



This is one of our raised garden beds cared for by students with help from Wells Fargo Bank volunteers.



Second Graders using technology to capture nature in action.



First graders take History in our Outdoor Classroom



We utilize reused milk jugs to water our gardens with rainwater collected in our rainbarrels.



Prekindergarten students showing off their gross motor skills in Timberwolf Park.



These girls are developing their engineering skills in our Outdoor Classroom.



Students are participating in a drumming circle. Notice the colorful scarves adorning them.