



## 2015-2016 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. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is not subject to the jurisdiction of OCR. The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.
4. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the public school district concluding that the nominated public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
5. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
6. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the public school or public school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or public school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
7. The school meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

### U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2015-2016

Public  Charter  Title I  Magnet  Private  Independent  Rural

Name of Principal: **Mr. Greg Barthelmas**

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

Official School Name: **Schuylerville Elementary School**

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: **14 Spring Street, Schuylerville, NY 12871**

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

County: **Saratoga** State School Code Number \*: **52-17-01-04-0-003**

Telephone: **518-695-3255** Fax: **518-695-6492**

Web site/URL: <http://www.schuylervilleschools.org> E-mail: [bartgreg@schuylerville.org](mailto:bartgreg@schuylerville.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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Greg Barthelmas".

(Principal's Signature)

Date: 01-27-16



Name of Superintendent: **Dr. Ryan Sherman**

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

District Name: **Schuylerville Central School District**

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ryan Sherman".

Date: 01-27-16

(Superintendent's Signature)

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

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

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

Name of Nominating Agency: **New York State Education Department**

Name of Nominating Authority: **Mr. Carl T. Thurnau, PE**

(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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carl T. Thurnau".

Date: 01-27-16

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

#### **SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

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



## SUBMISSION

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

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509  
Expiration Date: March 31, 2018

### 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.

## PART II – SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Schuylerville Elementary School, with 720+ students, is located on the Schuylerville Central School District campus in the rolling hills and fields of beautiful upstate NY, close to the shores of the Hudson River. With such a wealth of scenic and agricultural resources surrounding the grounds, striving to be a “Green Ribbon School” is a great fit for the school’s mission, as it is one critical way to ensure that future generations care for and benefit from the natural resources of our area and the planet.

The Schuylerville Green Ribbon School (GRS) Project began in 2011. It was started by elementary parent volunteers with support from nonprofit partner and neighbor Hudson Crossing Park, inspired by the Children and Nature Movement and [GreenRibbonSchools.org](http://GreenRibbonSchools.org). Its focus is on embedding the Green Ribbon cornerstones, of getting young people outdoors, learning about and from the environment, making sustainable choices, and prioritizing healthy lifestyles, into the fabric of students’ lives.

A GRS Project volunteer leader framed our mission early on: “The stewards who are now volunteers dedicating countless hours to creating and caring for community parks like Hudson Crossing started out as tree climbers and tulip planters; the innovators who are inventing new ways to recycle and reuse paper fiber started as kids who wrapped gifts in old artwork; the conservationists who steadfastly champion the importance of caring for natural resources- clean air, clean water, fertile soil- were once little butterfly catchers and birdwatchers.” This sentiment guides us and is summarized in our tagline, “Growing. Learning. Leading ... It’s in our Nature!” To date, more than 50 projects have been implemented as part of the Green Ribbon School group’s efforts, many integrating multiple GRS cornerstones or pillars, spanning school years, and sending ripples across the district and community. What began with ideas from parent volunteers is now growing as students, teachers, and administrators seek out the GRS volunteers for support with their projects and programs.

A handful of projects exemplify the creativity, sustainability, and impact of this transformation of the school’s vision, operations, and educational goals. Annually, more than 500 Schuylerville students,



Class reports for the Turtle Count Challenge

teachers, and families participate in the Turtle Count Challenge celebrating World Turtle Day in May. Teachers bring students to the pond on the campus, using observation to build STEM and literacy skills. Having been inspired, students often return with their families to observe the turtles and other wildlife. What was once an overlooked retention pond is now a treasured natural space. The yearly program has been so successful that

it has garnered the attention of the Schuylerville Public Library, leading to collaboration with the GRS volunteers to plan a “Story Walk”. Using the book “In the Small Small Pond”, pages from the story will be posted on a trail around the school grounds, and then on waterside trails at Hudson Crossing Park, promoting outdoor observations and literacy to young readers.



Counting turtles in the campus retention pond

Additionally, the Turtle Count prompted the second grade students to host an awareness event and fundraiser for the locally-endangered Blanding's Turtle. Educators from Wilton Wildlife Park and Preserve assisted the students with an educational presentation, and expressed gratitude for the students' project and collected donations.



## *Students in the Butterfly Garden*

for the newly-hatched butterflies. With the guidance and donations from five local farm and nursery businesses, the



## *Planting a Tulip Test Garden*

Like many schools, Schuylerville Elementary has a well-established curriculum at multiple grade levels that includes hatching insects, including butterflies. One of the first projects of the new GRS volunteer group was to work with teachers and a local Girl Scout troop to plant a butterfly garden so that there would be an accessible supply of milkweed for the voracious caterpillars and an appropriate release space.



*Releasing hatched insects in the Butterfly Garden*

flies. With the guidance and support of our garden and nursery businesses, the butterfly garden is now an established outdoor learning area. It also serves as a site for more than 200 students participating in Journey North's Tulip Test Gardens Citizen Science Program, and is currently being certified as a Monarch Watch Waystation as part of a local Girl Scout's Gold Award. The interest in gardening has also grown throughout the school, leading to the cultivation of indoor classroom gardens and the construction of four outdoor raised beds.

Since its inception the GRS Project has been supported by Hudson Crossing Park, a public educational and recreational destination within walking distance of the school. The annual Hudson Crossing Triathlon inspired a summer student and family jogging program called Towpath Tuesdays, as well as an annual

The screenshot shows the Saratoga County website with a banner at the top featuring the county's name and a seal. Below the banner, there's a navigation bar with links like Home, Departments, County Initiatives, Board of Supervisors, News, Meetings, Forms/Downloads, and Contact. The main content area has a title "High Five 5K Challenge 'How To' Guide". To the right of the title is a "Print Version/Download by Document" link. Below the title is a large graphic of five colorful handprints in red, blue, yellow, green, and purple. Underneath the graphic is the text "High Five 5K Challenge 'How To' Guide and Rules for Participants". A detailed description of the challenge follows, including rules for participants, responsibilities for hosts, and a note about liability. It also mentions a \$100 reward for the best decorated booth. The text ends with a note about the deadline for entries. On the right side of the page, there are links for various county departments: Parks/Recreation, Administrator's Office, Board of Elections, Board of Supervisors, County Attorney, County Auditor, County Clerk, County Treasurer, Department of Motor Vehicles, and Emergency Services. At the bottom, there are links for Employment & Training, Economic Development, and Business Services.

## Saratoga County Spreads the Hi-5k Challenge Model

Hi-5k Challenge, which invites participants to complete a 5k in some form- walking, jogging, racing, biking swimming, hiking, kayaking, etc. In the inaugural Hi-5k, more than 250 students, teachers and community members reported success in finishing a 5k, including a couple classes of kindergarten students who decided to replace the usual classroom Thanksgiving “feast” with a 5k Turkey Trot of accumulated laps on the school track. Each year the 5k challenges have evolved, including serving as the organized event for the school’s contributions to the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life. Finally, beyond the on-campus activities, the 2014



## *The Hi-5k Challenge Wall*

senior class decided to host a 5k fundraiser at Hudson Crossing Park, and even more significantly, in 2015 the Saratoga County Public Health department public outreach program chose to replicate the

Hi-5k program, challenging all of the youth in the summer recreation programs of the 20 towns and villages in the county.



*Learning in the Outdoor Classroom*

As a striking highlight of teacher leadership in the GRS efforts, 120+ fourth grade students planted a White Pine “Tree of Peace” in the Outdoor Classroom (the construction of which was also a Green Ribbon School team project). After studying Native American history while simultaneously implementing an anti-bullying curriculum, students brainstormed words and phrases that represented



*Planting a Peace Tree*

“weapons of war” and buried them under a new five-foot pine. By locating this tree in the Outdoor Classroom, fourth graders made it an accessible symbol of peace for the entire student body, as it is a place that all visit for growing and learning and leading.



*The first Recycling Station installed*

Finally, the GRS Project has included profound, system-wide improvements to the school’s recycling program and energy-reduction technology. In 2011, much of the school’s “waste” went to the landfill, including discards from 50+ classrooms, offices, and large gathering spaces, as well as far too many unclaimed items in the “lost and found”. Now there are zero-sort receptacles in every classroom, specialized programs for recycling electronics, ink cartridges, and markers, unclaimed clothing donations to a second-hand store serving the community, and a rapidly evolving cafeteria program that will divert 40,000 lbs. of food waste to a local pig farm and compost pile, and more than 90,000 milk cartons per year to a recycling facility.



*Students preparing to recycle milk cartons*

hand store serving the community, and a rapidly evolving cafeteria program that will divert 40,000 lbs. of food waste to a local pig farm and compost pile, and more than 90,000 milk cartons per year to a recycling facility.

While the opportunities to realize energy-use reductions in a standing building (versus new construction) are fewer and more difficult to fund, the commitment to maximizing every chance to make a “green” choice is still one that Schuylerville has embraced. Significant capital improvements since the launch of the Green Ribbon School project include energy conservation measures such as: LED/T-8 and motion sensitive lighting conversions for the entire building – classrooms, offices, exterior lighting and gymnasiums; hot water heater and system upgrades; roof systems/roof insulation upgrades and replacement windows (approximately 50 windows); and energy management upgrades to direct digital controls (DDC). Valve and motor replacement/upgrades on the gym and cafeteria air handlers; miscellaneous heating lines have been reinsulated; unit ventilators have been replaced; and all appliances in the kitchen are Energy Star compliant. To further reduce Schuylerville’s carbon footprint, staff have orchestrated prudent scheduling with the energy management system based on building use, including night setbacks and occupancy sensors. Concluding this years-long capital improvement project will be boiler burners and controls upgrades. The district has realized approximately a 25% savings in electrical consumption, reducing the school’s carbon footprint, saving the taxpayers’ money, and helping the environment.

Growing stronger every year, the GRS Project is nurtured through ownership, investment, and leadership from a wide variety of stakeholders, ranging from kindergarten students to Hudson Crossing Park board members. Together Schuylerville Elementary and Hudson Crossing Park are growing tomorrow's leaders with their feet in the grass and their eyes looking forward to a healthy and vibrant community and planet. In the words of the Schuylerville School District Superintendent, "the Green Ribbon School team has successfully changed the culture of the school, improving the future for all of us."

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

The Schuylerville Central School District is located 40 miles north of Albany, NY in Saratoga County, one of the fastest-growing counties in New York State. The district is made up of seven towns and covers an area of 100 square miles. Schuylerville Elementary School houses 722 students in grades K-5.

### **Pillar I – Reduced Environmental Impact & Costs (Score 59.40 out of 90):**

- Schuylerville Elementary School achieved the EPA Energy Star Award in 2012 with a score of 80%.
- The school's addition/alteration project was designed to meet the LEED Silver standard and NYS Executive Order III.
- The school also participates with GreenRibbonSchools.org and submits a yearly 'Greenprint' that identifies at least one activity/initiative to be accomplished in each of four cornerstones.
- Other initiatives include energy efficient and smart-use lighting; high efficiency water heaters; heating systems with energy management; energy efficient windows and roofing; motion-sensor bathroom fixtures; and computer sleep functions.
- Water saving and water quality features include water-bottle filling stations; garden rain barrel; and use of run-off water and retention ponds.
- 80% of cleaning products used are Green Seal certified and the school's recycling rate is 51%.
- 41% of the school's site is devoted to ecologically beneficial uses including an outdoor classroom; wetland preservation; and wildlife/native plant habitats.
- Buses are 'clean diesel'; a no-idling policy is enforced; and routes are planned to ensure efficiency.

### **Pillar II – Improved Health & Wellness (Score 62.02 out of 90):**

- The school has a preventative maintenance plan to regularly inspect and service ventilation systems. MERV 8 rated filters are used.
- The school nurse is on site during the day and is trained and provides guidance on asthma management plans for students.
- The school has a Chemical Hygiene Plan and Coordinator, and provides training for all staff. There is a pesticide policy in place, the policy is posted on the web site and notifications are mailed each year.
- Schuylerville Elementary School practices a Coordinated School Health approach.
- The school has long-standing relationships with local farmers to provide produce and eggs from within a five mile radius of the school.
- Classroom hydroponic gardens and outdoor raised garden beds provide students with experience growing and tasting a variety of vegetables and herbs. Fresh salads are sold daily in the Cafeteria and the school complies with Smart Snacks guidance. The school has initiated a School to Farm program where they send food scraps to a local pig farmer.

**Pillar III – Effective Environmental & Sustainability Education (Score 74.85 out of 105):**

- Concepts such as net zero environmental impacts and the relationship between the environment and personal health are integrated into reading and writing experiences at each grade level.
- Approximately 30% of the school's teachers have opted in to environmental/sustainability professional development opportunities.
- The school's site includes a retention pond; outdoor classroom; butterfly garden; raised garden beds; and a bird trail.
- Supplemental classroom programs include Journey North Tulip Test Garden planting; vegetable gardening; chicken egg incubation; turtle observations and birdhouse building.
- Outdoor learning experiences and programming is provided to engage students in critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making.