



## 2015-2016 District Nominee Presentation Form

### CERTIFICATIONS

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#### District's Certifications

The signatures of the district superintendent on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the district's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the superintendent's knowledge.

1. The district has been evaluated and selected from among districts 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.
2. The district is providing 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.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school district 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.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the school district has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
5. 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 school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
6. The district 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 District Sustainability Award

Name of Superintendent: **Charles Buckel**

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

District Name: **Granton Area School District**

(As it should appear on an award)

Address: **217 N. Main St., Granton, WI 54436**

Telephone: **715-238-7292** Fax: **715-238-7288**

Web site/URL: **www.granton.k12.wi.us** E-mail: **www.granton.k12.wi.us**

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 reads "Charles Buckel".

Date: **January 12, 2016**

(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 district’s eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority’s knowledge.

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

Name of Nominating Agency: **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**

Name of Nominating Authority: **State Superintendent Tony Evers, PhD**  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date: **January 25, 2016**

(Nominating Authority’s Signature)

**SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE’S ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

**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 [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.

**U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools  
Summary of Achievements  
*for*  
Granton Area School District**

Located in rural central Wisconsin, the Granton Area School District serves a high-need population with 66% of its 238 pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade students economically disadvantaged. The school district, housed all in one building, receives Title I funds and its elementary school is designated as a Title I school. This school's accomplishments over the past five years serve as an excellent example of making change in all three pillars with limited resources.

In their application, the school notes, "As a Green and Healthy school we encourage everyone, students, staff and community members, to be responsible citizens to help sustain and preserve the natural resources, while taking care of ourselves, making healthy choices for ourselves and the environment. We continue to work as a team to build a stronger tomorrow, taking advantages of the resources available in a responsible and respectful way. We have worked countless hours to develop and expand Granton Area Schools to become more Green and Healthy and we recognize that our work is never done. There are ever changing events that impact the environment and in the 21st century we are faced with the advancements and challenges that technology and research data presents. We continue to learn more at a fast rate, but one thing remains true, and that is how much of an impact humans have on the environment."

**Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact**

The Granton Area School District Green Team, consisting of teachers, administration, school board members, community volunteers and students, works closely with the custodial and kitchen staff when developing and implementing any projects or programs to ensure they meet both state standards and regulations and green expectations. Working with CESA 10 Energy Management Serviced, they upgraded lighting, replaced high-demand appliances, and expanded technology to increase energy efficiency. They also implemented a system to monitor energy consumption in order to track use into the future. The school has a well-established recycling program where students are taught to reduce, reuse and recycle through their PAWS (Positive Attitudes + Work = Success) education program. Granton is currently implementing a school wide composting project. Energy conservation and sustainable behaviors are a part of the whole school's culture and is woven into the curriculum at various levels. While facility upgrades, such as low-flow toilets, have been implemented, it is the education of students leading to daily behavior change that that been most impressive in all areas.

**Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness**

Granton School District has a comprehensive indoor air quality management program that is consistent with EPA's Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools and an Indoor Environmental Quality Plan. They pride themselves on minimizing use of any products that may negatively impact the environment and have taught the students the same thing. They agriculture department has a pesticide-free apple orchard and they market the product to the community as "chemical-free."

Granton promotes healthy lifestyles through exercise and healthy eating programs, including offering a salad bar in the cafeteria. This fall the school initiated a walk to school day event that was a huge success. Students are currently involved in a hoop shoot activity before and after school. Their afterschool program, called the Learning Zone, has a physical activity and healthy snack component to the daily schedule.

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

An outdoor classroom, adjacent forest land, and playground facility serve as outstanding environmental education learning labs. Working with the LEAF program from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, students learned from professionals and inventoried species through two bio-blitz events. A community garden was developed on the

school property and is used by both the community and school for various projects. The FFA and FFA Alumni supported a dedication of the school property.

### **Cross-Cutting Questions**

The school has been recognized as a “Sugar Maple” through Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin. Granton is an active participant in professional development opportunities through the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education and has received both the LEAF Educator of the Year Award and the LEAF Community Supporter Award.

### **Scoring and Highlights:**

The complete state application is too long to include in this nomination submission, so the applicant’s information has been summarized in the following pages, aligned with the pillars and elements. Each application was ranked by teams of external reviewers and internal reviewers, each with different areas of expertise, using a common ranking tool. In addition, the slate of nominees was forwarded to related state and federal agencies to ensure there were no compliance or regulatory issues.

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

The village of Granton reported a population of 406 in the 2000 census. The District has 238 students and 56 staff members. 5% of their students have limited proficiency in English.

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

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

###### **Focus Area: Energy**

Granton Area School District worked with CESA 10 Energy Management and have reduced the amount of desktop computers and other high demanding energy appliances, replacing them with more energy efficient items. They have begun to keep track of the energy consumption and will have more data available in the future to calculate actual energy use reduction.

The IMC recently added special conservation lighting to increase intensity of the light, while decreasing the costs. There are now half the lights in the library, which also serves as the community library, but the actual light is double. We have also implemented more use of natural lighting. Also, they are also installing T8 florescent lighting in all of the classrooms and hallways to help reduce energy use and costs. They also installed sensors in the bathrooms, hallways and field house so when there has been a few minutes of inactivity going on, the lights will shut off, saving energy. The outdoor lights will also be replaced in the near future to be more efficient.

Granton has many promotions for our students and staff to use to promote conservation of energy. They strongly emphasize shutting lights off when not in the rooms, making sure to shut down computers during weekends and evenings, only having smart boards on when being used and many more. In addition, the district installed motion sensor lights so that when the gymnasium, rest rooms and hallways are not being used, the lights automatically go off.

Energy is taught at general levels throughout the elementary school, but all students receive a lesson in our annual Earth Day program. Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP) curriculum is used. In addition, energy is taught to middle school and high school science students and those who enroll in various technical education and agriculture education classes. There is currently an Alternative Energy Overview course taught through the agriculture department in conjunction with Mid-State Technical College, where students receive transcript credits at the tech for the course taken at Granton. We plan to expand this area in the future to teach more about renewable energies at all age levels, rather than just high school.

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

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

Granton Area School District has a municipal water supply from a groundwater source. The municipal water is checked daily by the village personnel to ensure a safe water system. Taps, faucets, and fountains are cleaned at least twice annually to reduce contamination, and screens and aerators are cleaned at least annually to remove particulate lead deposits.

The district has also replaced and repaired leaky showers and faucets throughout the building to conserve water wasted. In addition, they have replaced some hot water heaters to be more efficient and repaired a swimming pool that was leaking.

Other actions taken to help protect and conserve water include:

- ✓ a medication disposal policy
- ✓ water-saving toilets
- ✓ installation of a water fountain with a bottle filler

Granton has worked with the village to show students the wastewater facility in hopes that they will be inspired to have less waste. Granton is striving for students to understand that good clean drinking water is a natural resource that can be used up and need to be conserved. They also promote proper disposal of products that could contaminate groundwater, both among all staff, and the student body.

Students are taught the water cycle in many classes. In the natural resources and middle school agriculture classes, the students are instructed about how much water is used versus wasted in the common household. They discuss how long a shower is needed, compared to what they take. The district encourages students to shut off showers, etc. in the locker room, and is currently researching sensor showers that automatically shut off when students leave. They discuss shutting off the water when brushing teeth instead of letting it run the entire time. There are many such lessons taught at all levels.

Middle school and high school agriculture students conduct numerous water quality labs and lessons to expand knowledge and awareness. The science curriculum also has some lessons in water quality. The water cycle is taught at both levels and watersheds are studied as well.

There are numerous opportunities offered to staff. Each month the Environmental Education online network sends an email with many different conferences, training and workshop offerings and that email is forwarded to all staff. The Green team also provides resources and other information as needed.

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

##### Focus Area: School Site

The school has landscaping designed to be water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate and uses alternative water sources (ie. grey water, rainwater) for irrigation. The school uses its grounds extensively for outdoor teaching and has integrated natural features into the playground area.

A beautiful healing garden was designed and installed at the entrance of the district building. It includes two handmade benches that a community member constructed with donations from two families in memory of someone. This theme garden was planted by adults and elementary students and is now maintained by adults and high school students enrolled in agriculture courses. As the gardens are maintained, they have harvested many plants that are sold to help support the costs of other projects.

There is also a building-length planter in front of the high school and community IMC that was recently renovated and showcases perennials. It has become an awesome focal point for anyone entering the building or driving by. This was planted by horticulture and landscaping students and community members, who continue to maintain it throughout the year.

Several other smaller gardens were installed around the property to help enhance the natural beauty of the property. These native gardens have now developed well enough to sustain themselves pretty much on their own. Improving and maintaining the school site is truly a community effort. All of these projects were designed by the Green Team and implemented by community volunteers and FFA members.

Water education has expanded greatly with the development of the school property. They have now incorporated wetland lessons, aquatic biotic and water quality studies of the creek, and they have added an aquaculture curriculum. With the addition of the transcript credit class of Fish, Forests and Wildlife, Granton will also be expanding the curriculum to include invasive species and fish diseases, such as VHS, detrimental to the Wisconsin lakes. In addition, Granton will be expanding lessons on pollution, especially placing emphasis on point and non-point sources. As an agriculture community, they will broaden their scope to create an awareness of the impact of pesticide use on the waterways and train students and community members about responsible application, rules and regulations.

Granton school property has trails, bridges, cross walks and learning stations. They also erected an outdoor classroom. Hundreds of hours went into clearing the brush, marking and paving trails and then building the classroom and other structures. The technology education department helped head up the classroom project, while the forestry students led the challenge of the forest.

This fall Granton students completed another phase of the forest project, as they had 32 metal signs made that will be hung this spring at various locations throughout the woods. Students the past 3 years have helped to develop areas that provide great lessons, from succession and tree identification, to wildlife habitat and other forests plants. They then designed an educational sign, using Microsoft Word or Publisher, to highlight those lessons learned. Once they hit their goal of 30 signs this fall, they hired a professional printing company to make the signs. They installed the posts for the signs before the ground froze, and the second semester class will begin putting up the signs this spring as the various plants bloom and the area is confirmed. They used the maps of the property to label where the signs would go and a local individual donated all of the money to have the signs made.

The development of their outdoor lab is one project of which they are especially proud. The outdoor classroom was built by technology students, and agriculture students build 30 Leopold design benches for the facility. This is an outstanding place for students and staff to have productive learning lessons. The high school agriculture department also cleared the trails for the forest and laid gravel on the trails. The students and community members have also built 2 bridges and 2 boardwalks on the trails for wetland crossings. Granton worked closely with the county forester to develop their school forest management plan and the students and community are working to follow the guidelines recommended.

This fall, their FFA chapter celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> year as a chartered organization. They held a huge banquet in the fieldhouse and served 621 guests dinner. This was all free, thanks to the generosity of some community members and the FFA Alumni support group. They also held a program after the dinner, which lasted around 2 hours. At the completion of the banquet, FFA members and Green Team members led tours around the facility and out to the school forest. Over 200 guests took the time to walk through the forest and could not believe the awesome lab they have created. Since that time, many more individuals have been using the forest as a place for a nature walk and even a few have brought families together for photographs. Some former students who were involved in the major project even came back to have all of their wedding photos taken here. Granton is very confident that the addition of the signs will be a great asset to having families come together for outings and learning together.

They have also been working on following the sustainability plan for their forest, which includes removing several mature aspen trees. The warm and wet winters have hampered this process somewhat, as the ground is too soft, since part of the woods is right in a wetland, but they continue to work with the state forester and local harvesting forester to harvest those trees when it becomes possible. They plan to plant more new trees on the property and have been holding off until the aspen harvest, but now plan to start with a few plantings this spring.

#### Element 1C: Reduced waste production

Focus Area: Recycling & Waste Management

Granton Area School District recycles:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ glass,
- ✓ metals,
- ✓ plastic,
- ✓ ink,
- ✓ cell phones,
- ✓ batteries

Paper and plastic recycling bins are located throughout classrooms, hallways, commons, and in the lobbies of athletic events. Students and staff are using the bins and sorting items very efficiently. The custodians also do check the garbage each day as they dump from each classroom to ensure that nothing got missed. If it did, they grab it and recycle it then. A water bottle filler has been installed to encourage students to reuse water bottles to eliminate unnecessary waste.

All students are taught to reduce, reuse and recycle through their PAWS (Positive Attitudes + Work = Success) education program and various classroom activities. They utilized a smartboard activity for the PAWS program which has all students and staff working together on the same topic once a month. They shared with all students and staff how to make a difference.

Students have helped to build a compost bin that has now been set up by the school dumpster, with the plans to expand recycling projects. Some of the students have worked on signs for the school cafeteria and will be working, in shifts, with the various age groups to help teach them what can and cannot be composted from the school lunch program. They will also help them sort garbage to include more recycling, particularly with the milk cartons. The compost will be dumped daily and then students and community members will utilize the compost in the community garden.

For potentially hazardous waste, Granton utilizes information from Material safety Data Sheets and labels to ensure that all products are disposed of according to guidelines and laws. The science materials are stored in locked containers and used according to legal recommendations. Custodial staff has a record of any potentially hazardous material and where it is located and that is available to the crisis team in the event of any emergency as well.

All computer purchases are Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) certified products. A couple of years ago Granton participated in a clean sweep to eliminate hazardous wastes from the building. All old technology equipment and other items are also all disposed of through appropriate companies and services.

## Element 1C: Use of alternative transportation

### Focus Area: Transportation

Granton School District conducted an internal transportation audit and found that 55% of students ride the bus, 30% walk, 10% carpool, and 5% bike. Because of the rural nature of the school, bussing is required. The school district contracts bus maintenance and repair with a neighboring school. The shop area sees much less use so energy consumption is down. They have gone down to three bus routes, eliminating one bus. The three have a few extra miles to go each day, but buses are not passing each other and traveling unnecessary miles.

The district also offers the following to improve its transportation efficiency:

- ✓ Bike racks, showers, lockers, and/or other bike amenities.
- ✓ Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.
- ✓ A plan to regularly review bus routing to optimize passenger/miles driven ratios

Many staff live outside of the district so they are encouraged to carpool whenever possible. Granton has cooperative sports agreements with surrounding schools so various teams travel together in one bus, rather than having 3 different buses on the road. The students wait a few minutes for their rides, but most utilize that time for homework. Whenever possible they use a school van rather than a large bus for small groups, as well.

The school provides vehicles for staff to use for in-services and encourages all staff to carpool for the events. If there is a large group in-service at surrounding schools, the staff are all transported with one bus, instead of having 20 plus cars going to the same place.

They also have a couple of district vans available that can be used in place of hauling a small group with a large bus. This cuts down fuel costs greatly. Many times a coach or advisor who is going anyway can provide the transportation needed. For some of the events, such as FFA competitions, the advisors will also work with neighboring schools to share buses to the long distance contests and conferences. This has also helped out with transportation costs.

Outdoor Air quality is taught in the natural resources curriculum in the high school. Special emphasis is placed on eliminating burn barrels because of the huge hazards they present. The atmosphere layers and pollution are also taught extensively in that course. The Technology education department addresses transportation energy efficiency lessons.

## Pillar II: Improved Health & Wellness

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

#### Focus Area: Environmental Health

Granton Area School District has:

- ✓ a comprehensive indoor air quality management program that is consistent with EPA's Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools
- ✓ taken actions to prevent exposure to asthma triggers such as mold, dust, and pet dander
- ✓ has installed one or more energy recovery ventilation systems to bring in fresh air for use in the HVAC system
- ✓ met ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2010 (Ventilation for acceptable indoor air quality)
- ✓ installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources
- ✓ a schedule of visually inspecting all our school's structures on a monthly basis to ensure they are free of mold, moisture, and water leakage
- ✓ indoor relative humidity is maintained below 60%
- ✓ moisture resistant materials/ protective systems installed (i.e. flooring, tub/shower, backing, and piping).
- ✓ chemical management program that includes storage and labeling, training and handling, hazards communication. All chemicals are locked up to minimize student and staff exposure.

The school has not completed radon testing, as it is not a requirement in Wisconsin. According to the Department of Health Services, the radon average for this zip code is 4.19 pCi/L, which is just above the EPA recommendations. The schools are encouraged to complete radon testing as a part of becoming a Green & Healthy School.

Mercury has been removed from Granton facilities, including the old thermometers. The Science department teaches chemical safety, not only in their chemistry courses, but also physical and life sciences. Chemical safety is taught through numerous other courses also, including middle school science, health, technology education and agriculture. All staff are trained for proper handling of materials as they relate to their work. Some of the training is simple procedures for general first aid, while some is more complex, such as the science lab procedures. Staff is all given the opportunity to attend any CESA training that may apply to their specific areas.

Granton tries not to use any pesticides at school. They implemented using a weed whacker for weed control instead of herbicides. They have live traps for rodents instead of rodenticides. The greenhouse had a problem with white flies so they utilized sticky tape instead of insecticide. They have minimal pesticide use at our facility, but if need be, they hire a professional to ensure everything is done according to regulations. We also post any pesticide use as required by the law.

They pride themselves on minimizing use of any products that may negatively impact the environment and have taught the students the same thing. They agriculture department has an apple orchard that they have been maintaining for over 10 years, and they do not use any pesticides and market the product to the community as chemical free.

## Element 2B: Nutrition & Fitness

### Focus Area: Health & Wellness

Granton uses the following to promote nutrition and fitness:

- ✓ Our school uses the Got Dirt? or Got Veggies? resources.
- ✓ Students spend at least 120 minutes per week per year in school supervised physical education.
- ✓ Health measures are integrated into assessments.
- ✓ Our school promotes hand washing for staff and students.
- ✓ Our school has a salad bar.
- ✓ They have hosted walk to school and bike to school activities

The district works with Clark County Social Services if there is need for any assistance or there are safety concerns at home. They have access to the county nurse who works closely with staff to provide all necessary training. The county nurse is also a reference for us with regard to any health issues. They have a part-time school psychologist from whom they get services through their local CESA. In addition the district employs a full-time school counselor who and is placed in the building. She is available for individual needs and regularly visits the classrooms to conduct various activities and lessons promoting student well-being at all ages.

Physical education courses offer a wide range of outdoor education activities. They have snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, running or jogging, softball or baseball, walking and other activities that are taught. Many of the more individualized activities are conducted on the trails of our school forest. Their facilities are well developed and students are encouraged to use them whenever possible. They have had many afterschool activities outside as well, including scavenger hunts, relay races and much more.

They have transitioned our students from the food pyramid to the MyPlate concept. As part of the food service department, all students are taught healthy eating choices and portion control. Each of the grade levels also have health lessons incorporated into their physical education course, or an entire course is taught on health and wellness. The FACE department was reinstated for the first time this fall in nearly 10 years. There are a couple of foods classes being offered and health and nutrition are part of those classes as well.

The food service department follow all of the guidelines for the school lunch program as directed by the state and each day fresh fruits and vegetables are included on the salad bar option for students and staff. They provide breakfast and lunch options for the students and have after school lunches available as well. No vending machines are allowed on during school hours. They have also hosted several family fun events that have encouraged healthy lifestyles, from eating right, to exercise and physical activities and mental health issues. Portion sizes are taught and utilized both in the cafeteria, and at various events.

The next step that will be discussed at the spring Green team meeting is implementing the farm to school program, so students may produce foods in the garden and greenhouse that can be served as a part of the school lunch program. They have been researching this topic and are excited for the challenge and opportunities that it brings.

The physical education department, learning zone and PTO are also conducting numerous activities throughout the year to promote physical health activities for all ages, including community adults. The district wellness program has recently expanded to include a yoga group, walking clubs and afterschool clubs, through the learning zone. They are encouraging students and staff to be more active and have eliminated soda machines from the school and classrooms. We have added a water fountain that has a water bottle filler to encourage students to bring their own bottle, eliminating unnecessary waste, while adding more water to their diet.

Staff has conducted some healthy activities as well. They held a few walking groups with friendly competition and held a biggest loser contest. There is an exercise bicycle and treadmill available for staff to use at the school. The facility is open to staff if they want to use it.

Granton is a small district but has joined cooperative sports programs so our students can have the chance to participate in physical activities that are offered at a larger scope, including football and hockey. Students are

encouraged to feel safe at school and in the classroom. They have a crisis team who also works on developing plans to keep the facilities as safe as possible.

The FFA chapter hosts an annual lock-in event for members in grades 7 – 12, where they spend 10 hours together participating in team and individual physical activities, from basketball and kickball to musical chairs and volleyball. Healthy food choices are provided and then there are team-building activities and individual card and board games to encourage camaraderie among the students. Several adults come to chaperone and join in the festivities.

The Green team has provided numerous resources for staff to gain ideas for outdoor activities. The physical education department has also begun providing more options for outdoor activities. Since developing the school forest many more students and community members can be seen walking, jogging, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing on the property. They have also implemented a wildlife education curriculum that encourages being outdoors for the physical and psychological advantages. They have started to utilize the pond across the road for fishing as part of the physical education and aquaculture curriculums, “Hooked on fishing program” and after school learning zone activities. They have also started to incorporate geocaching and other outdoor activities in lessons. Summer school also offers some health and wellness options now to encourage kids to get off the couch and be active.

The gardening lessons are a simple way to increase physical fitness as well, encouraging healthy eating of natural foods, avoiding all of the health issues associated with processed foods. It also helps to improve physical activity.

Through the learning zone program, we have acquired 12 bows and other archery equipment, and we are currently in the process of getting some adult volunteers to be trained so that they may offer the “Archery in our Schools” program for students. They also have formed a fencing club that meets on Monday nights for students and community members interested. They understand that some students are naturally drawn to competitive sports like basketball or softball, while others may not have the same interests. By offering some of these other clubs and activities they are hoping to promote healthy lifestyles all throughout life. We have implemented a bowling club for the learning zone, as well, once again promoting lifetime fitness. And for those in the competitive spirit, the school board has begun to reach out to other districts looking for opportunities to join forces for cooperative sports agreements. Since they are so small, the district’s options are limited, so they are trying to share resources and provide students with as many options as possible.

This year they have also opened up the weight room to anyone who wants to work out. There are volunteer staff members who oversee the room in the morning and after school if anyone wants to use it.

The FACE department has had good success drawing students to the foods classes, and educational displays and posters can often be seen exhibited in the hallway area. Most recently there was one depicting how much sugar can be found in the various drinks available on the market, from soda to lemonade to sports drinks and energy drinks. Walking through the hallway students could be seen looking at the display and commenting about how they need to change what they consume.

Granton has an adopted policy on Harassment that is printed in its student handbook. It clearly states that harassment and/or bullying will not be tolerated in the district, which includes any property or vehicles owned, leased or used by the district. Cyberbullying is also addressed and is viewed as a violation under this policy. Very specific instructions are included in how to handle the situation if harassment or bullying is suspected in any way, and it included adult/parent responsibilities.

Social interaction is another aspect of health and wellness that they try to really promote and enhance here at Granton. Student council plans events for members throughout the year to get them excited to be part of the school and take an active role in what is going on. Their PBIS program has implemented incentive programs as well, encouraging students to set goals for academics and behaviors and rewards those who meet those goals. This winter those who accomplished their first semester goals will be going to the local ski hill for time together and in the spring they will once again head to a water park or related place.

In addition, they have a PAWS group at Granton that helps with social interaction, positive attitudes and service. PAWS stands for Positive Attitude + Work = Success, and it involves all of our students in grades 4K – 12, getting together once a month to promote team work, community spirit and positive attitude. Each fall all of our students and staff spend an afternoon volunteering all around town and even in the country, raking lawns or washing windows, etc. for elderly or disabled individuals in need. People now call the school, even before the newsletter comes out soliciting for help, to get their name on the list. Students can be seen bringing their rakes to school and it is awesome to see how hard they try. The older students work with the younger students to help accomplish the tasks, serving as role models as well. They have various recognition events also that highlight students who have been a great example and prizes like water bottles and t-shirts can be won.

### Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

#### Element 3A: Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems

##### Focus Area: Environmental & Sustainability Education

Granton Area School District has a scope & sequence for environmental education and an environmental/sustainability literacy requirement. All staff are to utilize the *Wisconsin Model Academic Standards Environmental Education standards* when developing their lessons. Each staff member is being required to teach at least one environmental education lesson outdoors and document the lesson for administration.

Granton staff are trained each fall about the facilities and then training and resources are available throughout the year for lesson planning. They also sponsor a spring Earth Day/ Bio Blitz event to have everyone spend the day outdoors.

The district has several staff who were trained for LEAF curriculum and EPS (Earth Partnership for Schools) who offer local training, and they also promote the workshops offered by LEAF to staff. They also sent our afterschool learning zone coordinator to a workshop to encourage her to implement more "green" topics in the program. The staff at Granton have had many opportunities for professional development in environmental education, including participation in Earth Partnership for schools, Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP) courses, LEAF courses and workshops, Project Learning Tree, Project WILD, Project WET, and Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education workshops and have attended the Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education Association annual conference.

There are many reference resources throughout the building and they have been instructed on where they may loan or purchase supplies for various labs. The school district foundation provides a couple of grants to the local teachers each year for various classroom supplies and the environmental education network email is shared with all staff each month. This provides the staff with additional opportunities for training workshops, grants, potential lessons and other resources. They have developed an environmental resources list available for all staff and actually brought the items together for them to see first-hand. They have trained our staff with some hands-on lessons as examples of things they can do with their students.

Granton has a community individual who has pledged \$1500 per year for educational field trips so teachers may plan lessons beyond Granton's boundaries. The PTO organization also budgets money for teachers to request for classroom supplies and field trips as needed. The community support of our program is endless. Teachers are given time each month to work collaboratively with their peers in a PLC (Professional Learning Community) and as they work to expand the curriculum and academic success, Granton has provided in-service training to show how they can incorporate environmental education with their own specific course objectives.

The core areas have all had the training to see how they may plan a lesson in their area that focuses around the environment. There are many mathematical equations and lessons one can learn and use in the forest. Creative writing or research papers can be centered on environmental topics. There is no easier way to implement the scientific research method than through environmental studies and there is tons of history associated with Wisconsin forests. The "specials" teacher have learned that music, art and physical education can certainly be enhanced through the outdoors and CTE (Career and Technical Education) teachers can utilize the facilities and resources to develop the specific industry skills associated with nature and health, while taking the opportunity to reinforce the soft skills needed to be successful in today's work force.

In addition all students and staff will participate in an all-day bio-blitz "earth day" activity this spring as part of our PAWS program. A number of specialists will come in to teach many different lessons about the environment using the school forest facilities here on site. The Bio-Blitz Earth Day activity is offered to all students. Through the various courses many other opportunities are provided.

They have a FFA chapter which is highly involved in the continued development of outdoor facilities. There are currently about 70 FFA members. Students also have a chance to be part of the community Green team. Four students are active members of the team, but many other volunteer for their projects. All students in the district participate in the PAWS group which has implemented numerous environmental activities as well. In the agriculture department there is outdoor learning in the following courses, for several weeks each, Forestry, Advanced Forestry, Landscaping, Advanced Landscaping, Going Green, GPS/GIS, Middle School Rotations, Wildlife Management and Natural Resources.

This past spring Granton hosted another Green Day event that included all students, from preschool to the high school seniors, along with all teachers and support staff and community resource personnel to bring the children outdoors for learning. They started by forming 3 large groups, about 75 in a group, and they rotated from station to station. Chris Kuntz from the UWSP was one of the leaders and she took us all throughout our property to learn about the many native plants there. Chris Schmitz, who is a state Forester, took another group through the school woods and helped to explain the management plan and why they are doing the things they are to ensure a great forest for years to come. The third station was led by our county DNR agent, Adam Hanna, and he spent his time teaching students about the many wildlife creatures they could expect to find in Wisconsin and on the property. In addition, he talked about management of those resources.

After the main speakers had each worked with all three groups, the teachers at Granton then had the chance to put into action their own teaching lesson. They had held a couple of different in-services earlier in the year to cover environmental education standards with staff and shared the goal of having all teachers utilizing the outdoor classroom in lesson planning. One of the meetings brought Chris in from the UWSP to share ideas and resources, and for another meeting, they had a night after school where Green Team members helped share ideas and take staff around to brainstorm possibilities.

This opportunity for teachers to plan and implement their own lesson was very helpful in motivating them and the students. The administrative support and encouragement helped ensure that all teachers got to share in the experience. Because Granton is such a small district, they paired the students together, two grades in a cluster, so there were always at least two teachers to work together on the lessons. The second part of the Green Day saw teachers working collaboratively with the student age groups that they normally teach in hands-on, enthusiastic lessons. Staff that were once before hesitant to take kids out of the classroom boundaries were excited with the results, and they have since planned additional lessons and are utilizing the outdoor classroom lab more than before. This fall Granton also had an in-service for new staff about the resources available to them.

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

Focus Area: Environmental & Sustainability Education

The science department just began utilizing the GEMS[KCL1] program this year and is looking at expanding it next year. They have many new staff but hope to expand our STEM programs and curriculum in the future.

Mid-State Technical College transcript credit options are offered in the agriculture department for Introduction to Horticulture and Alternative Energy Overview. Besides alternative energy course for transcript credit, we have also offered a general horticulture course for additional credits through Mid-State Technical College. This year we are also offering a third agriculture course for Mid-State credits during the second semester. This is the first time we are having the Fish, Forests and Wildlife course, but we are confident that students will have a strong interest in the

course. It will feature lessons on invasive species, management of our forests, watersheds and other water resources and specific units on useful skills to aid in those management practices.

FFA Students completed the following projects: Benches for the outdoor classroom, community garden raised bed installation, garden plot usage, cleared forest trails, mulched and graveled trails, made learning stations and designed signs for those stations, installed the posts for signs, planted numerous native plant gardens and they continue to maintain all the gardens on our grounds. Technology education students built an outdoor classroom near the school forest. At the time they built it 4 years ago, they were a Skills USA group. We lost that instructor and the group did not maintain status, but our new instructor is looking to bring it back into his program in the future.

In addition, we have incorporated more field trip learning opportunities for our students. We have taken students to the county forest, Mead wildlife reserve, local forests to watch the processing and harvesting procedure, apple orchards, cranberry marshes, parks, zoo and more. We are promoting the concept of “No child left indoors” and are encouraging teachers to think outside of the box.

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

#### Focus Area: Community Involvement

The Green Team works with any focus area as needed, but they have been most influential in the school site and environmental and sustainability education areas. Several community members were instrumental in helping to develop the facilities and continue to bring new ideas each spring and fall. They were instrumental in raising over \$20,000 to be used for the development of Granton’s facilities and outdoor learning lab.

The afterschool program is funded by a 21st century grant, and this program has expanded education programs greatly. Their coordinator is always looking for ways to expand the green initiative. They have really helped the district develop and expand in the areas of water, recycling and waste management and health and wellness. This grant has also helped to fund the many community nights. The rotary was influential in helping students get involved in the Adopt A Highway program and they continue to assist with the PAWS community clean-up events.

The students have had a major impact on the Granton Area School District site and environmental sustainability education. As mentioned early on, they have been the driving force to develop a school forest and learning lab that is a genuine source of pride. This forest is open for the public to use, and many people use it on a regular basis for a walking trail and others for professional photo shoots of seniors or family groups.

The students began the project four years ago, as they worked with community volunteers to start to clear brush to make trails through the forest. They poured the cement for the outdoor classroom and constructed the facility. They built Leopold-style benches that sit in the classroom and along the trails in the forest so students may sit and have a place to work while outdoors.

Students helped to build a bridge that would enable people to cross the creek that runs through the forest. They also constructed 2 boardwalks in areas that were lower and quite wet. They shoveled load after load of wood mulch that they got from the local lumber mill. They did this each spring for 3 years, but this fall upgraded to gravel so it would be more permanent as the mulch was breaking down over time with so much traffic. This is no easy task as the trails are too narrow for any equipment to get through, and there are steps and other terrain issues so they had to do this all by hand.

They installed 30 large posts and used the computer to design educational signs for various learning stations throughout the forest. These signs are being completed this year and will be hung before the big blitz event in the spring. A second bridge was built as they extended the trail farther into the property and students again helped with that and the additional trail work. A few trees went down in a storm and students helped to clean up that mess, as well.

The students also helped to put up fence around Granton’s community garden and helped to build and install a dozen raised beds during a community work day. Students still help work the soil in the gardens and some of the students utilize the regular area gardens in there for their Supervised Agriculture Experiences. The FFA even planted some

strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries in the garden and raise them for classroom activities, like jam making. This idea came about after they had so much success raising 50 apple trees on a property adjacent to school.

There are numerous gardens on our property which were planted by students and staff. The students maintain these gardens by weeding as needed and then cleaning them out each fall. Many community members comment on the awesome gardens. The students also redid the school main entrance area by removing old dying shrubs and brush, and replacing them with ornamental trees, all donated by the community.

The students built the compost bin which we are getting ready to begin using and they are always willing to get involved. They went to the school board last year to get permission to expand the trails some more and develop a little house on the prairie in the future. The students and community have great pride in what we have accomplished and continue to pull together to plan for the future.

The school staff works collaboratively to accomplish goals, and the community is right there to help out! The custodial department works closely with distributors to get environmentally healthy and energy efficient supplies. The kitchen staff works to promote healthy choices in menu planning and uses the state mandates in all planning. Granton works with the village for water issues and has a transportation director who works with the neighboring school to be the most efficient. The teaching staff continues to work on teaching lessons in environmental education, and they are being pushed to expand more by the school board and administration.

The district strives to utilize as many resources as possible in its green initiative. Businesses have contributed money and supplies for numerous projects. We have worked with LEAF and UW Stevens Point, Mid-State Technical College, the DPI and numerous other agencies for these various programs. The local Rotary and FFA Alumni groups have been huge assets to these programs. The FFA chapter participates in the Adopt A Highway program cleaning the local highway 3 times a year. And our PAWS group hosts a spring and fall clean-up to rid the streets of garbage.

The Green Team is a huge community project. They initiated this group 4 years ago and had tremendous support in getting the projects going. They are continuously looking at other potential projects in hopes of expanding and getting more community members involved yet. Granton is always looking to involve more community, not only for financial assistance, but also active participation. They already have great support from the community and are always pleased that those who participate are enthusiastic and excited.

There are currently 12 raised bed garden plots in their community garden which were built on a Saturday morning by community volunteers. When the beds were done, posts and a fence were erected around the garden area to help with keeping unwanted animals out of the garden. Three years ago they had only 2 community members utilizing the garden and had several unplanted throughout the summer. This past summer all of the beds were full and they did not have any left for the elementary and middle school summer school students. So, their goal is to build a few more this spring, including a couple of higher ones to help the elderly not have to bend so much.

Besides the raised beds, they worked up a couple of additional garden plots. Despite struggling a bit with weeds, they now have enlisted more student volunteers in helping to maintain those beds, and the Green team purchased a roto-tiller for the community volunteers to use and it has been much more productive.

The FFA members plant many tomatoes that they give to the community food pantry, as well as, utilize in the feeding America class, learning various aspects of food preservation, canning and processing. The second bed is now thriving with strawberries that the members planted a couple of years ago. They harvest the berries and freeze them to again use later in class to make jams, jellies and other delicious foods. This summer, they used some fresh picked strawberries to make pies and desserts for the Granton Area School District Foundation Sweet Treat Social fund-raising event. This group organized just 2 years ago to help fund our many school district projects and this was their second event. One of the FFA desserts raised \$425.00 for the foundation.

Besides strawberries, the students have now added a few raspberry, blackberry and blue berry plants. They were just planted last year and so have yet to see any production. There are plans expand that fruit production in upcoming years. In addition, they are considering trying to grow sweet corn this summer. All of these crops are being raised by students and community members. The students are learning the somewhat forgotten skill of

gardening and home food production with the help and support of people who want to pass on that tradition to the younger generation. Watching all of these ages work together with a common goal in mind is heart-warming.

Granton is very proud of the accomplishments of its green school implementation program. They have had nearly 400 different individuals of all ages and backgrounds work in some aspect of their program. They don't have numbers of all volunteer hours previously, but just this past year we had one individual donate over 310 hours. All projects were funded purely by donations. They have generated over \$28,000.00 in community donations to fund their many projects, which included a grant for the community garden for \$500.00 and memorial contributions in nearly \$14,000.00.

They have had many community members involved in various projects and have greatly expanded the utilization of businesses, organizations and trained professionals to assist in teaching lessons and implementing projects. They have called in representatives from UW Stevens Point and Mid-State Technical College. They have utilized materials and supplies from the Environmental Education resource department at the UWSP, as well as, CESA 10. They have purchased additional lab equipment and supplies with Carl Perkins funds and Career Prep grants. They have invited various business representatives to share in the Green team efforts and to share in their expertise, as well as, help inform others of pending projects and resources. They have received all kinds of help from the county and state divisions of forestry, land conservation and DNR, including aquatic and wildlife specialists.

Granton continues to receive donations from individuals that want to share memorial money for special projects and these funds are managed through the school Green team account and there is also a special school forest savings account, managed by family representatives, specifically available upon request for forest related projects.