

## EXEMPLAR: SCHOOL GROUNDS AND GARDENS

Your Report Card is your opportunity to share out all the effort your school put into your certification project. Please respond to each question with as much detail as possible.

### **STEP ONE: BUILD YOUR GREEN TEAM**

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1. Please describe your Green Team. Please include the number of members, their roles in the school community, and any other details.

**Our Green Team includes 12 members. Myself, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher, our 10<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher, 10 students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 5 students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade.**

2. How often does your Green Team meet?

**We meet the second Wednesday of every month after school from 2:45 to 3:45 pm.**

3. What general goal does your Green Team have in making your school greener and healthier this year?

**This year we want to build a garden on our school grounds.**

4. Give us a brief description of your school. Include whether it's in a rural or urban community as well as any other details that makes your school stand out.

**Our school is located in a rural area. We are the largest high school in the county with 845 students. We are very diverse and 40% of our students speak another language besides English.**

5. If you have already certified as a Washington Green School, please share how you are maintaining your Lasting Change from previous environmental categories.

**We've certified twice before. Last year we certified in Waste and Recycling through a food waste monitoring and sorting system. We still sort our waste every lunch period and we recently purchased reusable cutlery.**

**Two school years ago we certified in healthy school buildings. Members from our Green Team still take turns wiping down desks during lunch.**

**We also continued our proper handwashing campaign by making new signs that hang above all bathroom sinks.**

## **STEP TWO: ASSESS**

Please complete the audit found within the [School Grounds & Gardens Classroom Supplement](#) and then answer the questions below.

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### **General**

6. Does your school curriculum incorporate the use of the school grounds (i.e. garden education, plant growth, water education, wildlife, habitat, field science, physical fitness etc.)?

**Every year our science teacher takes our students outside for a tree identification activity using dichotomous keys**

### **Water**

7. Does your school employ water conservation practices such as drip irrigation, watering timers, or other methods to maintain lawns, playfields, landscape plantings, and/or gardens?

**We have a rain garden in the front of the building by the school sign.**

8. What percent of your current school grounds is covered in impervious surface? Any buildings, concrete, and asphalt are impervious while grass and plantings are pervious. Feel free to reference the satellite view on [Google Maps](#) for assistance.

**65 %** impervious surface

### **Existing Gardens**

9. Does your school have a food garden (vegetable, fruit, orchard, native plant) and/or specialty garden (rain, butterfly, wildflower, herb, shrub-steppe, pollinator, etc.) that students work in on a regular basis (classes, after-school programs, other)?

**We don't have a food garden yet, but by the end of this project, we hope to have a set of raised beds. We do have a rain garden made up of native plants and it also attracts pollinators.**

10. If you have a food garden, what is done with the produce that is harvested (i.e., used in cafeteria, eaten in the garden or classroom, taken home by students/teachers, given to a food bank).



**We plan to use the food in the cafeteria and donate any extra to families and/or to our local food bank.**

### **Wildlife Habitat**

**11.** Does your school have any of the following on its campus to help attract wildlife? Please choose all that apply.

Bird Feeders   1  

Bird or Bat houses       

Hummingbird, Butterfly garden                   

Water Features (bird bath)       

### **School Grounds Management**

**12.** Does your school district have policies in place to minimize or ban the use of chemicals on the school grounds? An Integrated Pest Management policy is one example.

**We do have an IPM policy to reduce our use of toxic chemicals on the school grounds.**

### **Audit**

**13.** Please complete the School Grounds Audit in the Classroom Supplement and transfer your findings to the following questions. During this assessment phase, you will calculate data regarding your school grounds currently as a baseline for your Lasting Change.

**a.** Total of Yes responses:   4   (Your Score!)

**b.** Total of Needs Improvement responses:   8  

**c.** Total of No responses:  10 

**14.** Considering your assessment results, what is your SMART goal to make your school greener and healthier? Goals should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Specific).

**Our goal is for 100% of our high school to have access to healthy produce on a daily basis during the school year.**

### **STEP THREE: MAKE A LASTING CHANGE**

**15.** Describe *in detail* what actions your Green Team took to address your Lasting Change goals. What did students do? How many students, Green Team members and beyond, were actively involved in this project? For assistance, please see exemplar report card here.

**After students completed an audit, they created various designs for their**

**garden and then voted on their favorite. In September we applied to a grant called Flower and Fun. We were awarded the grant in January and were able to design and implement a set of four raised beds. We elicited donations for soil, mulch, compost, and starter plants and used the grant money to buy the lumber for our raised beds. We advertised and planned a Garden Work Party in April to celebrate Earth Day, where over 40 people came out to help. In just four hours we were able to build the four beds, fill them with soil and compost, put mulch around the beds, and plant one bed with garlic and onions. Our Green Team assigned one of the beds to each grade and has coordinated volunteers to carry out jobs such as weeding, planting, and harvesting. The onions and garlic we planted were just used in our school's lunches in June and we're excited to continue eating our produce years to come. 55 students were involved in the planning, construction, and maintenance of the garden this year. Next school year we plan to integrate more educational activities so classes can come outside to learn about organic gardening.**

**16. What challenge(s) did you face while implementing your Lasting Change and what kind of solutions were you able to develop to address the challenge(s)?**

**It was a long process to get funding for our project. We did not receive funding from a number of grants. Finally, we got help from a parent who has a lot of grant writing experience and she helped us write a robust application. Due to her help, we were awarded the money.**

#### **STEP FOUR: VERIFY YOUR IMPACT**

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The purpose of the verification step is to determine to what extent your Lasting Change is having an impact on your school's grounds.

**17. Did your Green Team reach the goal set in Step 1?**

**Yes, we did reach our goal because the garden provides access to fresh produce for our entire school body. We're confident that next year, our raised beds will be even more bountiful.**

**18. Please elaborate on key factors in achieving this goal or reasons that you did not achieve the goal.**

**We really leveraged our school community with this project. We asked a parent to help with the grant, we asked many families to donate their time building the beds (especially those with construction experience) and we needed support from our administration to build a garden in the first place.**

19. What circumstances may have influenced your Lasting Change results?

**We had an unusually cold and wet spring so we had to delay planting our seedling until may.**

20. Were you able to reduce the amount of impervious surface on your school grounds? If so, estimate what percent is impervious surface now.

**60%**

21. How do you plan to maintain your Lasting Change?

**Over the summer, we're implementing an "adopt-a-bed" system so families can take care of a bed and ensure it doesn't go fallow. Also, our Green Team plans to bring younger grades to the garden next fall so they can learn more about our work."**

22. How do you plan to maintain your Lasting Change?

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23. What are some takeaways or lessons learned from this process that you did not include in your answers to the questions above?

**We learned a lot about effective planning and determination to make something happen. We realized that in order to build and plant in the spring, we needed to begin applying for grants well ahead of time in September.**

## **STEP FIVE: SHARE YOUR STORY**

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24. In order for your sustainability efforts to become a part of your school's identity, the entire community has to be aware and involved. How did you share your certification project within your school AND within the greater community?

**We invited the whole school to our Garden Work Party and we encouraged teachers to take their classes out to the garden. We also showcased the raised beds at the last Back to School Night in May. We hope that our efforts this year will help us engage even more of the school community**

next fall.

25. What do you consider to be the greatest success that you've seen as a result of your action project?

**We've noticed that kids who normally hated eating vegetables that the cafeteria provided are now eating fresh, organic produce from the garden on site. We added the garlic grown in the garden to spaghetti day (Wednesday's) and our students really loved it.**

26. What was the greatest challenge that you faced when completing the certification process?

**The greatest challenge was getting funding to build the raised beds. It was also challenging to spread the word about our work party, but it paid off considering 40 volunteers arrived ready to help.**

27. Your community should know about the exceptional work you've done to become a Washington Green School! For example, we may help you get the word out by sharing a press release of your certification story with a local news outlet. We'll need a few things to make that happen:

The name of your local paper where we can send the press release:  
**Lake Chelan**

A brief synthesis of how your Green Team has made a positive impact on your school:

**After students at Green High School noticed a lack of fresh, organic produce in their school lunches, they applied to several grants to get funding for a set of four raised beds. With help from their community, they built all four beds, filled them with soil and compost, and planted a plethora of organic seedlings. Now, students regularly eat fresh food from the garden in their school lunches plus go out to the garden for their classes.**

A quote from a member of the school community or Green Team about why this certification project was important:

**"It is really rewarding to watch a little tiny seed, grow into something that we can eat. It's actually tastes pretty good! It's been fun to learn more about gardening too." –Student from Green Team**



## **STEP SIX: CERTIFY AND CELEBRATE**

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- 28.** Please give your Report Card a careful final review to make sure that all your information is complete and correct. We will follow up with you in about two weeks with a review of your Report Card and information about celebrating your success



School Grounds and Gardens  
Exemplar Report Card  
[www.wagreenschools.org](http://www.wagreenschools.org)