

EMBARGOED UNTIL April 22, 2020 1:00 P.M. EST

Schools named U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Carl Sandburg/Discovery Community School among 39 schools recognized on Earth Day

KIRKLAND, Wash. – The U.S. Department of Education announced today that **Carl Sandburg Elementary/Discovery Community School** are among the 2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award honorees. The two elementary schools share a building and work together on sustainability initiatives, including the process for the Green Ribbon School recognition.

Sandburg/DCS was nominated by the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. “At Sandburg Elementary and Discovery Community School we push ourselves to go farther,” said Principal Lori Pierce. “If we reduce our environmental impact and conserve natural resources, the world will remain a place of endless possibilities for our students for generations to come.”

The three pillars of the award include: (1) Reducing environmental impact and costs; (2) Improving the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff; and (3) Providing effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways.

Parent and community volunteers are integral to the success of school sustainability initiatives. For example, to support the herbicide free program, volunteers spend time on campus weeding the raingardens and other natural areas around the school.

By collecting recycling and compost in the lunchroom and classrooms, the schools have achieved a recycling rate of 58% as of November 2019. The schools are active in the King County Green Schools program and have achieved the highest level of recognition: Sustaining Green School (maintaining Levels 1-3). The campus also received National Wildlife Federation certification as a wildlife habitat in 2015.

After a successful pilot program last spring, the schools added a food share and donation program this year during lunch. Students can put packaged, unopened food items from their school lunch into a share bin for other students to eat. Leftover foods from the share bin are collected and donated weekly to a local food bank.

Across the country, 39 schools, 11 districts, and five postsecondary institutions are being honored for their innovative efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, improve health and wellness, and ensure effective sustainability education.

The list of all selected schools, districts, colleges, and universities, as well as their nomination packages, can be found [here](#). A report with highlights on the 55 honorees can be found [here](#). More information on the federal recognition award can be found [here](#).

Commented [CK1]: A Note on the Award Name for Communications

ED's award is called "U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools" and has "District Sustainability Award" and "Postsecondary Sustainability Award" categories, in addition to the original school award. It is abbreviated ED-GRS. "Green Ribbon Schools" without the "U.S. Department of Education" is not ED's award, but instead is a separate program overseen by another organization. A selected school is a "2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School." A selected district is a "2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee." A selected postsecondary institution is a "2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School Postsecondary Sustainability Awardee. There is no "National," "Award," or "Program" in the title. There is no apostrophe or hyphen after Education.

Commented [SC2]: If we are going to treat these as plural (the use of 'are' after the school names), then we should probably separate these out as Carl Sandburg Elementary and Discovery Community School. Otherwise, we can keep them together but say 'is' instead.