

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2015-26

Monday, March 9, 2015

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Three schools, one district nominated for 2015 Green Ribbon Awards

MADISON — Three schools and one district from Wisconsin that have shown a commitment to conservation of natural resources and the health of students and staff members have been nominated for U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Awards.

State Superintendent Tony Evers nominated **Colby Elementary School**, Colby School District; **Columbus Elementary-Discovery Charter School**, Columbus School District; and **Lake Mills Elementary School**, Lake Mills Area School District. In addition, he nominated **Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District** for a District Sustainability Award. The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools, districts, and higher education institutions that reduce schools' environmental impact and costs, improve the health and wellness of students and staff members, and provide effective environmental and sustainability education.

“From conserving water to increasing recycling to paying attention to nutrition and fitness and integrating those lessons across the curriculum, these schools have made a considerable commitment to addressing the major environmental challenges we face in Wisconsin, the nation, and our world,” Evers said. “I congratulate these Green Ribbon award nominees for their efforts to ensure healthy, safe environments for both students and staff members.”

The online application for the Green Ribbon Schools program required extensive data collection and reporting about the school's facility, its health and safety policies, food service, and environmental and sustainability curriculum and assessment. Each application is reviewed by two state-level teams of education consultants and content experts. Reviewers considered the applicant's demonstrated progress in nine areas: community involvement, energy, environmental health, environmental education, health and wellness, recycling and waste management, school site, transportation, and water.

At the federal level, applications from each participating state will be reviewed to determine if the nominees: 1) meet all of the eligibility requirements; 2) comply with all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environment and safety statutory and regulatory requirements; and 3) meet high college- and career-ready academic standards. Winners will be announced on April 22.

(more)

Each of the three school nominees also will receive Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin “Sugar Maple” certification and be recognized nationally through Project Learning Tree’s “Green Schools” program.

“The goals of the Green Ribbon Schools program and environmental education in general are reasonable. That is why I truly do not understand why the proposed state budget eliminates our only environmental education consultant,” Evers said. “I call on the Legislature to restore this position, which will not have any impact on taxpayers.”

Last year, four schools and one district in Wisconsin received Green Ribbon awards. They were **Park Elementary School** (Cross Plains), Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District; **Tomorrow River Community Charter School** (Amherst Junction), Tomorrow River School District; **Hurley K-12 School**, Hurley School District; and **Conserve School** (Land O’ Lakes). The **Greendale School District** was among only nine nationwide to receive the program’s 2014 District Sustainability Award. Wisconsin had more schools receive Green Ribbon awards than any other state in the nation in both 2014 and 2013.

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NOTES: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2015_26.pdf. More information about Green Ribbon Schools nomination can be found at http://cal.dpi.wi.gov/cal_green-ribbon-schools. To learn more about Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin certification, visit: www.GHSWisconsin.org. Details about U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools program can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/green-ribbon-schools/index.html>.