

2018-2019 Alabama Green Ribbon School Application Instructions

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Alabama Green Ribbon School!

The mission of Alabama Green Ribbon Schools (AL-GRS) is to recognize schools, districts, and institutions of higher education who nurture and promote environmental, health, and sustainability education and practices. This includes demonstrating responsible stewardship of Alabama's natural resources, promoting the safety and wellness of children and adults, and encouraging an appreciation of Alabama's rich natural heritage. AL-GRS mirrors the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) in recognizing schools, districts, and IHE that show exemplary dedication to the following three pillars:

- Pillar I:** Reducing environmental impact and costs.
- Pillar II:** Improving the health and wellness of students and staff.
- Pillar III:** Providing effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills and green career pathways.

Schools demonstrating exemplary achievement in all three Pillars will receive highest rankings. Up to three public preK-12 schools, one private preK-12 school, one school district, and one college or university will be awarded the title of Alabama Green Ribbon School and go on to be nominated to ED-GRS.

This document will guide you through the application process. The deadline for submissions is **December 3, 2018**. AL-GRS will notify awardees by January 7, 2019, and submit nominees to the U.S. Department of Education by February 1, 2019.

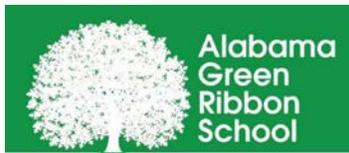
For questions regarding the application process, please contact **Mary Dansak** (mdansak@alsde.edu) or **Martha Anne Allison** (mallison@alsde.edu).

This document contains the following:

- Overview of the Application Process
- AL-GRS Pillars and Elements
- Guidelines for each part of the application
- Federal Eligibility and Compliance Requirements
- Helpful Contacts

Please note that this is not the actual application.
The application can be downloaded from this [LINK](https://goo.gl/AaiaE5).
(<https://goo.gl/AaiaE5>)





Overview of the Application Process

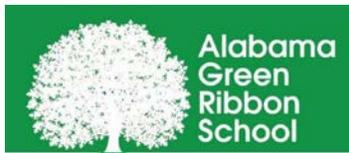
Your application consists of 4 parts: **School/District/IHE Information**, a **Summary Narrative**, **Evidence of Sustainability Achievement**, and **5 Photographs** with captions. This document will provide you with detailed information about each of these components.

Recommended Steps:

1. Read this entire application packet thoroughly. There are several hyperlinks included. If you have difficulty accessing these, contact Mary Dansak at mdansak@alsde.edu for assistance.
2. Watch the [AL-GRS Overview video](#), and download the [PowerPoint presentation](#) to share with your GRS team.
3. Read at least three [Highlights](#) and view several [Nomination Packets](#) from ED-GRS awardees across the country.
4. Assemble your GRS team. Include a variety of people.
5. Your interest in applying to become an AL-GRS assumes you are already taking steps toward energy efficiency, health and safety, sustainability education, and other innovative practices. Send your team out to gather evidence of any and all practices taking place related to the pillars.
6. Compile the relevant practices that go **beyond** local, state, and federal requirements into a document. Be sure your pillars are clearly indicated, and that you have several practices for each pillar. This constitutes the **Evidence of Sustainability Achievement** component of your Alabama Green Ribbon Schools application.
7. Select the most creative, interesting, or otherwise noteworthy practices from your evidence and write a **Summary Narrative** highlighting them. Be sure you have all three pillars represented in your narrative.
8. Have a pair of “fresh eyes” read your documents for clarity before submitting. Complete your application and submit it to mdansak@alsde.edu. Adhere to the deadline of **December 3, 2018**.



A note from Mary: Don't be discouraged if you fall short. The process of applying is an excellent self-assessment tool as you work toward becoming an environmentally friendly school. Consider putting off your application until next year if you aren't ready, and use the time to grow your practices.

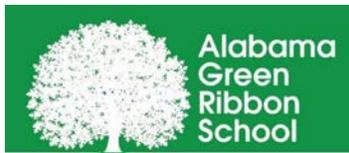


2018-2019 Alabama Green Ribbon Schools

To learn more about the Pillars and Elements, visit [Green Strides](#).

Use this chart as a guide to your application. Try to include practices from each element of each pillar, and label your examples by pillar and element in your evidence components.

AL-GRS Pillars and Elements
Pillar I: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs
Element 1A: Reduced or Eliminated Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions
Element 1B: Improved Water Quality, Efficiency, and Conservation
Element 1C: Reduced Waste Production
Element 1D: Use of Alternative Transportation
Pillar II: Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff
Element 2A: Integrated School Environmental Health Program
Element 2B: Health and Wellness
Pillar III: Provide Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education, Incorporating STEM, Civic Skills and Green Career Pathways
Element 3A: Interdisciplinary Learning about the Key Relationships between Dynamic Environmental, Energy and Human Systems
Element 3B: Use of the Environment and Sustainability to Develop STEM Content Knowledge and Thinking Skills
Element 3C: Development and Application of Civic Knowledge and Skills



School/District/IHE Information

This information is to be provided on a fillable form.

Summary Narrative

2-3 pages

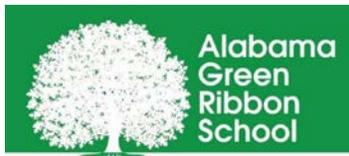
Note: We suggest writing this narrative AFTER gathering all Evidence of Sustainability Achievement (next section).

After gathering evidence of green actions, select those that highlight the most innovative, effective, and otherwise important practices and write a summary narrative describing your school's efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs, improve student and staff health, and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Focus on unique and innovative practices and partnerships. Note that it is not enough to simply meet the requirements of your district to be recognized by AL-GRS or ED-GRS. We want to hear your creative, "out-of-the-box" strategies for greening your school. This overarching summary should highlight the best of your work in every ED-GRS Pillar and Element.

In your narrative, address your efforts in each of the three Pillars. The number one reason schools do not qualify for nomination to ED-GRS is leaving out a Pillar. We suggest you overtly name which Pillar you are addressing by underlining or bolding text. You will find specific suggestions on what to include in your Summary Narrative for each Pillar in this document. We realize you may not have everything listed in the suggestions, and that you may have other tactics, programs, or strategies not listed which you might choose to include.

We strongly recommend you visit the [ED-GRS website](#) and read several [Highlights Reports](#) from winning schools. Your Summary Narrative should be "Highlights ready."





Evidence of Sustainability Achievement

Our AL-GRS Committee members are happy to assist you in any of these areas. Please see the “Helpful Resources” in this document.

Pillar I: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

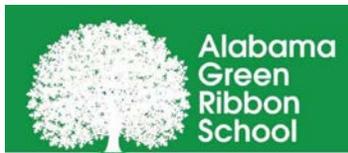
Use 1-3 pages to describe how your school, district, or postsecondary institution is reducing environmental impact and costs by reducing or eliminating greenhouse gas emissions; improving water quality, efficiency, and conservation; reducing waste production; and using alternative transportation. Identify your energy-efficient facilities and practices, ecologically beneficial uses of grounds, and methods of disposal for solid and hazardous wastes. Use supporting data to demonstrate progress when possible.

Pillar II: Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

Use 1-3 pages to describe how your school, district, or postsecondary institution improves the health and wellness of students and staff by integrating an environmental health program and promoting sound health and wellness practices. You should discuss contaminant, moisture, and asthma control, air quality, thermal comfort, pest management, water quality, and procurement, as well as nutrition and outdoors physical activity. Other components you may include are: health education, health services, counseling, psychological and social services, sun safety, staff health promotion, and family and community involvement. Incorporate metrics when possible.

Pillar III: Provide Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education, Incorporating STEM, Civic Skills and Green Career Pathways

Use 1-3 pages to describe how your school, district, or postsecondary institution ensures effective environmental and sustainability education throughout the curriculum. Provide examples of interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems. Demonstrate how your institution uses the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills, and teach all subjects in context. You should discuss how your school, district, or postsecondary institution develops and applies civic knowledge and skills to environmental and sustainability education. All STEM and civics work should be described **as it relates to environmental and sustainability learning**. Detail any environmental or sustainability literacy standards, show how these concepts are integrated into assessments, and describe environmental and sustainability literacy professional development. Include co-curricular opportunities such as field trips, study abroad, clubs, and service learning. This section should describe hands-on, place-based, project-based, authentic learning across the curriculum, not limited to one subject, such as science courses.



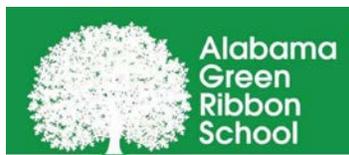
Photographs

Please submit 5-10 photographs with descriptions including who, what, when, and where. Photos should be action shots, not posed. By sending these photos, you are giving the ALSDE and the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them in newsletters, social media, and other media platforms.

Federal Eligibility and Compliance Requirements

If selected for nomination to ED-GRS, the school principal and district superintendent must be prepared to certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true; however, 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 one or more of grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction as 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. 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.
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.



Helpful Contacts: 2018-2019

NAME	ORGANIZATION	E-MAIL	AREA OF EXPERTISE
Ashley Smith	Alabama Forestry Association	asmith@alaforestry.org	Pillar III
Brian Stone	NORESKO	bstone@noresko.com	Pillar I
Carrie Threadgill	Alabama Conservation & Natural Resources	carrie.threadgill@dnr.alabama.gov	Pillar III
Dale Dickens	AI Forestry Commission	dale.dickens@forestry.alabama.gov	Pillars I and III
Daniel Tate	Energy Alabama	dtait@alcse.org	Pillar I
Doyle Keasal	ACES	keasade@auburn.edu	Pillars I, II, and III
Evelyn Terry	ADECA	Evelyn.Terry@adeca	Pillar I
Jim Grassiano	ADEM	jgrassiano@adem.alaba	Pillar I
Lynn Battle	ADEM	mlb@adem.alabama.gov	Pillar I
Martha Anne Allison	AMSTI/ALSDE	mallison@alsde.edu	General GRS info
Mary Dansak	AMSTI/ALSDE (chair)	mdansak@alsde.edu	General GRS info
Michal Robinson	ALSDE	mrobinson@alsde.edu	Pillar III
Nancy Ray	ALSDE	nray@alsde.edu	Pillar II
Paige Moreland	LEGACY	paige@legacyenvd.or	Pillar III
Paul Mohr	ACHE	paul.mohr@ache.alaba	Institutions of Higher Education
Perry Taylor	ALSDE	ptaylor@alsde.edu	Pillar I (buildings)
Robin White	Alabama Power	rjwhite@southernco.co	Pillar I
Shirley Farrell	Troy University	sfarrell@troy.edu	Pillars I, II, and III
Sarah Boren	US Green Building Council	sboren@usgbc.org	Pillars I and III
Toni Bruner	Cook Museum	tbruner@cookmuseum.	Pillar III