## Massachusetts Green Ribbon Schools 2025: Application Template

**Application Instructions**

Before you submit your completed online application, please ensure you have filled out and uploaded all documents and pictures. **Applications are due December 17, 2024.** Contact Nicole Scola ([nicole.scola@mass.gov](mailto:nicole.scola@mass.gov)) with any questions.

Step 1: Review the rubric to learn more about the evidence that should be provided in your application.

Step 2: Review [Online application](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7903836/Green-Ribbon-Schools-2025). A copy of the application is available on the [Green Ribbon Website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/awards/greenribbon/). The application contains the following parts:

* School/District contact and information.
* Narrative section. The application requires a narrative that provides a “snapshot” of the school’s efforts to address the three Pillars (upload as a Word document in the application)
* Summary to be used by the U.S. Department of Education in their honorees document. The paragraph summary should include the [district/school]’s efforts on the three pillars of the award.
* Pictures of students in action (upload in the application) and photo description.
  + Please submit 5-10 high-resolution photographs with a brief description including who, what, when, and where for each photograph.
  + Photos should be candid action shots, not posed nor collaged. They should be recent. By sending these photos, you are giving the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them in newsletters and social media. Acceptable photograph file formats are jpg, jpeg, gif, and png. Save photos with numbers 1-10 with a simple name (e.g., 1.composting) that corresponds to the 1-2 sentence description of the photo. The descriptions should be submitted at the end of your narrative section.

Step 3: Complete the application by uploading all photos and documentation. Applications are due December 17, 2024.

Notes and Tips:

* It is important to document concrete achievement; wherever possible include evidence or data that supports each Pillar.
* Provide details and examples whenever possible. Use the MA Green Ribbon Schools Rubric to guide your narrative.
* Focus on what makes the school worthy of becoming a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School.
* Discuss innovative, yet replicable, practices and partnerships.
* It is recommended that you assemble a team to complete the application. This team might include, but is not limited to a facilities manager, physical education director, food services director, curriculum director, finance department representatives, teachers, parents, and students.
* Be sure to note if students were actively involved in preparing the application.
* Consult the ED-GRS [Green Strides Resources](https://greenstrides.org/) and ED-GRS [Pillars](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/green-ribbon-schools/eligibility.html#pillars) for more information related to each Pillar.
* If the school is not able to meet the criteria for any Element within any of the three Pillars, put “N/A” and explain why it is unable to meet the criteria.

###### **Application Information**

School/District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Point Person: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Point Person's Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Point Person's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

###### Narrative, Summary, and Photo Description section

This document should be uploaded into the [Green Ribbon Application](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7903836/Green-Ribbon-Schools-2025) as part of your application. Use the rubric to ensure you are including evidence aligned to each Pillar. The narrative should provide a “snapshot” of the school’s efforts to address the three Pillars. **Provide your evidence for each Pillar below.** Tell us how your district or school culture embodies sustainability such that it should be recognized as a national exemplar.

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

In your narrative, be sure to include details, examples, and data whenever possible to illustrate how your school/district is meeting this Pillar and Element. In addition, feel free to include any other actions the school has taken that are not covered in the rubric.

* **Pillar 1, Element A: Improved energy conservation/energy-efficient building(s)**  
  Please describe efforts to reduce or improve energy efficiency, eliminate greenhouse gas, and work toward sustainable building systems.
* **Pillar 1, Element B: Improved water quality, efficiency, and conservation**  
  Please describe efforts to improve drinking water, reduce overall water use, and conserve water both inside the building and on school grounds (irrigation, permeable surfaces, landscaping). If available, please provide data on reductions in water usage (e.g. average gallons per occupant).
* **Pillar 1, Element C: Reduced waste production and improved recycling and composting programs**  
  Please describe efforts to reduce waste (including food waste), increase composting, improve recycling programs. If available, please provide data on magnitude of waste reduction (cubic yards reduced, recycling rate, etc.).
* **Pillar 1, Element D: Use of alternative transportation to, during, and from school**  
  Please describe efforts to reduce use of automobiles (carpooling/no-idling zones), increase the number of students who bike/walk, and ensure district transportation fleet is as energy efficient as possible.

###### **Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness of Schools, Students, and Staff**

* **Pillar 2, Element A: An integrated school environmental health program**  
  Please indicate your school's recent initiative(s) related to improving environmental health. These standards can by met by addressing integrated pest management, contaminant controls, safe building materials, air ventilation, moisture control, radon testing, purchasing/procurement for environmental health, and safe use of cleaning products, fertilizers, and other chemicals.
* **Pillar 2, Element B: High standards of health and wellness (nutrition, fitness, outdoor time, and mental health)**  
  Please describe your efforts to set high standards ofhealth and wellness (nutrition, fitness, outdoor time, and mental health).

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

* **Pillar 3, Element A: Interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems**   
  Please describe your efforts to incorporate key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems into coursework and other student learning opportunities.
* **Pillar 3, Element B: Use of the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills**  
  Please describe your efforts to use the environment around you and local sustainability initiatives to develop students' thinking skills and STEM content knowledge.
* **Pillar 3, Element C: Development of civic engagement knowledge and skills**   
  Please describe your efforts to engage with your communities, allowing students to apply knowledge and skills in addressing sustainability issues in their own community.

###### **Other**

Include any other supporting evidence that did not fit in the Pillars/Elements above. If applicable, please indicate any previous environmental or sustainability awards that your organization has received in the past 5 years.

###### **Summary**

Provide a brief project summary to be used by the U.S. Department of Education in their honorees document. The paragraph summary should include the [district/school]’s efforts on the three pillars of the award. Exemplar paragraphs from the [2024](https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/programs/green-ribbon-schools/highlights-2024.pdf) and [2023](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/green-ribbon-schools/highlights-2023.pdf#page=15) honorees and other resources can be found on the [ED-GRS website](https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/recognition-programs/green-ribbon-schools).

* Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs
* Pillar II: Improved Health and Wellness
* Pillar III: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

###### **Picture Descriptions of students in action (upload in the application)**

Upload to the application 5-10 high-resolution photographs. Include a brief description below that includes the who, what, when, and where for each photo. Save photos with numbers 1-10 with a simple name (e.g., 1.composting) that corresponds to the 1-2 sentence description of the photo.

Please Note: Photos should be candid action shots, not posed nor collaged. They should be recent. By sending these photos, you are giving the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them in newsletters and social media. Acceptable photograph file formats are jpg, jpeg, gif, and png.