Green Ribbon Press Release and Newsletter Examples

These examples have been compiled by Andra Yeghoian from the Green Ribbon applications that she directly applied for or supported applications for in 2015-16, 2017-18, and 2018-19, and 2019 - 2023

I. San Mateo County Press Release Example - 2017-18 and 2018-19 Application

→ Original Link - SMCOE Press Release Example

The San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) has won a <u>California Green Ribbon Award</u> for excellence in resource efficiency, health and wellness, and environmental and sustainability education. The California Department of Education (CDE) will present the award at a ceremony on May 3rd. The CDE recognizes four levels of Green Ribbon schools: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Green Achievers.

SMCOE received the Bronze or "Entry Level" award for its efforts. Highlights of SMCOE's environmental efforts include: 85 percent of electrical energy sourcing is carbon free, an emphasis on eco-friendly cleaning practices, support of 13 school districts' participation in Safe Routes to School, access to outdoor learning in SMCOE-sponsored schools, and integration of environmental literacy in STEAM Center professional learning. The San Carlos School District was awarded the Gold or "Full Integration" Award and is recognized across the county as a leader in environmental education and sustainable practices. Woodside Priory, another recognized green school leader in San Mateo County, also received the Gold Level Award this year, as well as in 2015, 2016, and 2017. Woodside Elementary School District was a Bronze Level winner in 2016.

The award corresponds with the launch this year of SMCOE's Environmental Literacy Initiative, which includes the One Planet Schools Challenge, the Schools for a Sustainable Future Conference, a Professional Learning Series, and the Environmental Sustainability Partnership Program. The One Planet Schools Challenge offers schools and districts an easy first-step and pathway toward becoming a Green Ribbon school, while the Partnership Program helps school boards commit to green practices and programs.

"We are honored to receive the Green Ribbon Bronze Level Award this year and will work hard to achieve at the Gold and Green Achiever levels," explained Superintendent Anne E. Campbell. "We have made environmental literacy a priority and look forward to working alongside schools and districts in the county to not only improve facilities and practices, but to equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to create an environmentally sustainable world," Superintendent Campbell continued.

For more information on SMCOE's Environmental Literacy Program, contact Andra Yeghoian at ayeghoian@smcoe.org or 650-802-5406.

Other Resources

• SMCOE Green Ribbon Technical Support: https://www.smcoe.org/for-schools/environmental-literacy/green-ribbon-schools.html

II. Bishop O'Dowd Press Release Examples - 2015-16 Application

Earth Day 2016 held special significance for Bishop O'Dowd High School. That's when U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. and Managing Director of the White House Council of Environmental Quality Christy Goldfuss announced O'Dowd was named a 2016 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School.

O'Dowd is among 47 schools, 15 school districts and 11 postsecondary institutions being honored this year. The honorees are being recognized for reducing their environmental impact, including energy use, waste, transportation, and water; creating healthy learning environments and fostering wellness practices; and providing effective sustainability education that prepares students to succeed in the 21st century. O'Dowd was nominated for the federal award in February, when it became the first Catholic school to receive the highest-level honor (Green Achiever) in California's Green Ribbon Schools program. The school was recognized as a California Green Ribbon School program (CA-GRS) Gold School in 2015, and a Silver School in 2014.

"Our school leadership has worked hard aligning values and decision making practices with sustainability principles, as well as designing pathways for students to access sustainability in the curriculum and co-curricular programming. Receiving this recognition now is an affirmation that we have really stepped forward as leaders in the Education for Sustainability movement, and gives us purpose for continuing to move this important work forward," Director of Sustainability Andra Yeghoian said. One example of O'Dowd's recent efforts includes a partnership with the ReThink Disposable project. In 2015, the school replaced disposable plates and bowls in the cafeteria with reusable baskets, reducing solid waste by 3,376 pounds per year.

And, as a Catholic high school, O'Dowd is committed to bringing the themes of Pope Francis' environmental and social justice encyclical – <u>Laudati Si</u> – to life. To that end, the school strives to equip students, faculty and staff, and the greater community with the tools, resources and life experiences to create an environmentally sustainable, socially just and economically viable world.

Some of the initiatives, programs and curriculum that O'Dowd was recognized for include:

- Building a LEED-platinum certified Center for Environmental Studies
- Gaining recognition as a Fair Trade School (O'Dowd is only one of 16 schools nationwide at the K-12 level to receive such recognition)
- Creating a comprehensive transportation program to encourage carpooling
- Replacing grassy areas with artificial turf or drought-tolerant plants
- Installing a total of 243 solar panels on campus
- Introducing new curriculum, such as the freshman Science and the Environment course, which provides a meaningful intro to the environment and issues associated with earth stewardship
- Piloting the Living Lab Certificate program in which over 125 students participated
- Supporting the formation of student clubs such as the Sustainability Corps dedicated to the greening of campus, spreading social justice and empowering others to live sustainably
- O'Dowd faculty and staff are formalizing a draft of forward-looking sustainability initiatives across campus, community and curriculum areas, building off the success of efforts to date.

Other Resources

Other Articles: <u>BOD Patch Release</u>, <u>NCEA Announcement</u>

III. Newsletter and Story Examples

The following include examples of newsletter stories and changemaker interviews that help to elevate the stories of districts and schools that have achieved Green Ribbon.

- Newsletter Example: Example of a newsletter article from the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) elevating the story of one of the school districts in their achieving Green Ribbon: <u>SMUHSD Newsletter article</u>.
- Changemaker Story Examples: The following include interview style profile stories that elevate the journey of one district or school that have achieved Green Ribbon. This type of profile story could be included in a larger newsletter article (see example above).
 - o San Mateo Union High School District Green Ribbon Journey (Bronze 2022)
 - o Ravenswood City Elementary School District Green Ribbon Journey (Bronze 2021)
 - South Hillsborough School Green Ribbon Journey (Silver 2021)
 - Nueva School Green Ribbon Journey (Green 2021)