Massanutten Regional Governor's School for Integrated Environmental Science and Technology Application for 2024-2025 School Year





Massanutten Regional Governor's School for Integrated Environmental Science and Technology (MRGS) offers an interdisciplinary curriculum of issues, topics, and challenges pertinent to the field of environmental science. The program emphasizes an integrated, collaborative, and enriched inquiry-based curriculum to highly motivated high school juniors and seniors centered upon the exploration of interactions between human and environmental systems at local, regional, and global levels. At MRGS, we believe that learning should mimic the real world; therefore, our students engage in simulations, presentations, investigations, problem-solving, extensive research, and intensive use of technology.

MRGS opened in the fall of 2005 as one of the 19 Academic-Year Governor's Schools in the state of Virginia. The school is operated as a joint school serving the counties of Page, Rockingham, and Shenandoah, as well as Harrisonburg City. MRGS moved to Mountain View High School in Quicksburg in the fall of 2023.

MRGS provides a two-year half-day instructional program for approximately 80 juniors and seniors from the participating school divisions, including 10 high schools. Classes at MRGS take place each weekday morning. After completion of MRGS classes, students return to their home school for afternoon classes and extracurricular activities. Our half-day program allows students to remain active participants at their home schools while receiving the academic rigor that our program offers.

Juniors take the following courses: Agro-Ecology I, English 11, Environmental Science I, Statistics, and Research. Seniors take the following courses: Agro-Ecology II, Calculus, English 12 and Creative Thinking, Environmental Science II, and Research. All of these courses, except Research, can be dual enrolled for college credit through Laurel Ridge Community College. Students and their families are responsible for paying all dual enrollment fees. Dual enrolling these courses is not required; however, all students will engage in the same level of rigor regardless of whether or not the student elects to dual enroll a specific course. Although we cover the Advanced Placement content in applicable courses, preparation for AP examinations is not the focus of our curriculum.

At this time, MRGS is accepting applications from current 10th graders who will start at MRGS in the fall of 2024. In general, we are seeking applicants who are in the top 20% of their class and above average in core content areas. In addition, applicants should be seeking innovative challenges and something beyond the regular high school curriculum and be willing to use critical and creative thinking to solve real-world problems from a variety of viewpoints. Students who consider themselves eligible and have discussed this opportunity with their parent(s)/guardian(s) and their school counselor are encouraged to apply. Completed applications should be submitted to the Counseling Office at the student's high school.

For more information and to download the application, visit the Massanutten Governor's School home page.
To access the MRGS website, go to the Shenandoah County Public Schools website, click on Schools, and click on Massanutten. Once on the MRGS website, click on School Documents/Links and the application is in the middle of the page.

MRGS does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political affiliation, veteran status, or against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities in its programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the school's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to either MRGS at (540) 477-3226 or your school division's Steering Committee representative.

MASSANUTTEN GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL
At-a-Glance

Vision Statement	The vision of Massanutten Regional Governor's School is to promote a sense of personal responsibility for our environment and to prepare our students to pursue leadership roles in a constantly changing world.
Mission Statement	Our mission at Massanutten Regional Governor's School is to provide an integrated and enriched research-based curriculum to highly motivated and intellectually gifted students based on environmental science and technology. At MRGS we believe that our students are our program and that the education we provide has the potential to benefit not only our students as individuals but society as a whole.
Program Objectives	The learning environment of Massanutten Regional Governor's School is designed to accelerate, enrich, and enhance the educational opportunities of students. We will 1. Deliver a rigorous academic program that challenges students to pursue their interests in mathematics, science, and technology to their fullest potential. 2. Provide opportunities for students to learn the fundamentals of scientific method, action research, and oral and written communication. 3. Foster an environment that promotes independent learning and personal responsibility. 4. Extend to students the opportunity to engage in real-world applications. 5. Incorporate technology so students can improve their technical skills and can become confident in its usage. 6. Provide an integrated and collaborative learning environment among the faculty and students. 7. Ensure positive public relations.
Daily Schedule	▪ Approximately 2¾ hours of on-site instruction ▪ 7:40 – 10:25 (onsite hours) ▪ Students should expect approximately 2-4 hours of off-site work per class each week.
Yearly Schedule	▪ Approximately 190 days ▪ MRGS has its own instructional calendar that differs from the participating school divisions
Student Enrollment	▪ Approximately 80 students from the 4 participating school divisions ▪ 11th and 12th grade students
Site Description	▪ Located in Quicksburg at Mountain View High School (beginning in the fall 2023)
Curriculum Focus	▪ Environmental Science, Mathematics, English, Research ▪ Technology integration into all subject areas ▪ Emphasis on interdisciplinary connections ▪ Problem-based learning ▪ Collaborative learning environment between instructors and students
Anticipated Course Offerings 2024 – 2025	▪ Junior Year o DE Agro-Ecology I (3 college credits)[1] o DE English Language (6 college credits)[1,2] o DE Environmental Science I (4 college credits)[1] o DE Statistics (6 college credits)[1,2] o Research ▪ Senior Year o DE Agro-Ecology II (3 college credits)[1] o DE Calculus (8 college credits)[1,2] o DE Environmental Science II (4 college credits)[1] o DE Literature and Creative Thinking (6 college credits)[1,2] o Research ▪ During the 2022-2023 school year, Governor's School students collectively earned 1,500 college credits. ▪ NOTE [1]: Dual enrollment courses are offered through Laurel Ridge Community College. DE courses are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to understand how DE courses transfer to a four-year institution. ▪ NOTE [2]: These courses cover the AP curriculum; however, preparation for AP exams is not the focus of the courses.
Grading	▪ Letter and/or numerical grades are submitted to the home school's counseling office at the end of each semester. ▪ Weighted credit is at the discretion of individual school divisions based upon their division's policy.
Diploma/Transcripts	▪ School division diploma with Virginia Academic-Year Governor's School Seal ▪ School division transcript ▪ Laurel Ridge Community College transcript

Graduation Statistics	▪ Since 2008, approximately 100% of graduates have planned to continue their education either at an institution of higher education or in the military. ▪ Since 2008, approximately 98% of graduates have continued their education at a four-year institution immediately upon high school graduation. ▪ Since 2019, approximately 77% of graduates have earned either an Associate's Degree or a Certificate of General Education through Laurel Ridge Community College.
Counseling Services	▪ Counseling services are provided by the home school. ▪ Emergency counseling is available.
Program Administration	▪ Program Director ▪ Establishment of regulatory procedures is created in collaboration with the Regional Board of Directors
Fiscal Agent	▪ Personnel and purchasing procedures are overseen by Shenandoah County Public Schools.
Application/Selection	▪ Selection is based upon a multi-criteria format ▪ Each school division selects its Governor's School students.
Transportation	▪ Each school division provides transportation from home schools to Governor's School.
Student Code of Conduct	▪ School policies are in accordance with Shenandoah County Public Schools. ▪ Disciplinary action will be determined collaboratively between the Governor's School and the home school.
School Website	▪ To access the MRGS website, go to the Shenandoah County Public Schools website, click on Schools, and click on Massanutten. Once on the MRGS website, click on School Documents/Links and the application is in the middle of the page. https://mrgs.shenandoah.k12.va.us/

MASSANUTTEN REGIONAL GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL
APPLICATION FOR 2024-2025

APPLICANTS MUST TYPE THEIR APPLICATION FOR CLARITY AND ACCURACY.
PLEASE PROVIDE ALL REQUESTED INFORMATION.

APPLICANT: PERSONAL AND SCHOOL INFORMATION

STUDENT INFORMATION			
First Name		**Date of Birth**	
Middle Name		**Nickname**	
Last Name		**Pronoun Preference**	
Mailing Address		**City, State, Zip**	
Student Phone #		**Student's School Email**	
Parent's/Guardian's Name		**Parent's/Guardian's Name**	
Parent's/Guardian's Phone #		**Parent's/Guardian's Phone #**	
Parent's/Guardian's Email		**Parent's/Guardian's Email**	

HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION	
School Division	

HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION	
High School	
School Counselor	
Counselor's Email	

STUDENT STATEMENT:
The decision to apply to Massanutten Regional Governor's School is my own. If accepted, I plan to participate fully in the program, and I am willing to commit to the two-year program. If accepted, I will abide by the rules and expectations explained in the *Student Accountability Handbook* and all other expectations provided by the program director. I waive the right to view the recommendations provided by teachers and counselors as part of this application. The responses contained in this application are my own work and are truthfully offered.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT **DATE**

PARENT STATEMENT:
I hereby grant my child permission to apply for admission to Massanutten Regional Governor's School. I give permission for the school division's selection committee to review my child's academic record, and I waive the right to view the recommendations provided by teachers and counselors as part of this application.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN **DATE**

APPLICANT'S NAME	

APPLICANT: CAREER HIGHLIGHTS –ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH, AND HONORS

Activities and Programs
List the 3 most significant activities and programs you have been involved in during the last three years (not prior to 8th grade). Choose activities and programs that highlight your leadership skills and/or willingness to take on high levels of commitment. Please explain any acronyms you use.

Activities and Programs	Organization	Leadership Position (if applicable)	Time Involved
Activity Example: Ecology Club	*HS*	*Vice President*	*3 hours/week 2023-24*
1.			
2.			
3.			

Research and Study Experiences
List the 3 most significant research and study experiences you have been involved in during the last three years (not prior to 8th grade). Choose experiences that highlight your ability to conduct meaningful research. Please explain any acronyms you use.

Research and Study Experiences	**Organization**	**Leadership Position** (if applicable)	**Time Involved**
Research Example: Research project to consider the consequences of fertilized run-off on the Shenandoah River	*Jane Doe, HS Biology*	*n/a*	*1 hour/week 2022, fall semester*
1.			
2.			
3.			

Honors and Recognitions

List the 3 most significant honors/recognitions you have received in the last three years (not prior to 8th grade). Choose honors that highlight your overall excellence. Please explain any acronyms you use.

Honors and Recognitions	**Level of Competition –** Local, Regional, State, National	**Year**
Example: First Place, Public Speaking Career Development Event	*Local*	*2023*
1.		
2.		
3.		

APPLICANT'S NAME	

APPLICANT: PROGRAM INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to each of the questions below in three to five sentences. Answers should indicate a genuine interest and commitment to the vision, mission, and objectives of MRGS.

1. Why do you want to attend MRGS?

2. What past experiences have you had in working with environmental studies, agro-ecology, or related fields? How have you demonstrated an interest in these areas?

3. How do you feel you will adjust to the rigorous academic involvement at MRGS?

4. How do you think you can contribute to the MRGS program?

5. Provide any additional comments that would be helpful in supporting your application. (optional)

APPLICANT'S NAME	

APPLICANT: ACADEMIC ESSAY

Please respond to two of the three essay topics provided below. Essays should not exceed 250 words and should be double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman font, with a 1" margin on each side. Include your name in the upper right-hand corner of each page of the essay and number the pages 4a and 4b. If applicable, sources should be cited at the conclusion of each essay. Please see the appendix for the rubric showing how each essay will be scored.

ESSAY TOPICS (SELECT TWO)

1. The Spotted Lantern Fly, an insect native to China, has spread invasively to other parts of the world, including the United States (specifically in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and other mid-Atlantic states). Globalization has led to increased human travel and trade, and as people move around more, they bring with them species of plants, animals, and insects (to name a few) from their home regions. These introductions, which can be intentional or unintentional, allow for invasive species to be observed in non-native habitats. Such movement of invasive species can harm ecosystems, economies, and human health. Can such harm be effectively mitigated through eradication and quarantine efforts, including mechanical, chemical, and/or biological controls? How much of a role should governments play in these efforts, or should efforts be left to private businesses and organizations? What is your rationale? What role will increased globalization and global climate change play in helping exacerbate or minimize these concerns, both in the short term and long term?

2. Nearly 30 million Americans nationwide are affected by the lack of access to affordable, fresh foods. Problems with the availability of food are not specific to one group; they occur in both rural and urban communities and pose challenges to people of all ages, races, and household structures. Unavailability can be physical or economic and is unique to each community, while potential solutions can benefit farmers, families, and local economies alike. Describe a specific challenge and how you would design a solution to address that challenge.

3. Inclusive design is essential for overcoming exclusion and inequality in the world. Designers today look at the breadth of human diversity and help people of different genders, languages, and cultures have a sense of belonging as they live, work, and play. Describe a specific challenge and how you would design a solution to address that challenge.

APPLICANT'S NAME	

ENGLISH TEACHER: RECOMMENDATION

Massanutten Regional Governor's School for Integrated Environmental Science and Technology (MRGS) offers an interdisciplinary curriculum of issues, topics, and challenges pertinent to the field of environmental science. The program emphasizes an integrated, collaborative, and enriched inquiry-based curriculum to highly motivated high school juniors and seniors using simulations, presentations, investigations, problem-solving, extensive research, and intensive use of technology.

This recommendation is to be completed by a current or previous English teacher who can assess the applicant's abilities. Please estimate the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated in your class(es) the qualities listed below. Use the scale from 0-3 as indicated below. Be sure to respond to all qualities; items omitted are included as a zero when computing a score.

To what extent has the student demonstrated they are a fit for MRGS in the following areas? Please use only whole number values. **0 = Not a fit for MRGS 1 = Weak fit for MRGS** **2 = Strong fit for MRGS 3 = Outstanding fit for MRGS**	**Score**
Academic ability: aptitude and/or potential for academic success, quality of independent work	
Class participation: willingness to participate in and contribute to class activities	
Cooperative behavior: ability to work in collaboration with peers, contribute to the group process, and respect and tolerate the views of others	
Dependability: attendance, promptness, preparation for class, ability to meet deadlines	
Emotional stability, maturity, and self-discipline	
Higher-level thinking skills: ability to use critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems	
Intellectual curiosity: interest in and appreciation for learning, openness to new experiences	
Motivation and initiative: curious, self-starter, desire to learn, reaction to setbacks	
Self-direction: ability to work independently without strong teacher guidance	

(OPTIONAL) ADDITIONAL TEACHER NARRATIVE THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE.

Signature of ENGLISH Teacher	**Printed Name**	**Date**
What course(s) has the applicant taken under your supervision and in what years?	**Email Address:**	

APPLICANT'S NAME	

SCIENCE TEACHER: RECOMMENDATION

Massanutten Regional Governor's School for Integrated Environmental Science and Technology (MRGS) offers an interdisciplinary curriculum of issues, topics, and challenges pertinent to the field of environmental science. The program emphasizes an integrated, collaborative, and enriched inquiry-based curriculum to highly motivated high school juniors and seniors using simulations, presentations, investigations, problem-solving, extensive research, and intensive use of technology.

This recommendation is to be completed by a current or previous Science teacher who can assess the applicant's abilities. Please estimate the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated in your class(es) the qualities listed below. Use the scale from 0-3 as indicated below. Be sure to respond to all qualities; items omitted are included as a zero when computing a score.

To what extent has the student demonstrated they are a fit for MRGS in the following areas? Please use only whole number values. **0 = Not a fit for MRGS 1 = Weak fit for MRGS** **2 = Strong fit for MRGS 3 = Outstanding fit for MRGS**	**Score**
Academic ability: aptitude and/or potential for academic success, quality of independent work	
Class participation: willingness to participate in and contribute to class activities	
Cooperative behavior: ability to work in collaboration with peers, contribute to the group process, and respect and tolerate the views of others	
Dependability: attendance, promptness, preparation for class, ability to meet deadlines	
Emotional stability, maturity, and self-discipline	
Higher-level thinking skills: ability to use critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems	
Intellectual curiosity: interest in and appreciation for learning, openness to new experiences	
Motivation and initiative: curious, self-starter, desire to learn, reaction to setbacks	
Self-direction: ability to work independently without strong teacher guidance	

(Optional) Additional Teacher Narrative that would be helpful to the selection committee.

Signature of SCIENCE Teacher	**Printed Name**	**Date**
What course(s) has the applicant taken under your supervision and in what years?	**Email Address:**	

Applicant's Name	

STUDENT-SELECTED TEACHER: RECOMMENDATION

Massanutten Regional Governor's School for Integrated Environmental Science and Technology (MRGS) offers an interdisciplinary curriculum of issues, topics, and challenges pertinent to the field of environmental science. The program emphasizes an integrated, collaborative, and enriched inquiry-based curriculum to highly motivated high school juniors and seniors using simulations, presentations, investigations, problem-solving, extensive research, and intensive use of technology.

This recommendation is to be completed by a current or previous high school teacher who can assess the applicant's abilities. Please estimate the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated in your class(es) the qualities listed below. Use the scale from 0-3 as indicated below. Be sure to respond to all qualities; items omitted are included as a zero when computing a score.

To what extent has the student demonstrated they are a fit for MRGS in the following areas? Please use only whole number values. **0 = Not a fit for MRGS 1 = Weak fit for MRGS** **2 = Strong fit for MRGS 3 = Outstanding fit for MRGS**	**Score**
Academic ability: aptitude and/or potential for academic success, quality of independent work	
Class participation: willingness to participate in and contribute to class activities	
Cooperative behavior: ability to work in collaboration with peers, contribute to the group process, and respect and tolerate the views of others	
Dependability: attendance, promptness, preparation for class, ability to meet deadlines	
Emotional stability, maturity, and self-discipline	
Higher-level thinking skills: ability to use critical and creative thinking skills to solve problems	
Intellectual curiosity: interest in and appreciation for learning, openness to new experiences	
Motivation and initiative: curious, self-starter, desire to learn, reaction to setbacks	
Self-direction: ability to work independently without strong teacher guidance	

(Optional) Additional Teacher Narrative that would be helpful to the selection committee.

Signature of STUDENT-SELECTED Teacher	**Printed Name**	**Date**
What course(s) has the applicant taken under your supervision and in what years?	**Email Address:**	

APPLICANT'S NAME	

SCHOOL COUNSELOR: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

School counselors are asked to include the following with the student's application:
a) an official transcript

b) the student's most recent semester grades (if not included on the transcript)

c) standardized testing scores (SOLs, PSAT, SAT, ACT). Please include these items with the printed application after this page.

Signature of SCHOOL COUNSELOR	Printed Name	Date
Email Address:		

APPENDIX A: ACADEMIC ESSAY SCORING RUBRIC

Traits	4	3	2	1
Focus & Details	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main ideas are clear and are well supported by detailed and accurate information.	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main ideas are clear but are not well supported by detailed information.	There is one topic. Main ideas are somewhat clear.	The topic and main ideas are not clear.
Organization	The introduction is inviting, states the main topic, and provides an overview of the paper. Information is relevant and presented in a logical order. The conclusion is strong.	The introduction states the main topic and provides an overview of the paper. A conclusion is included.	The introduction states the main topic. A conclusion is included.	There is no clear introduction, structure, or conclusion.
Voice	The author's purpose of writing is very clear, and there is strong evidence of attention to audience. The author's extensive knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are evident.	The author's purpose of writing is somewhat clear, and there is some evidence of attention to audience. The author's knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are evident.	The author's purpose of writing is somewhat clear, and there is evidence of attention to audience. The author's knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are limited.	The author's purpose of writing is unclear.
Word Choice	The author uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words seems accurate, natural, and not forced.	The author uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words is inaccurate at times and/or seems overdone.	The author uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety.	The writer uses a limited vocabulary. Jargon or clichés may be present and detract from the meaning.
Sentence Structure, Grammar, Mechanics, & Spelling	All sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The author makes no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling.	Most sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The author makes a few errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling, but they do not interfere with understanding.	Most sentences are well constructed, but they have a similar structure and/or length. The author makes several errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling that interfere with understanding.	Sentences sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or are difficult to understand. The author makes numerous errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling that interfere with understanding.

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