



School Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

The signatures of the school principal and district superintendent (or equivalents) on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. *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 grades early learning to 12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement 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. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is not subject to the jurisdiction of OCR. The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.
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.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2015-2018

Public Charter Title I Magnet Private Independent Rural

Name of Principal: **Mr. Larry Washington**

Official School Name: **Warwick Valley High School**

Official School Name Mailing Address: **89 Sanfordville Road, Warwick, NY, 10990**

County: **Orange** State School Code Number *: **362997004034**

Telephone: **(845) 987-3050** Fax: **n/a**

Web site/URL: <http://www.warwickvalleyschools.com/warwick-valley-high-school/> E-mail: lwashington@wvcsd.org

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space*

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date: **February 28, 2018**

(Principal's Signature)



Name of Superintendent: **Mr. David Leach**
District Name: **Warwick Valley Central School District**

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Leach".

Date: **February 28, 2018**

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is 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. The school meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: **New York State Education Department**

Name of Nominating Authority: **Mrs. Rosanne Groff**

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosanne T. Groff".

Date: **February 28, 2018**

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

Expiration Date: March 31, 2018

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

Warwick Valley High School, Warwick, New York

Environmental Stewardship and Wellness are Essential Parts of the School Ecosystem

From educational activities in the grades 9-12 classrooms to environmental experiences throughout the region, Warwick Valley High School's 1,335 students and 121 staff members fully embrace the philosophies of green living.

This has led to the school being recognized nationally for its commitment to sustainable practices. In 2017, Warwick Valley High School was awarded a \$4,443 grant from the National Environmental Education Foundation to fund the proposed EcoEd Project. With the funding, students in Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science classes and other elective courses were able to work with wildlife biologists at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge to conduct original research on invasive species. They took multiple trips to the refuge, used handheld GPS equipment and other technologies to conduct land surveys and ultimately wrote up and reported their findings to the scientific community.

Warwick Valley High School students have also benefitted greatly from environmental education activities made possible by a \$91,000 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant award made to the school district. The award allowed educators to expand a partnership with Sustainable Warwick, a local organization committed to protecting the environment and reducing carbon emissions. As a result, environmental education units were incorporated into all academic areas at the school. In addition, Warwick Valley High School students worked with Sustainable Warwick staff to create and present community workshops on a variety of environmental and sustainability topics, in effect expanding environmental awareness into the larger community.

These grant-funded initiatives complement the school's broad range of classes that incorporate sustainability themes. This includes such courses as Conservation, Wildlife and Land Management; Landscape Design; Floral Design; and Land, Food and People. Warwick Valley High School students learn about green building techniques in the school's Project Lead the Way classes and also take advantage of field trips to further build their knowledge base. More than 35 trips are scheduled each year and most have an environmental focus. For example, students visited Wheelabrator Westchester, an energy-from-waste facility, to learn how household waste is converted into fuel to generate clean, renewable electricity. They also toured an environmental research facility that focuses on LED technology, robotic lighting, aeroponics and greenhouse disease research. Pupils are using their newly garnered knowledge to improve lighting in the school's greenhouse, which will, in turn, improve crop yields. This greenhouse — which will soon double in size to 1,200 square feet — provides produce for the school cafeteria and serves as a hands-on classroom for pupils enrolled in agriculture classes.

Many Warwick students also choose to participate in extracurricular activities that enhance environmental knowledge gained in the classroom. The school has an active Future Farmers of America (FFA), as well as an Environmental Club and a Green Team. The school's Envirothon Team advanced to state-level competition in 2017; this event has student teams tested on their knowledge of environmental topics and their ability to make effective oral presentations in problem-solving scenarios.

Warwick Valley High School staff members are learning right along with students. The school partners with Hospitality Green, which allows custodial staff to better understand their role in supporting sustainability. Teachers receive training and guidance from Sustainable Warwick and the Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation on integrating sustainability and environmental topics into all content areas. Many teachers also look for opportunities outside of school to further expand their knowledge base. For example, a science teacher joined an Earthwatch research team in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California to help scientists understand how climate change impacts the health of meadows. The research project was a valuable learning experience, as the teacher, in turn, integrated the research findings into science lessons for students.

Warwick Valley High School students need only to look around their school setting to gain an even greater understanding of how to effectively address sustainability and environmental issues in a larger, real-world context. With all of its successes in reducing environmental impacts and costs, the school itself is a perfect model.

For instance, Warwick Valley High School has made recycling and other green initiatives a front-and-center priority. The student-led Green Team designed reusable water bottles to replace those typically used once and thrown away; these bottles were sold to students and staff. Easily accessible water refill stations make continued hydration very convenient. Also, additional trash and recycling bins have been strategically located throughout school facilities to encourage recycling. Students added the "cool factor" to recycling by creating the Recyc-KOOL campaign in which they use stickers to identify items in the cafeteria that can be recycled. The high school cafeteria also has an eco-digester that processes all food waste (including food scraps from all four district schools); the resulting water is safe for sewers. These recycling/reuse efforts have led to a 19 percent reduction in the amount of trash going to landfills from the high school over the last two years.

Warwick Valley High School has improved energy efficiency through enhanced monitoring of energy usage, by installing LED lighting and by using software that automatically powers down computers when they're not in use. Efficiencies are also evident in the way high school students are transported to and from school, as the district has purchased 10 propane-powered buses. These vehicles run cleaner than traditional diesel buses and have almost no emissions. In addition, propane is approximately half the cost of diesel and the propane buses require less maintenance, yielding an estimated 30 percent savings in maintenance costs.

Even seemingly small opportunities for positive impacts are not overlooked at Warwick Valley High School. The parking lot has speed bumps that divert water away from vehicles and buildings and into a rain garden on the school property and to the local Wawayanda Creek. All landscaping is regionally appropriate and plants and shrubs have been chosen for their ability to thrive without the need for excessive watering.

Educators and school leaders also continually seek out ways to maintain a healthy, positive and compassionate school climate. To this end, Warwick Valley High School has a full-time registered nurse in the health office, along with six school counselors, a full-time school

psychologist and social worker to provide support and guidance to students. In addition, the school has partnered with the Orange County Department of Mental Health to establish a satellite clinic that offers counseling and intervention services and with the Warwick Valley Prevention Council, which provides pupils with information on healthy behaviors. They do have offices at each of the schools. To increase overall safety, the school has also added a school resource officer.

Maintaining and improving students' physical health is another vital element in the school environment. The meals prepared at Warwick Valley High School include organic produce sourced from local farmers, as well as from the school's greenhouse. With these fresh produce options, the school's menu often exceeds the USDA meal pattern requirements related to providing fresh fruits and vegetables.

Students are also encouraged to take advantage of endless opportunities to increase physical activity levels. More than 30 athletic teams currently represent Warwick Valley High School and students participate in at least 90 minutes of physical education classes each week, with many of these activities taking place outdoors. The high school offers a ropes course, rock-climbing wall and such outdoor education activities as orienteering. Plus, Warwick Valley High School is preparing to install an outdoor challenge course, which will allow students, staff and families to participate in a fun and interactive obstacle course that will further promote physical fitness. The outdoor courtyard and nature trails are popular choices for outdoor time for students.

Taken together, Warwick Valley High School's far-reaching and comprehensive sustainability initiatives are yielding significant positive results in the areas of environmental education, improved pupil health and wellness and reduced negative impacts on the environment. Environmental stewardship and wellness have, in effect, become integral parts of the school's ecosystem.

Part III – Documentation of State Evaluation of Nominee

The Warwick Valley Central School District is located 50 miles south of Poughkeepsie, NY in Orange County. The district is made up of 5 towns and covers an area of 101 square miles. Warwick Valley High School houses 1,294 students in grades 9-12.

A sample of the reasons this candidate was selected by the New York State Green Ribbon Schools selection team is included below.

Pillar I – Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs (Score 57.79 out of 90)

- Received the Energy Star Building Label in 2015 with a score of 96%.
- An on-site 2 megawatt solar array provides 85% renewable energy at the time of application with 100% anticipated within months of submission.
- A recent building addition was constructed with 100% EPA Energy Star certified materials and built to meet LEED certification standards.
- Building systems, such as HVAC and lighting, can be remotely monitored and controlled in each classroom to ensure efficiency.
- Achieved a high recycling rate (57%) based on volume, and has 100% use of chlorine – free, post-consumer recycled paper.
- A strict anti-idling policy is followed and several propane-powered buses used for pupil transportation

Pillar II – Improved the Health and Wellness of Schools, Students, and Staff (Score 71.79 out of 90)

- A qualified IAQ coordinator is employed to effectively carry out the environmental health program which corresponds with the work of the school's health and safety committee. The committee is inclusive of a student representative and local law enforcement personnel, among multiple school staff members.
- A registered nurse is available during all school hours to aid with asthma management plans and actions. Asthma triggers are actively mitigated as well.
- Fresh foods provided by local vendors are prioritized via purchasing agreements, as well as some foods produced in the school's greenhouse. Also, 30% of the purchased food is certified environmentally preferable.
- Refillable water stations are installed throughout the school to reduce use of single-use plastic containers.

Pillar III – Provided Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education (Score 83.79 out of 105)

- Professional development is in coordination with the Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation – 100% of the teachers at this school participate in PD sessions on sustainable topics
- Students learn about green technologies and environmental studies through classes developed as part of their "Lead the Way" series. Course titles such as "Land, Food and People" also incorporate sustainable efforts.
- The school's Green Team focuses on recycling and reducing waste through initiatives such as the sale of reusable water bottles within the school.

- Students collaborate with a local community-based organization – Sustainable Warwick - on projects to benefit the community that are focused on sustainable and environmental protection. (Cleaning parks and streets, planting vegetables, rehabilitating walking trails, etc.)
- Students experience off-site field trips (more than 35 per year) that relate to environmental issues and assist in performing original research at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge.