



**350 Districts**

**948 Schools**

**Participating**

## May Sustainability Heroes



The May 2020 Sustainability Heroes are Patricia Heindel, Ph.D. and Elizabeth Warner, the Co-Founders of the School Culture and Climate Initiative. Liz and Patricia are nationally recognized for their exemplary achievements in the field of social-emotional learning and school climate. Through their tireless work and visionary focus, these sustainability heroes have developed one of the most comprehensive initiatives in New Jersey to both improve school climates and promote students' health and wellness from kindergarten through 12th grade. See how The College of Saint Elizabeth, Dr.

Maurice Elias, #SELDAY, the North Pole and the Boston marathon fit into the story on the [Sustainable Jersey Heroes page](#).

To celebrate the stories of our local leaders, we recognize a monthly Sustainability Hero. If you have recommendations for someone on your green team, municipal staff, school staff or task force that's a sustainability hero, complete the [submission form](#).

## Virtual Sustainability Summit



In adherence with current public health and social distancing guidelines, we have cancelled the June 12 Sustainability Summit in Holmdel. Instead, we are offering four weeks of FREE virtual "Summit-like" content, including online educational sessions, interactive "happy hours," and 30-minute talks on a variety of topics. The Virtual Sustainability Summit will be April 20 to May 15. The Summit schedule is posted on our website [here](#). Descriptions seen [here](#) indicate which sessions have school-related content.

## New Event Added: Sustainable Jersey for Schools Happy Hour

2020 is the 5th Anniversary of the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. Gather with fellow school green team members for a supportive "happy hour" discussion of where we started and where we're going. We invite school staff, students, parents and anyone with interest in this topic to share your experiences, concerns, advice, and helpful resources.

Tuesday, May 12, 2020, 3:30pm - 4:30pm

[REGISTER](#)

## Fund Your Next Sustainability Initiative

Need funding to implement a sustainability initiative in your municipality or school? This session will provide an overview of the funding and resources available to municipalities and schools looking to complete Sustainable Jersey or Sustainable Jersey for Schools program actions along with grant writing tips to help applicants write good proposals. It will include information on the Sustainable Jersey and Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grants Program, current grant and technical assistance opportunities and additional resources and funding available from other organizations.

Friday, May 15, 2020, 1:00pm - 2:30pm

[REGISTER](#)

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## June 22 - Final Deadline for 2020 Certification Application

The third and final deadline to submit applications for 2020 certification is June 22. Applications that were submitted in the second round will be returned by the end of May.

For details about adjustments to the 2020 certification cycle and other accommodations for 2020 applicants due to COVID-19 disruptions, click [here](#).

If you need help with the application process, check out our [Green Team Resources page](#), which includes our [Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet template](#) to help you keep track of your points, [Application User Guide](#) and [recorded certification webinars](#). If you have any further questions feel free to reach out to us at [schools@sustainablejersey.com](mailto:schools@sustainablejersey.com).



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## Congratulations to NJ's 2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Cape May City Elementary School and Readington Middle are among the 2020 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award honorees. Both schools were nominated by the New Jersey Department of Education for reduction in environmental impact and costs; improved health and wellness of schools, students and staff; and environmental and sustainability education integrated throughout their curriculum.

### Cape May City Elementary School (Cape May County)

Cape May City Elementary School (CMCES) serves 150 students, 42 percent of whom qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The school is a Certified Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation. Earth Club students, who oversee the edible school gardens and the composting and recycling programs, are currently completing their

CONGRATULATIONS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
**GreenRibbonSchools**

2020 HONOREE

**Cape May City Elementary &  
Readington Middle School**



Sustainable Food pathway through Eco-Schools USA. CMCES has participated in Sustainable Jersey for Schools, beginning in its inaugural year, earning a bronze-level and two-silver certifications. This partnership has also resulted in three grants totaling \$6,000 to support recycling, composting, and gardening programs. Sandy Sandmeyer-Bryan was recognized by Sustainable Jersey for Schools as a Sustainability Hero in 2017: read the profile [here](#).

## Readington Middle School; Whitehouse Station (Hunterdon County)

A community guided by the triple bottom line, Readington Middle School (RMS) serves over 500 sixth- to eighth-graders in central New Jersey. Understanding how to balance the needs of people, planet, and profit is ingrained in the everyday lives of the RMS community. The school's physical space — its building, solar installation, and native, rain, and courtyard gardens — provide tangible context for student learning. Teachers, facility staff, engineers, master gardeners, and local environmentalists work side-by-side with students to examine and understand energy usage patterns, the rise of invasive species, and rain gardens as a solution to keep the watershed clean. Though RMS was built more than 60 years ago, the evolution of the physical space and surrounding natural environment is a visible representation of the value RMS places on green technologies and natural features that enhance well-being and environmental and economic health. Nearly 30 percent of the school's energy is obtained from rooftop solar panels and ground arrays. The school tracks resource use in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. The school has Eco-Schools USA Silver recognition and Sustainable Jersey for Schools bronze certification.

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## Contribute to a Complete Census Count

The importance of a complete count in the 2020 Census cannot be understated — nearly \$23 billion in federal funding for New Jersey depends on Census counts, including support for school programs and services such as special education, free and reduced lunch, class size reduction, classroom technology, after-school programs, Head Start and more. Even during this time of social distancing and remote learning, information encouraging completion of the Census online, over the phone or by mail can still be sent to families through school communication channels. The U.S. Census Bureau Statistics in Schools (SIS) program also has home and distance learning resources available [online](#) for parents and teachers. As a reminder, schools can earn points toward Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification for Census education and outreach and/or integrating SIS activities into student learning.

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## Happy 50th Birthday NJ Department of Environmental Protection



The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) celebrated its 50th birthday on April 22. The DEP was established on April 22, 1970 — America's first official Earth Day. Today, DEP employees in dozens of programs continue to advance innovative strategies to safeguard and enhance New Jersey's air, water and land and the health of its residents. With hard work; and exceptional knowledge and expertise, the DEP's dedicated staff have made the agency a reliable guardian of New Jersey's precious natural and historic resources.

Sustainable Jersey values the expertise and dedication of all of our partners at DEP. DEP staff support Sustainable Jersey for Schools by serving on taskforces and writing certification actions, specifically, DEP has lead the Student Learning Task Force as well as assisted with writing our Outdoor Classroom, Radon Testing and Mitigation actions. In addition, DEP staff launched new [Food Waste Guidelines](#) for schools in Fall 2019, providing schools with tools for waste reduction in cafeterias.

For more information on DEP, visit: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/>

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## Other Upcoming Events

The United States Green Building Council's Center for Green Schools will host a series of energy resilience webinars to help school communities prepare schools and districts in this changing world.

### Social Emotional Resilience: Supporting School Communities Through Crises

Schools are learning spaces first and foremost, but as the current pandemic has reminded us, they also function as so much more than that. For many students, schools are a place to be fed, connect with peers, and access critical infrastructure (internet, computers) they may lack at home. The psychological impacts of recent natural and health crises (and resulting disruptions to the school year) on students can be long lasting. As we think about returning to school, how can we address these ongoing challenges? Presenters on this webinar will help us understand how to help equip students and school staff to cope with uncertainty, practice understanding, and build social and emotional resilience after crises.

**May 28, 2020, 1:00-2:00 pm**

[REGISTER](#)

### Resilient Design: Preparing School Buildings for a Changing Climate

Schools are the cornerstone of our communities, and so it is especially crucial that these buildings are designed with resilient strategies to withstand and rebound quickly after disaster strikes. During this webinar, school leaders and design professionals will share successful strategies and lessons learned designing schools to minimize impacts, avoid disruptions and recover and adapt to natural and human health events, including the novel coronavirus.

**June 18, 2020, 1:00-2:00 pm**

[REGISTER](#)

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## Other Funding Opportunities

### Classroom Technology Grants

Frontier Internet will award three \$1,000 grants to K-12 teachers to be used toward technology in the classroom. Grants will be awarded to teachers who create unique lesson plans on how to use technology in the classroom to teach social responsibility. To learn more, click [here](#).

**[Application Deadline:](#) Friday, May 15, 2020, 11:59pm**

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For more grant opportunities for schools, students, or educators, visit the [Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grants Portal](#)

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## Green Team Resources

### Staying Green During Quarantine: Resources for Remote Learning & School Building Closures

Sustainable Jersey has posted a compilation of resources on our newly-developed [Remote Learning & Building Closure Resources page](#) to assist staff, students and families across our school communities during the current crisis. We will add to and revise this list as we become aware of

additional resources.

## NJBPU Announces New Incentives to Expand Local Government Electric Vehicle Fleets

To jump-start the electrification of local government vehicle fleets, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) has created the “Clean Fleet Electric Vehicle Incentive” program, which offers local governments \$4,000 per battery electric vehicle and \$1,500 for one dual-port Level 2 EV charging station. The application window opened on December 1, 2019, and the program will award grants on a rolling basis until the funding is fully committed. Eligible applicants are local government authorities, which includes school districts, counties, municipalities, and local utility authorities in New Jersey.

To make it easier for local governments to add electric vehicles to their fleets, EVs were recently adding to the State Purchasing Contract. Please review Sustainable Jersey’s [Alternative Fuel Vehicle Procurement Guide](#) for further details. Sustainable Jersey for Schools points can be earned for the new [Sustainable Fleets](#) action in the Green Purchasing category.

More information can be found [here](#) and the application can be accessed [here](#). If you have questions about the incentive program, please send an email to [EV.programs@bpu.nj.gov](mailto:EV.programs@bpu.nj.gov).

## It Pay\$ to Plug In: New Jersey's Electric Vehicle Charging Grants Program

It Pay\$ to Plug In provides grants to offset the cost of purchasing and installing electric vehicle charging stations. The program is designed to expand New Jersey's growing network of electric vehicle infrastructure, allowing residents, businesses, and government agencies to purchase and drive electric vehicles. EVs dramatically reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality for everyone.

It Pay\$ to Plug In has expanded its eligibility criteria to include workplaces, public places, and multi-unit dwellings (apartments, condominiums, and townhouses). The program is open to businesses, governments, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions. Private residential dwellings other than multi-unit dwellings are not eligible for grants.

Upon completion of work in accordance with the eligibility criteria, DEP will reimburse each applicant for a percentage of eligible costs up to a maximum of:

- \$750 per Level 1 charging station
- \$5,000 per single-port Level 2 charging station
- \$6,000 per dual-port Level 2 charging station

All application forms can be found on [DriveGreen NJ](#). Please direct questions to the Bureau of Mobile Sources at [DriveGreen@dep.nj.gov](mailto:DriveGreen@dep.nj.gov).

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## Mark Your Calendars!

Sustainable Jersey for Schools events, trainings, funding opportunities, and more!

- **April 20 - May 15** Virtual Sustainability Summit
- **May 12:** Sustainable Jersey for Schools Happy Hour
- **May 15:** Funding Your Next Sustainability Initiative Webinar
- **June 22:** Final Application Deadline for 2020 Certification Cycle

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## Download Program Resources

- [Brochure](#)
- [Fact Sheet](#)
- [District Registration Instruction](#)
- [School Registration Instruction](#)



We hope you will join us to take steps to create a brighter future, one school at a time! If you have questions, email us at [schools@sustainablejersey.com](mailto:schools@sustainablejersey.com) or visit [www.SustainableJerseySchools.com](http://www.SustainableJerseySchools.com)

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