



# Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Report of Toms River - High School North (Ocean), a Sustainable Jersey for Schools bronze certified applicant.

Seeking Bronze-level certification

## Contact Information

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## Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Toms River - High School North (Ocean) was approved for in 2023 appears below. Note: Standards for the actions below may have changed and the documentation listed may no longer satisfy requirements for that action. Additionally, points associated with actions prior to 2013 certifications may not be accurate.

### Board Leadership & Planning

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#### District Sustainability Policy

10 Points

🏆 Bronze Priority 🏆 Silver Priority District

**Program Summary:** Toms River Regional School District began developing a sustainability policy during the summer of 2022. Neighboring school district sustainability policies were used as a reference in building Toms River Regional's policy. The assistant superintendent of secondary

curriculum met with a cohort of teachers to review aspects of the sustainability policy. Collaboratively, administrators and sustainability champions crafted a draft sustainability policy. At the October 2022 school board meeting the sustainability policy was proposed for review. Community stakeholders had one month to review and submit comments on the sustainability policy. At the November 2022 board meeting, the sustainability policy was formally adopted. Various initiatives have led to the implementation of the sustainability policy. These initiatives have included recycling campaigns at the schools, grants for initiatives, and bioblitz's at various schools. The adoption of curricula integrating climate change and education for sustainability. Energy saving programs and lead abatement and reporting.

**PDF:** [TRRS SUSTAINABILITY POLICY](#)

**PDF:** [SUSTAINABLENJ GRANT PRESS RELEASE](#)

**PDF:** [SUSTAINABLE JERSEY FOR SCHOOLS HSN SUBMISSION DISTRICT SUSTAINABILITY POLICY ACTION .PDF](#)

**PDF:** [LINKS TO FEATURES HIGHLIGHTING SUSTAINABILITY POLICY](#)

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## School District Foundation

10 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** Toms River Education Foundation (TREF) was established in 2020 with a mission to foster student participation in extracurricular and school-based programs to enhance overall academic excellence and life skills, and to promote sustainable initiatives for the well-being of students and the Toms River community. The foundation is composed of Toms River Regional Schools alumni, teachers, current and former district and township leaders, and local business owners. Members include former Councilmember Terrance Turnbach (secretary); teacher Erin Cosentino (president); Toms River School Board President Jennifer Howe (vice president); former Board Member Michael Horgan (treasurer); and teachers and business owners Nicholas Pagano; Dana Tormollan DeRome; and Bill Rankin. TREF was founded on the principle that extra-curricular school activities are as critical to a student's educational experience as lessons learned in the classroom, and that lessons learned outside the classroom promote team building, responsibility, critical thinking, sustainability, and problem solving. Initiatives financially supported by Toms River Education Foundation include a \$10,000 donation to district-wide athletics; a \$10,000 contribution to K-12 music programs to remain sustainable; and a \$5,000 donation to support the arts, including funding the repair of broken kilns throughout the district. This support is achieved through various community fundraisers including road races, local tournaments, and partnerships with local restaurants. Examples of the foundation's impact on the school district and community can be accessed through the following web features:

<https://www.trschools.com/community/new-foundation-makes-immediate-impact>

<https://www.trschools.com/community/tref-makes-artistic-donation-to-district>

<https://www.trschools.com/community/tref-donates-10k-to-music-programs>

**PDF:** [TREF LETTER.PDF](#)

## Digital Learning Leadership

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### Equitable Access to Digital Learning

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority District

**Program Summary:** The Toms River Regional School District (TRRS) ensures that all students have equitable access to technology and digital learning through a multi-layered approach that involves all school community stakeholders in the process. To begin with, each year, district leaders craft challenging goals based on the progress of the previous years' goals, achievement data, feedback from stakeholders, and a consideration of government mandates, local and societal needs, and relevant research. One of the goals for the 2022-2023 school year puts technology at the forefront of district priorities. The goal reads: "Enhance a student-centered approach to technology education through (1) maximizing equitable access to digital learning opportunities both in school and at home; (2) expanding and maximizing the efficiency of our one-to-one program; (3) facilitating student ownership of academic achievement data through self-directed access and individualized learning goals; and (4) increased implementation of systemwide tools for data security; (5) leveraging technology tools and resources to enhance teaching and learning in order to provide a thorough and efficient education for all students." The ultimate goal is that every year, every single student has access to the internet at home and a personal device. The district's first step to ensuring equitable access to technology was in planning a one-to-one device initiative that extends from grade four through grade 12. All students in these grade levels are provided with Chromebooks, chargers, and cases that are carried between home and school each day. Additionally, each classroom in pre-kindergarten through third grade has a cart of Chromebooks, giving students access to technology at any point throughout the day.

PDF: [ECF MIFI UNMET NEED PARENT CERTIFICATION.PDF](#)

PDF: [ECF CB UNMET NEED PARENT CERTIFICATION FORM-NEW.PDF](#)

PDF: [REPORT OF STUDENT TECH\\_INTERNET NEEDS - SHEET1.PDF](#)

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## District Professional Development Plan \*Retires 10/31/23\*

10 Points

District

**Program Summary:** Toms River Regional Schools Professional Development Plan reflects the content, concepts and skills that have been identified as the most critical areas for which all staff will be provided with ongoing education and training. The District Professional Development plan includes an emphasis on digital learning (Goal 3) to increase educators' knowledge and understanding of digital teaching and learning in an effort to improve student achievement. The basis for the goals and activities include feedback from the School Improvement Panels (ScIP), the District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC), surveys, evaluation data, and applicable Annual District Goals. This district plan drives the creation of professional learning opportunities on days scheduled for such purposes and guides the approval of individual opportunities for staff.

PDF: [PD INTEREST AND REFLECTION SURVEYS RELATED TO DIGITAL LEARNING.PDF](#)

PDF: [AUGUST 17, 2022 BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA AND MINUTES.PDF](#)

PDF: [2022-2023 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.PDF](#)

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## Digital Learning Practices

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## Digital Citizenship

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority District

**Program Summary:** More than 50 educators and stakeholders have had input into the design and implementation of Digital Citizenship into the district Digital Citizenship plan. It is ensconced in our district expectations for students and staff in the acceptable use policy as well as the vision and goals for the district. Each technology curriculum document also specifically addresses Digital Citizenship

**PDF:** [DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP TRRS SUBMISSION.PDF](#)

**PDF:** [DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP RESUBMISSION - GOOGLE DOCS.PDF](#)

## Green Purchasing

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### Sustainable Fleets

15 Points

District

**Program Summary:** Beginning in 2016, Toms River Regional Schools made a concerted effort to replace its diesel-powered school buses with more efficient and environmentally-friendly gasoline, propane and/or electric vehicles, and sought to do this primarily through the Clean Diesel Rebate Program offered by the EPA. From the 2017 through 2021, the district was selected for these rebates an incredible five consecutive years, enabling it to replace 41 old, inefficient buses with newer, considerably less toxic buses, including 27 which use propane. The new vehicles are being used daily by the Transportation Department, in accordance with the district's four-tiered system of routing among its 18 schools and Early Learning Center. The acquisition process each year was conducted collaboratively among the district's Purchasing Department, its primary vendor, BlueBird, and the EPA. Purchase orders, invoices, bills of lading, signed documents of receipt, and letters confirming scrappage were required, and the acquisition process was completed successfully each year. As the EPA transitioned from this program to the current Clean School Bus Program, the district has a pending application to replace 13 old buses with 11 propane vehicles and two electric buses. Toms River Regional Schools has consistently informed the community about this effort over the past six years. No fewer than five press releases were issued with accompanying features on the district website. The rebate awards and bus replacements were announced at school board meetings each year, and celebrated on the district's social media channels including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Most significantly, the district's remarkable success with the program caught the attention of the EPA's Region 2, which visited Toms River in 2019 to celebrate the significant environmental impact that the program has had on the district and surrounding community. That feature can be accessed here:

<https://www.trschools.com/community/epa-visits-district-to-celebrate-reduced-diesel-emissions>

**PDF:** [BUS PROPANE LICENSE](#)

**IMAGE:** [PUBLIC COMMUNICATION OF PROPANE BUS FLEET](#)

**PDF:** [TOMS RIVER SCHOOL VEHICLE INVENTORY.PDF](#)

## Integrated Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math (iSTEAM)

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### iSTEAM Planning & Implementation

15 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** We are in the second year of hopefully a five-year grant embedding a teaching artist into our digital arts academy. Students in the academy collaborate across disciplines developing a virtual reality experience in the Unity physics engine using C+ developing storylines and solving problems aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Education for Sustainability Enduring Understandings. This year's project focuses on recognizing and protecting the commons and studies our impact on our shores. Participating students are in the second year of their program. In the first year, they study engineering and take those concepts into 3d design in VR and the creation of digital assets using the adobe cloud. The integration of the arts into this highly technical, math-based language and exploration of science truly is the quintessential iSTEAM plan.

PDF: [AIE RUNNING NOTES 2022-2023.PDF](#)

PDF: [HSN iSTEAM PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION.PDF](#)

PDF: [RESUBMISSION SUSTAINABLE JERSEY iSTEAM 5.26.23.PDF](#)

### Learning Environment

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### Curriculum Mapping

15 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, Toms River Regional Schools set out to align their curriculum with the expectations and rigor outlined in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). Supervisors emailed staff to gather interest to form curriculum evaluation teams by department and/or grade-level. The science curriculum needed to reflect the NJSLS. A team of three high school teachers, spear-headed by the supervisor from Intermediate South middle school, were trained on NJSLS: Science during a professional development day. During preparation periods and additional professional days, staff members combed through the existing science curriculum to identify alignment and misalignment to NJSLS: Science. Teachers replaced outdated standards and outcomes with performance expectations that prepare staff to teach a differentiated curriculum that prepares the leaders of tomorrow. Modifications were submitted to the Intermediate South's vice principal and Director of Secondary Curriculum for feedback. Following their critiques, the science curriculum was sent for school board review and approval. This allowed the proposed curriculum to be viewed by the public before formal adoption by the school board. At the August 2022 board meeting, Toms River Regional Schools adopted the updated curriculum. During professional days in March and June, staff will be trained by teacher-leaders and administrators on the changes.

PDF: [HONORS ENVIRONMENTAL EARTH SCIENCE CURRICULUM MAP](#)

PDF: [COLLEGE PREP ENVIRONMENTAL EARTH SCIENCE CURRICULUM MAP](#)

## Outdoor Classroom

10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** The outdoor classroom and stage at Toms River High School North (HSN)-- an area we've dubbed Setting the Stage for Outdoor Learning (S.S.O.L.)-- has enhanced our school and district. Getting students outside while learning dramatically increases their mood and participation. Setting the Stage for Outdoor Learning is laying the groundwork for a more sustainable future by introducing students to native species, our local ecosystem, and its connection to other content areas. The construction of the Setting the Stage for Outdoor Learning center strengthened our bonds with community partners who are invested in the future of our students, and whose expertise enhanced and literally brought this project to life. Our outdoor space extends from our building to an enclosed courtyard. That seating will face the back of our theater department's shed-- the rear wall of which is an art project in itself-- at the base of which we will install a stage for performances and student and teacher presentations. The courtyard is filled with native plant species. During the 2018-2019 school year, the students participated in a BioBlitz in partnership with two of our community members, Barnegat Bay Partnership and the Ocean County Parks. The outdoor classroom has been an aesthetic boost and breath of fresh air for students and staff-- instead of walls, and trees; the sound of birds replacing that of squeaky desks-- and the practical effects of this change of scenery will be reflected in student interest, engagement, and performance. It will also serve to enhance lessons across subjects, integrating STEAM practices to develop rigorous work that addresses real-world problems including climate change and cultural barriers. The outdoor space will be available to teachers throughout our school via our scheduling system (School Dude); will host elementary and intermediate students from other district schools; and be available to rent for project partners and outside organizations. To date, staff members have used S.S.O.L. for a variety of purposes. Many English teachers have held lessons on poetry, art classes have completed drawings with the inspiration of being outside, and science classes have conducted bioblitz and held labs in the outdoor learning space. The administration at HSN has conducted professional development in the outdoor learning space by hosting meetings and book clubs. The use of S.S.O.L. continued to be fluid as teachers and administrators developed new ideas that utilize the outdoors.

**IMAGE:** [OUTDOOR CLASSROOM PICTURE](#)

**IMAGE:** [SIGNAGE FOR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM](#)

**WORD:** [BIOBLITZ ARTICLE](#)

**POWERPOINT:** [OUTDOOR CLASSROOM LAYOUT](#)

**WORD:** [OUTDOOR CLASSROOM LESSON PLAN](#)

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## Student Participation in the Arts

10 Points

District

**Program Summary:** Toms River Regional Schools pride ourselves on all of the accomplishments of our students. In the 2017-2018 school year, Toms River Regional Schools dedicated each high school to its own career academy. Toms River High School North was designated as the

Performing and Visual Arts school. Student's schedules are designed to have more arts classes incorporated to keep students engaged and become well rounded artistic students when they leave High School North. Performing and Visual Arts students have had professionals from the community and beyond come in and talk to the students about their journeys. By getting the Performing and Visual Art students out to events and meeting with experts in the field, it creates a long lasting impression on those prospective students. Although High School North is the designated Performing and Visual Arts school, all of our high schools host vocal, performing, and digital art events. Community members are always invited to witness the hard work and dedication of our students. It is important to Toms River Regional Schools to incorporate the stakeholders of our community in the events we host, to advertise the skills and talents of our students. Recently, Toms River Regional Schools' High School South student, has been accepted to perform on clarinet, in the 2023 Music Educators Eastern Division Honors Band. He is one of only 21 clarinetists chosen from the entire northeast. Another High School South student, accepted a contract with Drum Corps International (DCI). Students who accept contracts offered by Drum Corps International, travel to spring training in preparation for a summer tour, where Corps perform and compete at various venues across the country. Incorporating the arts in the curriculum allows opportunities for all of our students to succeed and find the direction they want to take for the next part of their lives.

**PDF: [SUPERINTENDENT LETTER.PDF](#)**

**PDF: [LIST OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS CERTIFICATION](#)**

**PDF: [PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN MUSIC AND VISUAL ARTS AS REPORTED ON THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT FROM THE NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION F.PDF](#)**

## School Grounds

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### Biodiversity Project

10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** Students at High School North completed a biodiversity project. Sustainable Jersey for Schools awarded a grant for our proposal to construct the OurSpace Courtyard, a student-driven project that will overhauled the school's existing courtyard and transformed it into a space for students to cultivate and exhibit their design and life skills, promote art and inclusivity, and take a mental health break from the rigors of the school day in a biodiverse learning environment. To make sure OurSpace stays in the best condition throughout the school year, Jenny Neuhoff, the author of the original grant, will dedicate time throughout her school year for her and her classes to go out and tend to the native plants and outdoor space. Jenny and her students are responsible for OurSpace from September to June. During the summer months, our head of grounds, Denise, will manage the space. Denise is also in charge of the Setting the Stage for Outdoor Learning Classroom, created a few years ago. Denise tends the two outdoor spaces during the summer months (July and August) when the teachers are not around. The outdoor space will be available to teachers throughout our school via our scheduling system (School Dude), teachers and students will be responsible to manage the OurSpace upkeep, when using the space.

**PDF: [HSN BIODIVERSITY PROJECT SUBMISSION.PDF](#)**

**PDF: [HSN BIODIVERSITY PROJECT LESSON PLAN.PDF](#)**

**IMAGE: [OURSPLACE PROMO 1](#)**

**IMAGE: [OURSPLACE PROMO 2](#)**

**WORD: [PHOTOS.DOCX](#)**

## Student & Community Outreach

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### Green Team

10 Points

 Bronze Required School District

**Program Summary:** We've rallied district administrators, department leaders, and teachers with a diverse range of expertise and a unifying passion for sustainability to establish our District Green Team. The purpose of our Green Team will be to identify which Sustainable NJ Priority Actions we can pursue; define who will be responsible for carrying out specific elements of each Priority Action; assessing which of our 18 schools have registered, are pursuing registration, are pursuing certification, and what assistance they might require; and updating the members on our overall progress. Additionally, our district Green Team will work closely with Toms River Township's Green Team to identify and meet mutual goals and work collaboratively. In addition to the above-noted members, our Green Team will grow to include more teachers, community members, students, and parents.

**PDF:** [TRRS UPDATED INFORMATION.PDF](#)

**PDF:** [TRRS GREEN TEAM 22/23 SY](#)

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### Green Fair

10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** Within the district's TR Expo there was a Green Fair. The Excellence Expo took place on April 20, 2023 in the RWJ Barnabas Health Arena from 5 to 8pm. The seeds of this idea were planted by Jersey Shore Makerfest, the day-long celebration of creativity, technology, and the maker mindset which the district hosted for five consecutive years, from 2015-2019. Out of that popular event, and emerging from a two-year era of pandemic restrictions which essentially halted Makerfest, a core group of administrators worked diligently and patiently to see this idea come to fruition. The Green Fair featured a host of guests. Local vendors will provided resources. PTOs and booster clubs will promoted their missions. Schools' choruses, drama clubs, dancers, and bands will performed, and students will presented their STEAM capstone and Genius Hour projects. The popular educational troupe Lead U hosted hands-on music, yoga, and kids theater. There was something for everyone, and all of it was intentionally interactive. Attached is an article from the district website and the brochure advertising this event titled "HSN Green Fair Submission" and "TR Expo/Green Fair Flyer". Our partners described above continue to partner with us and, of course, the event continues to expand moving into a second larger space. We had approximately 4,000 participants this year. Located on the Scavenger Hunt image you can see all of the community partners that attended the TRExpo Green Fair. As participants came into the RWJ Barnabas Arena they were given a scavenger hunt, as kids visited each of the booth they asked for the answer that corresponded to that booths question. For example, when students visited the Roots and Shoots booth, they asked "Are pizza boxes recyclable?" To which the Roots and Shoots presenters would say "Yes." Each booth had demonstration or giveaway and all were



encourage to give away reusable items like stickers, seeds, rubber straws, etc. When the kids completed the scavenger hunt they brought their completed board to the first booth, the organization that created the scavenger hunt, Save Barnegat Bay. There the children received a tree sapling.

**PDF:** [HSN GREEN FAIR SUBMISSION.PDF](#)

**IMAGE:** [TR EXPO/GREEN FAIR FLYER](#)

**WORD:** [QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT](#)

**IMAGE:** [SCAVENGER HUNT](#)

## Student Learning

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### Education for Sustainability Grades 4-12 Science

5 Points

School

**Program Summary:** The “How to Improve my Carbon Footprint” project will have a large impact on each student’s outlook about their role in climate change. Students will first calculate their carbon footprint and place a number value on the carbon emitted during their daily activities. Students will then learn about various aspects of their carbon footprint. Individual assignments will be completed where the students have to reflect on their vehicle choice, food choice, and other various aspects of their carbon footprint. Each assignment will close with reflections on that individual aspect of their carbon footprint. Once that background has been reviewed the students will have a few class periods to complete their presentations where they will lay out the details that will be changed about their individual carbon footprints. Students are immensely impacted by this assignment. Many of them actually change what they are doing based on the information they learn in this assignment. They also share this knowledge with their parents and families. The green revolution is truly a mindset that catches fire in the classroom. I have seen the community of Toms River go from zero reusable water bottles to several students using them. Students have shared that they have changed the way their family eats and what their family buys. When you multiply that mindset change by the number of students then the impact is great.

**PDF:** [HOW TO IMPROVE MY CARBON FOOTPRINT PROJECT.PDF](#)

**PDF:** [SJS\\_EFS\\_QUESTIONNAIRE.PDF](#)

**PDF:** [HOW TO IMPROVE MY CARBON FOOTPRINT PROJECT-STUDENT COPY 2.PDF](#)

**PDF:** [HOW TO IMPROVE MY CARBON FOOTPRINT-STUDENT COPY 1.PDF](#)

**PDF:** [LESSON PLAN.PDF](#)