



# Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Report of Elms Elementary School (Ocean), a Sustainable Jersey for Schools bronze certified applicant.

Elms Elementary School (Ocean) was certified on August 15, 2023 with 235 points. Listed below is information regarding Elms Elementary School (Ocean)'s Sustainable Jersey for Schools efforts and materials associated with the applicant's certified actions.

## Contact Information

The designated Sustainable Jersey for Schools contact for Elms Elementary School (Ocean) is:

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## Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Elms Elementary School (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:** The Jackson Township Board of Education recognizes the importance of

minimizing the district's use of natural resources, providing a high-quality environment that promotes health and productivity and the effective management of their fiscal resources. The policy supports the development of a resource management program that includes strategies for implementing effective and sustainable resources practices, exploring renewable and clean energy technologies, reducing energy and water consumption, minimizing utility costs, reducing the amount of waste and consumable materials, encouraging recycling and green procurement practices, and promoting conservation principles. The attached Sustainability Policy is posted on the district website. The energy plan is reviewed and approved on a yearly basis. In addition, The District's Energy Education Specialist gave a presentation to the Board of education at its November meeting about the Energy Program and the importance of Sustainability. This presentation has also been done for each school during their faculty meetings. Our district has saved just under \$2.5 million over the past 4 years.

**POWERPOINT:** [SUSTAINABILITY POLICY PRESENTATION SLIDE.PPTX](#)

**PDF:** [ENERGY PLAN](#)

**PDF:** [BOARD APPROVAL OF ENERGY PLAN 2020](#)

**IMAGE:** [AGENDA](#)

**IMAGE:** [WEB POSTING](#)

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

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## Green Enhancement of District Strategic Plans

10 Points

District

**Program Summary:** The Jackson School District has gone out of its way in order to create a Culture of Energy Conservation. It created a position and hired a professional Energy Specialist in order to conserve both energy and money. It is this person's responsibility to "mind the shop" when it comes to energy use and misuse. Among this person's responsibilities include: energy audits during unoccupied hours, bill analysis, procurement, and much more. This person will also track and analyze our energy expenditures and report the savings to the public at Board meetings. In addition, it is this person's responsibility to create and foster an energy conservation mindset among the staff. The Board and the Administration realized that the creation of this position was essential to the long term goals of the district in terms of energy reduction. Attached are the Board Minutes from June of 2016 in which, on page 3, the Superintendent mentions the creation of the Energy Specialist position as being part of the district's goals in order to help reduce the energy costs of the district. Once this person was hired, the district then created an Energy Plan that is reviewed on an annual basis. Also attached is the updated plan from 2022. It has already been approved by the Board at the September 2022 meeting. You can see this on page 3 of the attachment. It is because of this support from the top that our program is going so strong!

**WORD:** [BOARD APPROVAL](#)

**PDF:** [GOALS AND OBJECTIVES](#)

**PDF:** [ENERGY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022](#)

**PDF:** [BOARD MINUTES - SEE PAGE 8](#)

**PDF:** [SEE PAGE 3](#)

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## Strategic Plan Implementation of Green Initiatives

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Jackson School District has gone out of its way in order to create a Culture of Energy Conservation. Our district created a new position and hired a professional Energy Specialist in order to conserve both energy and money. It is this person's responsibility to "mind the shop" when it come to energy use and misuse. Among this person's responsibilities include: energy audits during unoccupied hours, bill analysis, procurement, and much more. This person also tracks and analyses our energy expenditures and reports the savings to the public. In addition, it is this person's responsibility to create and foster an energy conservation mindset among the staff. In March of 2022, the Energy Specialist presented the sixth annual Energy program update which chronicled the successes of the first 6 years of the program. The successes were shared with the community via the district website along with the local newspaper, The Jackson Times. Since the creation of this position, the Board has fulfilled its goal and now we are over 6 years into this action and it has served us well in terms of both our carbon footprint and the \$3.6 million dollars that has been eliminated from the energy budget line. This year's update is scheduled for the fall of 2023. Attached is an updated version of our Energy Management Plan that was approved in September of 2022 along with information regarding the Board presentation in March. The details of the presentation can be found in a link in one of the attachments. It was presented live on the local JTV (Jackson Television Network) along with a recorded version on their You Tube channel.

**PDF:** [ENERGY PLAN](#)

**WORD:** [BOARD APPROVAL](#)

**WORD:** [BOARD PRESENTATION](#)

**PDF:** [BOARD MINUTES - SEE PAGE 8](#)

## Climate Mitigation & Renewable Energy

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### Onsite Renewable Generation System - Geothermal

10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** When Elms school was built, a geothermal system was installed in order to both save money and reduce the district's carbon footprint. If you look at page 6 from the attached report, you will see the details of the system. I have also attached photos of the heat pumps in the mechanical room to show evidence that the system is still in use.

**WORD:** [ELMS USAGE](#)

**PDF:** [AUDIT REPORT](#)

**PDF:** [GEOTHERMAL MAINTENANCE](#)

**IMAGE:** [HEAT PUMP PHOTO](#)

## Diversity & Equity

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## Breakfast After the Bell

20 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** Elms offers all students the opportunity to receive breakfast meals during the homeroom block after arrival in the morning. Students are permitted to select from several choices and eat their meals in the cafeteria under the supervision of a dedicated staff member. The offering was communicated to families throughout the district and services over 60+ students on a daily basis at Elms Elementary School. Whether being dropped off by parents or arriving on the bus, students can partake in eating a healthy meal prior to going to homeroom. The academic schedule was built specifically to allow 20 minutes each morning for students who need breakfast to not miss any academic time. Any left over food items from breakfast are added to the school-wide food share program where students can take additional items from the baskets during their lunch period. This has had a huge impact on overall student hunger concerns, and the breakfast and food share program during lunches is utilized every single day.

**PDF:** [ELMS BREAKFAST PROGRAM](#)

**PDF:** [ELMS BREAKFAST TOTALS 2022-2023](#)

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## Energy Efficiency

### Behavior-Based Energy Conservation Programs

10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** The Elms Green Team is managed by Shaina Brenner (grade 2 teacher), Sheryl Konopack (media specialist), and Jessica Fioretti (speech pathologist) and is composed of 18 students in grades 3, 4, and 5. The Green Team meets each month after school for 1.25 hours. The Elms Green Team participated in the Empowered Schools Program during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. Through each benchmark of the Empowered Schools Program, students learned about renewable energy and energy conservation. In conjunction with the work students did through Empowered Schools, the Green Team ran a school-wide energy savers contest. Students made fliers, presented to classes, conducted audits, and tracked progress. After each audit, Green Team members participated in the morning announcements to give feedback and share each grade level's progress. The contest was a great success and served as a foundation for the work the Green Team continues to do to this day. During the 2022-2023 school year, the Green Team continued conducting monthly energy audits. Green Team members are responsible for using the "Energy Audit Checklist" to evaluate classrooms. To aid students and staff, every classroom and office has an energy reminder checklist printed on green paper. In addition to our monthly audits, before winter break and spring break, Green Team members participate in the morning announcements to remind staff and students to power down before leaving. Green Team members also remind staff and students about how their energy conservation insights learned in school can be applied at home. Our Green Team members have not only gained leadership skills and a valuable sense of efficacy, they have also made significant contributions in shifting our school culture toward a higher level of sustainability. The Green Team has successfully raised awareness among students and staff about energy-saving opportunities and empowered students

and staff to be better energy savers.

PDF: [AUDIT CHECKLIST](#)

PDF: [ELMS CLASSROOM CHECKLIST](#)

IMAGE: [ENERGY SAVERS CONTEST FLIER MAKING SESSION](#)

PDF: [SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT SCRIPTS](#)

## Food & Nutrition

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### Promote Locally Grown Foods

10 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** The Jackson School District participates in the Department of Defense Produce Program. This was a perfect partnership for the Jackson Township School District because locally grown food is important to us and we care about giving our students the highest quality ingredients to fuel their bodies. Through the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers schools a wide array of diverse produce than would normally be available through USDA purchases. In Jackson we are aware that the Department of Defense is procuring locally to the greatest extent possible, consistent with season and quality. Attached you will also find an invoice from the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

PDF: [INVOICE](#)

WORD: [RECIPE OF THE MONTH](#)

PDF: [MAY MENU 2023](#)

PDF: [CHOOSE MY PLATE](#)

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### School Gardens

20 Points

School

**Program Summary:** Elms Elementary School has two school gardens. In our Aquaponics system, we raise tilapia and coy in our 190 gallon fish tank and use a filter to pump tank water into the highest parts of our system. About 150 gallons then flow from pipes, using gravity and water force, through the trays and eventually into the grow beds at the bottom. This year, students selected and grew cherry tomatoes, bok choy, joi choi, kale, lemon balm, purple basil, cilantro, and bibb lettuce. Our Student Green Team met monthly and participated in the maintenance of the system. They often cut plants that were ready for harvesting and brought them home to eat. Fourth graders spent time during Media class sampling herbs, as well. Our second garden is a soil garden located in our courtyard and consists of various plants, herbs, and vegetables. It also contains a sensory garden aspect with various visually appealing plants and flowers, plants with a variety of textures and fragrant smells. Pollinator friendly plants have also been included in our learning garden. There is a walking path through the garden to allow students an opportunity to experience the sites, smells and tactile qualities of the various plants. Our learning garden has an outdoor library with a large selection of garden related books. Students enjoy taking books from

the library and finding a space in the garden to sit and read. Both of our gardens were made possible by grants from Sustainable Jersey for Schools.

PDF: [OUTDOOR SOIL GARDEN REPORT](#)

PDF: [AQUAPONICS SYSTEM PHOTO & CAPTION](#)

PDF: [SAMPLE LESSON PLAN](#)

PDF: [PHOTOS](#)

PDF: [AQUAPONICS GARDEN REPORT](#)

## Green Cleaning

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### Green Cleaning Policy & Plan

10 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** Embedded within our Sustainability policy is the district's Green Cleaning policy and plan. Included on pages 4 through 6 in the attached document are all of the details that one needs to know about the policy. The district is aware that using green certified products is an essential component of creating a true sustainable and green thinking culture among all. The policy was adopted during a public meeting and it can be found in several locations on the district website. A photograph of the posting has been attached.

PDF: [GREEN CLEANING POLICY AND PLAN](#)

IMAGE: [AGENDA](#)

IMAGE: [WEB POSTING](#)

PDF: [SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DISTRIBUTION TO STAFF](#)

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### Green Cleaning Supplies

10 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** For the past 7 years the Jackson School District has been using green cleaning supplies in all of its facilities; from hand soap to multi-purpose cleaners. We realize the importance of using environmentally friendly cleaning supplies and are committed to continue this practice in the future. All of our cleaning supplies that were not environmentally friendly had been eventually phased out and we do not purchase them anymore.

PDF: [GREEN CLEANING PRODUCT INFO](#)

PDF: [LETTER](#)

WORD: [INVOICE AND PRODUCT INFO](#)

## Green Purchasing

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## Green Purchasing Policy

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority District

**Program Summary:** Embedded within our Sustainability policy is the district's Green Purchasing policy and plan. Included on page 3 in the attached document are all of the details that one needs to know about the policy. The district is aware that purchasing green certified products is an essential component of creating a true sustainable and green thinking culture among all. The policy was adopted during a public meeting and it can be found in several locations on the district website. In addition, The District's Energy Education Specialist has given multiple presentations to students, teachers, and administrators throughout the district about this policy and all of the items included in it. The page from the yearly presentation that addresses the policy is attached.

IMAGE: [AGENDA](#)

POWERPOINT: [SAMPLE SLIDE FROM PRESENTATION](#)

PDF: [GREEN PURCHASING POLICY DOCUMENTATION](#)

IMAGE: [WEB POSTING](#)

## Healthy School Environments

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### Classroom Chemical Purchase, Storage & Disposal Policy

15 Points

School District

**Program Summary:** Embedded within our Sustainability policy is the district's Classroom Chemical Purchase and Disposal policy. The district is aware that care needs to be taken when ordering such materials in order to eliminate waste. It is an essential component of creating a true sustainable and green thinking culture among all. The policy was adopted during a public meeting and it can be found in several locations on the district website.

PDF: [HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES](#)

PDF: [SUSTAINABILITY POLICY](#)

PDF: [PURCHASED EQUIPMENT](#)

PDF: [CHEMICAL HYGIENE PLAN](#)

PDF: [CHEMICAL INVENTORY](#)

PDF: [HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL](#)

## Learning Environment

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### Student Participation in the Arts

10 Points

District

**Program Summary:** The Jackson School District has always offered access to the arts for the students in our district. All students from K to 12 are able to participate in some form of artistic expression. For example, all elementary school students are offered Art and Music classes on a weekly basis. Middle school students are offered everything from Acting and Art History to participation in the Jazz Band. All of the visual and performing arts teachers are certified and highly qualified. The impact of students participating in the arts has many benefits to the Jackson community. Our high school musicals are renowned for the quality and professionalism of all involved. In addition, our award winning high school bands have performed in such prestigious events as U.S. Presidential Inaugurations as well as The New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade in the past. Aside from entertaining the public, these performances build community and patriotism. All of our Music and Art teachers are extremely proud of their contribution to the expertise and professionalism of our traditionally strong Music and Art programs. The attached documentation and curriculum maps show how dedicated our district is to these programs.

PDF: [MCAULIFFE PERFORMANCE REPORT](#)

PDF: [LIBERTY PERFORMANCE REPORT](#)

PDF: [MEMORIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT](#)

PDF: [ARTS CURRICULUM](#)

PDF: [GOETZ PERFORMANCE REPORT](#)

PDF: [SUPERINTENDENT LETTER](#)

## Student & Community Outreach

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### Green Team

10 Points

 Bronze Required School District

**Program Summary:** Our Elms Green Team has been going strong for many years and we continue to work hard to make our school the best it can be! Our members consist of Teachers, Administrators, and even students!. Several of our members volunteer their time and talents to after school activities, events and clubs. It is our vision to continue the activities of our team well in the future. We will strive to continue to help students and staff aim for excellence both in and out of the classroom. In addition, in 2022, we were the only school in NJ to be a nationally recognized Green Ribbon School!

PDF: [STUDENT GREEN TEAM MEETING DATES AND PLANNING NOTES](#)

IMAGE: [STUDENT GREEN TEAM FLYER 2022-2023](#)

PDF: [STUDENT GREEN TEAM - MARCH PHOTO UPDATES](#)

PDF: [STUDENT GREEN TEAM - OCTOBER PHOTO UPDATES](#)

WORD: [ELMS GREEN TEAM INFO](#)

PDF: [GREEN TEAM VERIFICATION LETTER.PDF](#)

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## Civic & Stewardship Volunteer Initiatives



## 10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** At Elms Elementary School, our Parent-Teacher Network (PTN) works closely with the students, staff, and administrators to enhance the learning experiences of our children. In addition to academics, we want our students to understand the importance of giving back to our community. This year, our PTN led a Souper Bowl Can Drive for the collection canned goods that were dropped off to the Jackson Food Pantry, as well as a pet supply drive for donations that were dropped off to the Jackson Animal Shelter. Throughout both initiatives, during morning meetings classroom teachers led discussions on the importance of both collections. In addition, during the 2021-2022 the Elms Green Team established a food share program, which remains in place today. During all lunch periods, students place unwanted, unopened food into bins. This includes unopened milk or juice, whole fruits, and pre-packaged foods such as fruit cups, yogurt, carrots, and apple slices. Students are welcome to also take food from the bin if they're still hungry. Any leftovers are donated to the Jackson Food Pantry and Helping Hearts Equine Rescue. Each week, Shaina Brenner (grade 2 teacher/Green Team co-advisor) brings the food to the pantry and rescue. Green Team members created a video that was shown to all classes about the importance of our food share program. The Elms school community also participated in the winter coat collection run by the Jackson Education Association.

**IMAGE:** [PET SUPPLY DRIVE](#)

**IMAGE:** [SOUPER BOWL CAN DRIVE IMAGE 1](#)

**IMAGE:** [SOUPER BOWL CAN DRIVE IMAGE 2](#)

**PDF:** [ELMS FOOD SHARE PHOTOS & THANK YOU LETTER](#)

**IMAGE:** [WINTER COAT COLLECTION JEA](#)

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## Green Challenges

### 10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** During the 2021-2022 school year, Elms Elementary School launched an all new recycling initiative, spearheaded by Shaina Brenner (grade 2 teacher/Green Team co-advisor). With help from the school's PTN, every classroom and office received a blue recycling bin. Shaina provided staff professional development on the recycling guidelines from Ocean County's Department of Solid Waste. Once staff were trained, Green Team student members presented to every class, showing students what could and could not go in the recycling bins. Each class pledged to recycle, and to keep everyone accountable, the Green Team began conducting recycling audits. During the 2021-2022 school year, a prize for the winning grade level was awarded. During the 2022-2023 we continue to conduct recycling audits and leave immediate feedback for classes through the use of "You've Been Visited by the Green Team" signs. Recycling efforts are also acknowledged on our morning announcements.

**IMAGE:** [RECYCLING AUDIT - CONGRATS!](#)

**IMAGE:** [RECYCLING AUDIT - KEEP GOING! KEEP GROWING!](#)

**IMAGE:** [RECYCLE BIN & SIGNAGE](#)

**PDF:** [RECYCLING AT ELMS - PRESENTATION BY SHAINA BRENNER](#)

**IMAGE:** [RETHINK YOUR TRASH DISPLAY](#)

**PDF:** [GREEN CHALLENGES - STAFF FEEDBACK .PDF](#)

## Student and Staff Wellness

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### Policies to Promote Physical Activity

10 Points

District

**Program Summary:** The Jackson School district believes that it is extremely important to encourage physical activity. This is evident in the attached policies. From the encouragement of the use of our playgrounds and facilities to our physical education policy, Jackson is dedicated to our students and cares greatly about their physical health. At the Elementary School level, all of our schools provide a minimum of 20 minutes of recess per day. This is mandatory in every building and can not be used as a punishment or disciplinary measure. During the school day, all of our teachers take activity breaks in addition to recess. These breaks come in many forms. Some teacher use programs like Go Noodle and many even practice Yoga Calm! Whatever the form, our students are extremely active in the learning process! Our Middle and High School gymnasiums and fields are always being used by both the students and the community. Take a look at the attached sample weekly activity schedule and see how busy we are!

PDF: [USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES](#)

WORD: [PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [PLAYGROUND USE DURING OFF HOURS](#)

PDF: [SUSTAINABILITY POLICY](#)

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### Programs to Promote Physical Activity

10 Points

School

**Program Summary:** Elms offers two seasons of intramural sports for its fifth grade students. In the winter, students had the opportunity to participate in basketball two times a week after school. During this time they were instructed in the fundamentals of the game as well as cardiovascular conditioning. Two Elms teachers served as coaches for the program. The event culminated in a district-wide basketball tournament with teams from each of the six elementary schools. In the spring, students were offered the choice of flag football as an after school activity. Once again, fifth grade students learned the rules and movements of the game and met after school with their teacher coaches. This free program was a huge success and over 30 percent of the fifth grade class participated in these activities for each season. Elms was also excited to be able to offer a dance club for third grade students. Children explored the world of dance by learning various moves in a choreographed fashion over a 10-week period. The club featured a culminating dance performance for both staff and parents. These initiatives are in addition to daily recess, regularly scheduled physical education classes, grade level field days run by our physical education teacher and exercise incorporated into classroom learning by teachers.

PDF: [PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS & LINKS](#)

IMAGE: [INTRAMURAL SPORTS PHOTO](#)

IMAGE: [DANCE CLUB PHOTO](#)

## Student Safety

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### Safe Routes to School District Policy

10 Points

District

**Program Summary:** Recently, the Jackson School District created our own Sustainability Policy. Embedded within this proactive policy is the district's Safe Routes to School policy and plan. Included on pages 8 and 9 in the attached document are all of the details that one needs to know about the policy. The policy was adopted during a public meeting and it can be found in several locations on the district website.

PDF: [SUSTAINABILITY POLICY](#)

PDF: [SAFETY PATROL](#)

PDF: [PUPIL TRANSPORTATION](#)

## Waste Reduction & Recycling

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### Recycling Non-Mandated Materials

20 Points

School

**Program Summary:** During the 2021-2022 school year, the Elms Green Team created a Recycle Station, located in front of our library/media center, in an effort to recycle items not accepted at the Ocean County Recycling Centers. Previously, we participated in the Crayola Color Cycle, but since the pandemic, that program has been indefinitely paused. To replace the crayon collection, we began collecting Dixon and Ticonderoga pencils for the Dixon Classroom Recycling Program through TerraCycle. We also collect Dunkin' brand coffee bags in our staff lounge, which also get returned to TerraCycle. In addition to the pencil collection in our Recycle Station, we have a second bin for the collection of all different plastics not accepted by Ocean County, such as bubble wrap and ziplock bags. The contents of this bin are periodically brought to ShopRite by Sheryl Konopack (media specialist/librarian/Green Team co-advisor). In addition to our recycle station, in the 2022-2023 school year we began collecting all used toner cartridges from our copy machines to be sent back to HP (HP Planet Partners) and Savin (Ricoh Consumable Take Back Program) for recycling. Shaina Brenner (grade 2 teacher/Green Team co-advisor) manages this collection. To learn more about Ricoh's recycling program: <https://www.ricoh-usa.com/en/about-us/corporate-responsibility-and-environmental-sustainability/product-stewardship-and-recycling> To learn more about HP's Planet Partners program: <https://www.hp.com/us-en/hp-information/recycling/ink-toner.html>

IMAGE: [TONER CARTRIDGES RECYCLING.JPG](#)

WORD: [NON-MANDATED MATERIALS RECYCLING SUBMISSION FORM 2022-2023](#)

PDF: [RECYCLE STATION PHOTOS](#)

PDF: [PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS](#)

PDF: [SIGNAGE](#)

PDF: [HP PLANET PARTNERS RECYCLING CONFIRMATION](#)

