

## Ready, Set, Certified!

**September 28, 2022** 



## Presenters



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## **Grant Funding Opportunity**

### **Accepting Applications Now**

### **2022-2023 New Jersey Education Association Grants**

Ten \$10,000 and forty \$2,000 grants for any initiative that would earn points towards Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification

**Deadline Oct 31** 

For details and applications: https://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/grants/

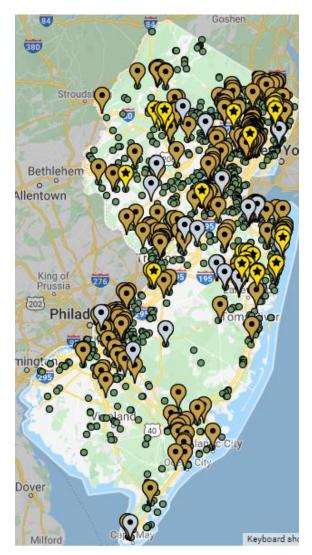
## Agenda

- Why Get Certified?
- Certification Overview
- 2023 Certification Cycle
- Online Certification Process
- Organizing the Green Team for Success
- Resources & Tips for Completing Actions and Applications
- Technical Assistance/Questions



## Why Get Certified?

- SJS program provides roadmap to sustainability in your district and schools
- Tap into extensive support and training
  - Sustainable Jersey training and events
  - Connections to partner organizations willing to help
- Priority access and notification on incentives & grants (Sustainable Jersey Grants Program)
- Gain recognition
- Fuel the statewide movement 354 schools certified



## Statistics

2014 Program Started 64%
Districts
Participating

1,057 Schools Registered



306 Bronze Certified



48 Silver Certified

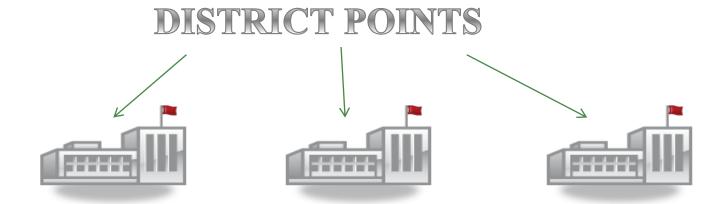


43 Digital Schools Stars 7,063
Actions
Implemented



## **Certification Overview**

- There is one certification application cycle per year
- Certification lasts 3 years
- The online application is a guided process with 3 rounds of submissions and feedback
- Districts and schools submit applications, but only schools are certified
- Points earned in the district application flow to each school in the district.



## Levels of Certification



350 points Silver

- Green team
- 2 out of 14 priority actions
- Actions completed in 6 of 22 categories

- Green team
- 3 out of 14 priority actions
- Actions completed in 8 of 22 categories

## Digital Schools Star

- Digital Schools Star is awarded to schools
- Digital Schools Star:
  - Districts and schools complete requirements as part of the certification application
  - Schools submit separate Digital Schools Star application (single action with checklist) in the final round of the certification cycle

For program details, go to:

https://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/actions/digital-schools-program/

## 2023 Certification Cycle

- January 20 Initial Application Deadline
- Late February Reviewer Comments
- March 31 Second Submission
- Early May Reviewer Comments
- June 15 Final Application Submission
- Early August Certified Schools Notified
- October Certified Schools Celebration



2021 Awards

https://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/certification/2022-certification-cycle/

## Applying for Certification

GET CERTIFIED

Application FAQs, with Application User Guide:

https://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/about/faqs/#c2791

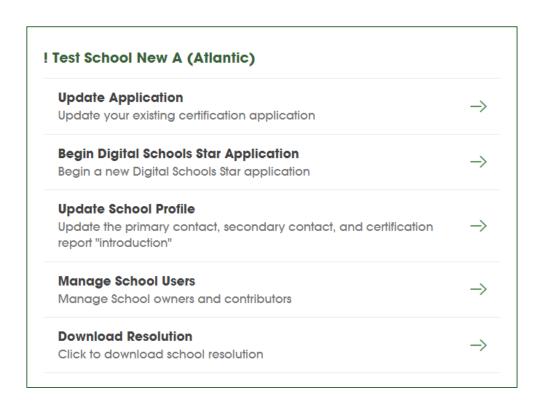
## Accessing the Application

Click on left hand side → District and School Dashboards

 You will be taken to a page that lists the districts and/or schools that you are linked to

### District and School Dashboards

 This is where you can access your application, update your profile, add users, and view registration documentation



- In order to have access to a dashboard you must:
  - > Have a username and password for the website
  - Be linked to a district or school through the registration process or by someone already linked

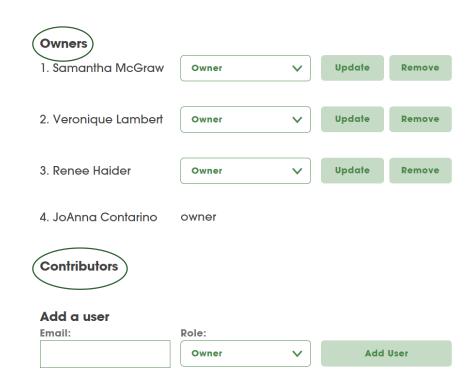
## **Update District/School Profile**

- Use this primarily to update contact information
  - Please keep this information up to date since these contacts will receive important emails regarding the program and the application process & status
- Click "Update Profile" at bottom to save changes

### **Update Profile** It is important to keep your district and school profile information current in order to receive timely information regarding your certification applications and other important program announcements. Primary and secondary contacts are also listed as users (owners/contributors) to the online application in order to receive certification notifications. The status of users can be checked on the Manage District/School Users section on the District and School Dashboards. **Primary Contact** First Name **Last Name** Veronique Lambert **Position Title** Chief Wizard Department Education Phone **Email Address** 908-927-9510 lambertv@tcnj.edu Street Address

## Manage Users

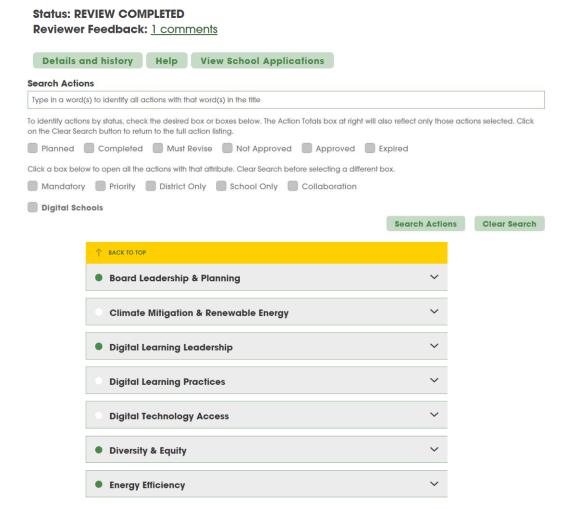
- Allows you to add or remove users to the district/school dashboard
- Users can be designated as owners (limit 5) or contributors
- Both can work on application (edit, upload, submit for review, etc.)
- Owners can add/remove other owners & contributors
- Contributors can add other contributors

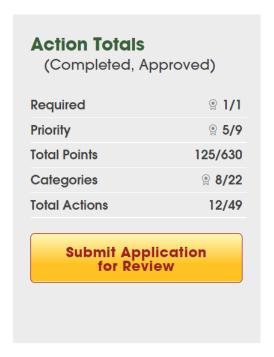


## Application – "Living Document"

### ! Test District SJ (Atlantic) Certification Application

Search Features

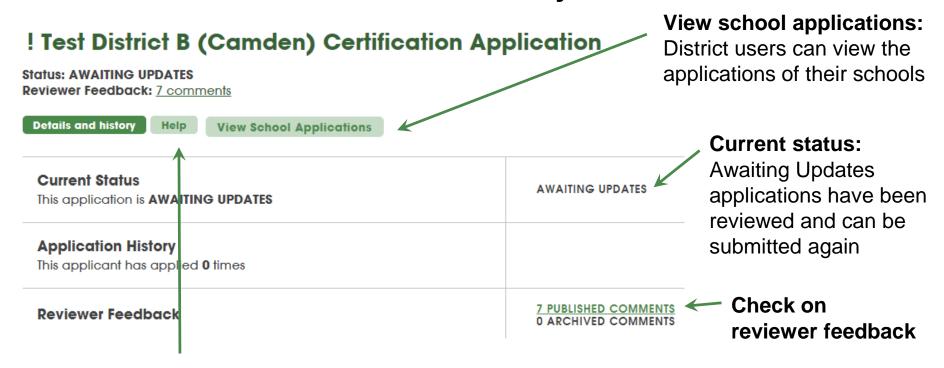




Point Calculations and Submission

## **District Application Overview**

### Click "Details and history" to see:



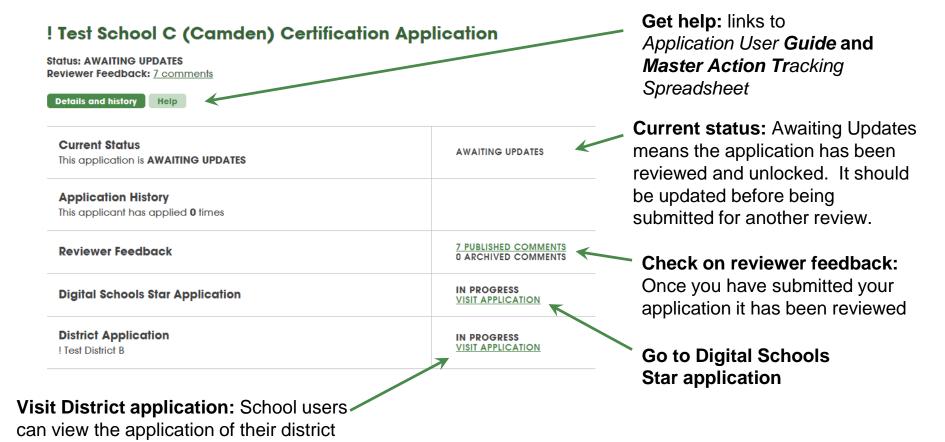
Help: links to

Application User Guide and

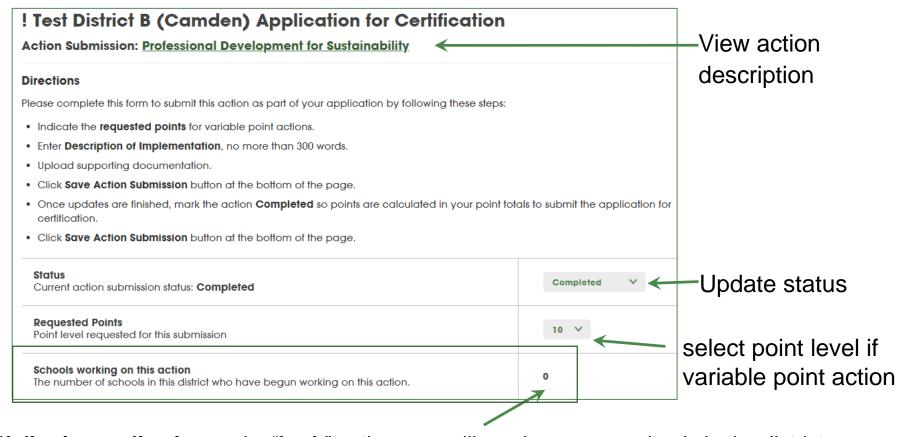
Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet

## **School Application Overview**

### **Click "Details and history" to see:**

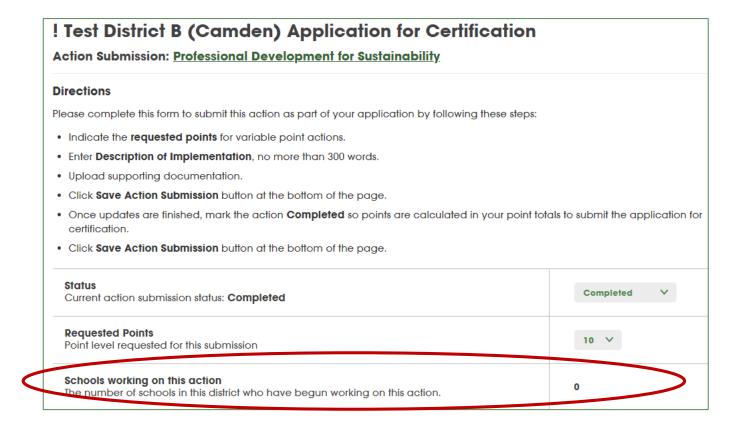


## **Action Information**



If **district application** and a "**both**" action, you will see how many schools in the district are working on the action. Districts should **not change the status** of an action if schools are working on it without consulting the schools first. The district submission will override the schools.

## Variable Point Actions



- User selects point value supported by the documentation as part of the submission from the drop down menu
- Reviewer confirms point value selected or changes it based on review of the documentation

## Description of Implementation

Input a short summary of what was accomplished and the impact it had or will have on the district and/or school. You may need to edit your narrative based on reviewer feedback.

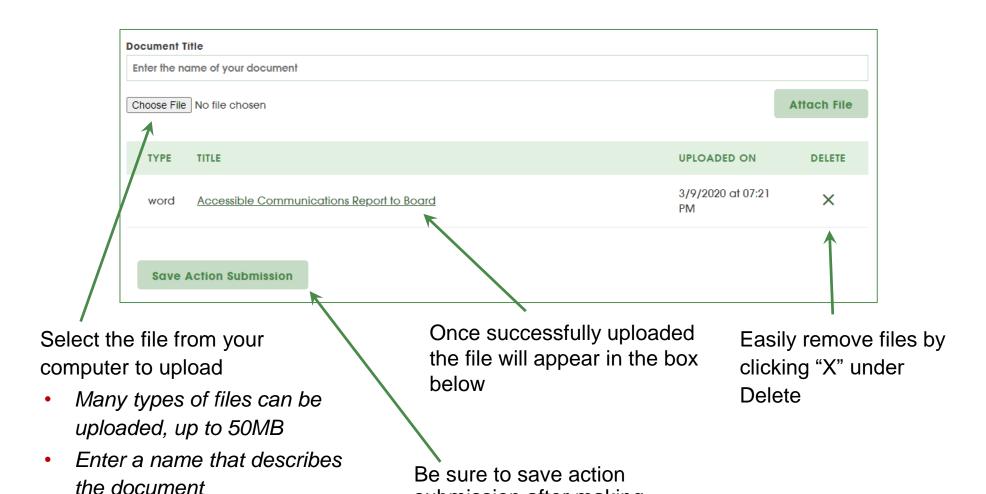
#### **Description of Implementation**

In the text box below, please provide a short summary (300 word maximum) of what was accomplished and the impact it had or will have on the school community. Include relevant references to the uploaded materials. If updating a previous submission, please remove any outdated or unnecessary information.

This is where you describe what you did for this action.

Be sure to save action submission at bottom of page after making any changes in the text box.

## **Upload Supporting Documentation**



submission after making

any changes

## **Calculating Points**

Use the **Action Totals** counter in right column to track your point totals.

The counter defaults to show total of Completed and Approved points. In school applications it also defaults to show points from both the district and your school application.

View point totals for actions with different statuses by checking the desired boxes under Search Actions

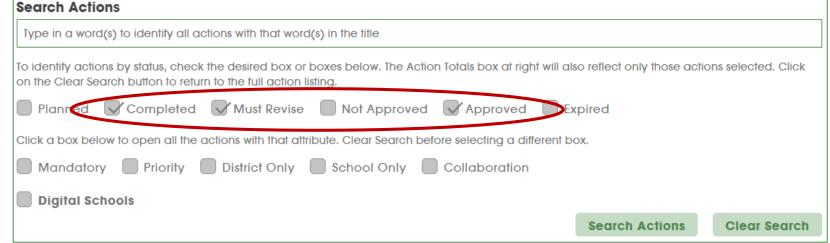
Priority

Total Points

Categories

Total Actions

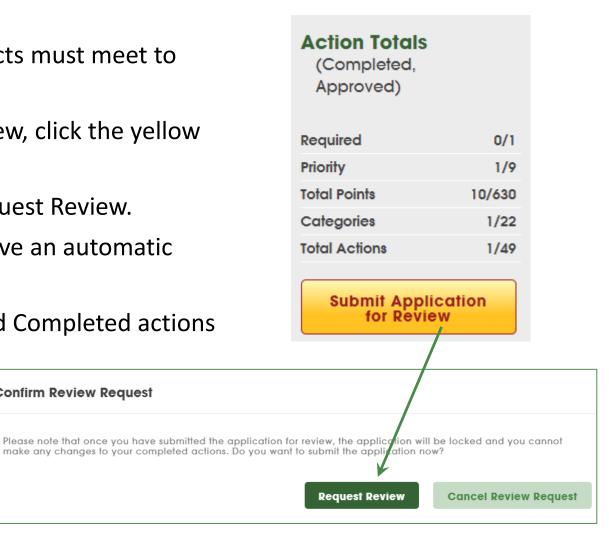




### **Preparing to Submit District Application**

**Confirm Review Request** 

- Once you have finished working on an action, mark it as "Completed"
- There are **no** minimum requirements districts must meet to submit an application
- When ready to Submit Application for Review, click the yellow button:
  - Confirm submission pop-up click Request Review.
  - All users linked to application will receive an automatic email about submission
- Users are locked from editing Approved and Completed actions until review is complete



## Preparing to Submit School Application

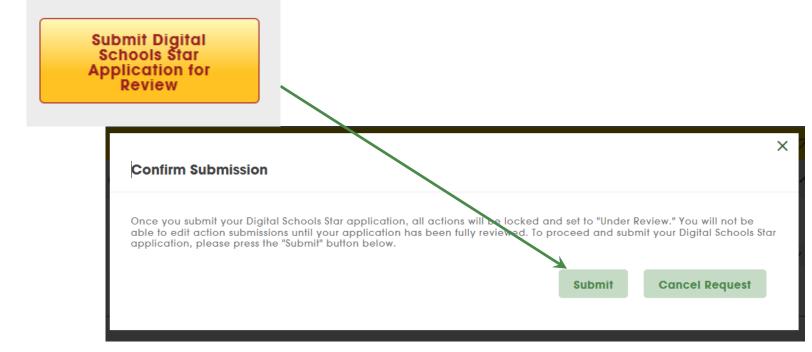
- Certification Criteria visible on right side of application main page
- Action Totals In school application you can also view points by District, School or Both..
  - District points flow from the District Application
  - District and School points combined determine ability to Submit Application for Review and Certification
- Once submitted, Approved and Completed actions are locked from editing until the review is complete





## Submitting a Digital Schools Star Application

- Submit the Digital Schools Star application in the second or final round of the application cycle (only if applying for this additional award)
- Complete the single action in this application which asks to complete the checklist of Digital Schools actions in your certification application. Mark the action as "Completed".
- Click the yellow button and Confirm submission in the pop-up box. Once submitted, the "Completed" action is locked from editing until the review is complete



### **Quick Step Application Guide**

1.	Sign in to website	Sign in
2.	Navigate to the School or District Dashboard	District and School Dashboards
3.	Click "Update/Begin Application"	Update Application Update your existing certification application
4.	Click on action name to open the submission page for that action	For example:
		<u>District Sustainability Policy</u>
5.	Add/edit information in the text box & SAVE Upload files and enter descriptive name & SAVE	Save Action Submission
6.	Before submitting for review, mark the actions "Completed" (even if they still need work) & SAVE	Completed
7.	Review your approved/completed totals in the Action Totals box. School applications need enough actions as Completed to turn "Submit" button yellow	Action Totals (Completed, Approved)
8.	Click yellow "Submit" button	Submit Application for Review
9.	Confirm application submission	Request Review

# Why actions are not approved

Pitfall	How to Overcome
Action documentation completion date is outside the shelf life of the action	Review the "What to Submit" sections of the action to find the shelf life of eligible activity and documentation (i.e. how old can they be and still qualify to earn points). Only submit documentation that falls within this period.
Proper documentation not submitted	Ensure that the documentation uploaded fulfills the requirements outlined in "What to submit"
Misinterpretation of Action Goals	Closely read the "What to Do" and "What to Submit" portion of the action to ensure that what you plan to submit is in line with the intent of the action
Seeking credit for same initiative under two different actions	Any initiative may only be submitted under one action, even if it fulfills the requirements of more than one action. Review the entire application to spot duplication
Failure to conduct outreach/education component required for many actions	Read beyond the action's title, paying close attention to the What to Do" and "What to Submit" sections
Failure to complete the prerequisite action	Check the Introduction and the "What to Submit" section for prerequisites, and make sure that any required are completed by the final application deadline.

### **District & School Collaboration**



- Points from District application flow down to all participating schools in the district
- Determine which actions the District will complete (If an action status is changed from "Unplanned" in the district application, then schools are blocked from doing that action in their applications)
- District application needs to be completed and submitted in the same time frame as school applications

Districts can earn up to 630 points to support school certification

### Organize Your Green Team for Success

- Recruit members from diverse sectors of the district administration, educators, facilities, food services, school nurse, parents, students, community partners
- Use existing committees (e.g. wellness council) to also serve as green team
- Tips to encourage and facilitate staff participation in the green team:
  - ➤ Make sustainability part of district goals
  - ➤ Include sustainability-related professional learning in staff goals
  - > Provide stipends to staff to coordinate green team initiatives and the application process
  - ➤ Release staff from hall/lunch/recess duty for green team meetings and to work on application
  - ➤ Use a shared drive (e.g. Google) to compile documents for application
  - > Publicly recognize green team efforts and the contributions of volunteers

### Partner With Your Municipal Green Team



Actions that earn points in both programs (Collaboration actions)

- Community Education & Outreach
- Green Fair
- Green Your Green Fair/School Event
- Civic & Stewardship Activities
- Recycling Non-Mandated Materials
- School Gardens
- **Community Asset Mapping**
- Safe Routes to School



**Highland Park** 2019 Green Team Collaboration Award

TIP: Look up your town on the Sustainable Jersey Municipal Program homepage to get contact information: https://www.sustainablejersey.com/certification/search-participatingmunicipalities-approved-actions/

### **Green Team Resources**

#### **Creating a Green Team**

Learn what you need to know when establishing a green team.

Read More

#### **Working on Certification**

View resources to help green teams achieve certification.

Read More

**TIP:** Download the Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet to survey actions and plan:

https://www.sustainablejerseyschoo ls.com/fileadmin/media/Grants\_and \_Resources/Green\_Team\_Resources /Certification/SJS\_Master\_Action\_Tr acking\_Spreadsheet.xlsx

#### **Green Team Promotion**

Read helpful tips on how to promote the work of your team.

Read More

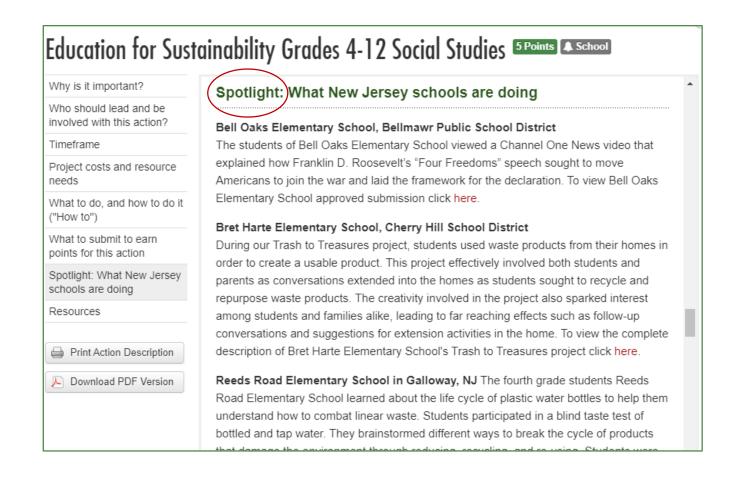
#### **Apply for a Grant**

Find out about Sustainable Jersey for Schools grants to help complete actions.

Learn More

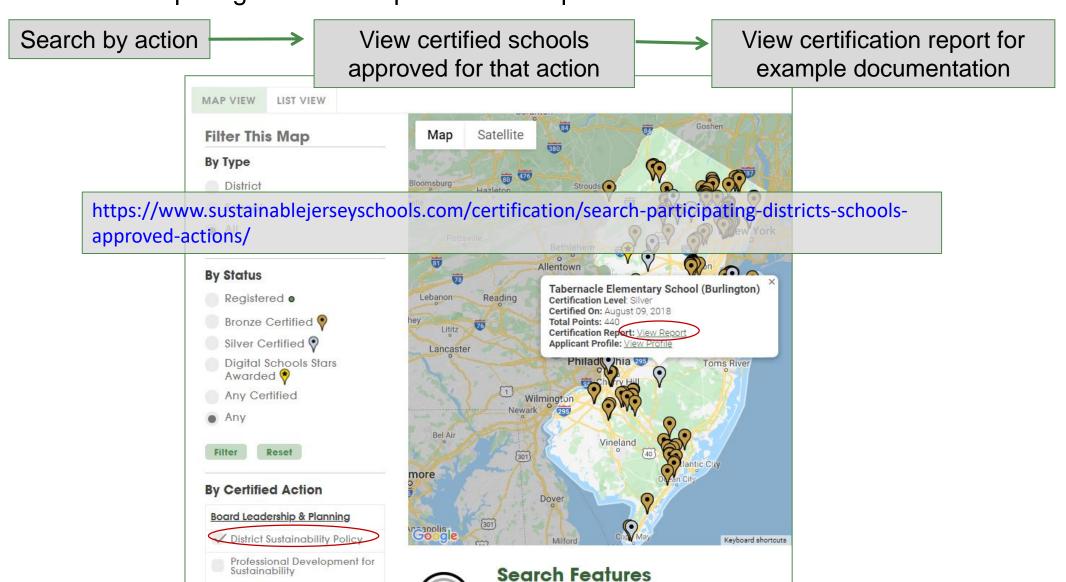
### **Check Out Examples: Action Spotlights**

Exemplar submissions from certified schools are "spotlighted" in the action descriptions:



### **Check Out Examples: Certification Reports**

Use the Participating Schools Map to find examples of documentation from certified schools



### Sustainable Jersey for Schools Community Certification Report



This is the Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification Report of Tabernacle Elementary School (Burlington), a Sustainable Jersey for Schools silver certified applicant.

Tabernacle Elementary School (Burlington) was certified on August 09, 2018 with 440 points. Listed below is information regarding Tabernacle Elementary School (Burlington)'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 Tabernacle Elementary School (Burlington) is:

Name:	Gerald Paterson	
Title/Position:	Principal / Principal	
Address:	141 New Road Tabernacle, New Jersey 08088	
Phone:	6092680150 Ext. 2003	

#### Sustainability Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Tabernacle Elementary School (Burlington) was approved for in 2018 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.

Example of certification report; scroll down report to find submission information for searched action.

#### **BOARD LEADERSHIP & PLANNING**

District Sustainability Policy 10 Points im District

#### Program Summary:

The Tabernacle Township Board of Education recognizes its role as a responsible steward of the environment. Embracing the sustainable schools concept and building healthy and sustainable schools positively impacts not only our students' learning experience but the health of the entire community. To this end, it supports sustainable planning and operations, as well as sustainability education and shall therefore endeavor to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The District's goal is to not only incorporate sustainability into our operational and business practices to the extent of economic and practical feasibility, but to make it an integral part of the students' educational experience. We seek to preserve our natural environment while balancing social, economic and environmental issues. The District believes that it is both possible and desirable to: 

• Protect the environment and preserve natural resources; • Improve the learning environment and student health; . Enhance sustainability leadership in our schools and community; . Strive to create green and healthy spaces within and outside our schools; . Create a culture of Environmental Stewardship. • Save General Fund dollars that can be used towards education and jobs. The District further believes that public education can provide leadership in sustainable development and operations. Therefore, it shall implement this policy in a manner that will involve those who attend, visit, and work in support of the District. The extent of this policy is far-reaching. It will include, but not be limited to: . Facility operations, functionality, design and construction; . Purchasing: • Curriculum development: • Health and Wellness. The Superintendent, in consultations with the Business Administrator shall establish administrative procedures and guidelines to implement this policy. Our district continues to recognize the importance of sustainable practices. There is on going support for the SJ4S actions as we strive towards a more responsible & sustainable school

- BOE Approval Documentation
- District Sustainability BOE minutes 2017
- District Sustainability Policy Documentation/BOE
- District Sustainability Policy Documentation/screen shot

## Strategy for moving forward!

### Make a plan!

- Focus on completing your Green Team Action
- Two Priority Actions
- Then review remaining actions to determine which actions you could complete by the final deadline.
- Low-hanging fruit Look for actions that your school/district is already doing.
- Add additional contributors to your dashboard to help with the documentation

## Final Thoughts & Takeaways

- **Certification Cycle:** It is doable! Many schools achieve certification by the 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline. Additional schools continue to work on their applications throughout the application cycle up to the final deadline.
- Open Source: Once a school is certified, a report of its approved actions will be publicly available on our website. The goal is to share best practices. Please do not include any sensitive/private information in your submissions.

## **Program Updates**

- Buy Renewable Electricity action is now called Buy Renewable Energy & has been updated with clarified look-back and approval periods
- Behavior Based Energy Conservation updated with relevant programs and resources to assist in energy conservation
- Energy Tracking & Management and Onsite Renewable
   Generation System Solar actions have been updated
   with clarified look-back and approval periods

### Sustainable Jersey for Schools Sponsors and Funders













### **Grant Sponsors**







### **Corporate Sponsors**

























**\*Digital Schools Sponsors and Funders** 

### First Certification Application Deadline:

Friday, January 20, 2023 at 11:59pm