



2014-2015 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 Pre-K-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 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.
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 2014-2015

Public

Name of Principal: Dr. David Fancher

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name: Bluff Park Elementary

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: 569 Park Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

County: Jefferson State School Code Number *: 158-0080

Telephone: 205.439.2800 Fax: 205.439.2801

Web site/URL: <http://bluffparkelem.al.hce.schoolinsites.com/> E-mail: dfancher@hoover.k12.al.us

**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.

(Principal's Signature)

Date: 11/15/15

Name of Superintendent: Dr. Jim Reese, Interim Superintendent

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)



District Name: Hoover City Schools

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

Jim Reese Date: 1/20/2015
 (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: Alabama State Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: Dr. Thomas R. Bice, State Superintendent of Education
 (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Thomas R. Bice Date: 1/27/15
 (Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Provide a coherent "snapshot" that describes how your school is representative of your jurisdiction's highest achieving green school efforts. Summarize your strengths and accomplishments in all three Pillars and nine Elements. Then, include

documentation and concrete examples for work in every Pillar and Element. **See Application**

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications and documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to green.ribbon.schools@ed.gov according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

Expiration Date: February 28, 2015

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.

ED-GRS APPLICATION FOR SCHOOLS

School Contact Information

School Name: Bluff Park Elementary

Street Address: 569 Park Avenue

City: Hoover State: AL Zip: 35226

Website: <http://bluffparkelem.al.hce.schoolinsites.com/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bluff-Park-Elementary-School/257184034387359>

Principal Name: **Dr. David Fancher**

Principal Email Address: dfancher@hoover.k12.al.us Phone Number: **205.439.2800**

Lead Applicant Name (if different): **Nancy McGowan**

Lead Applicant Email: nmcgowan@hoover.k12.al.us Phone Number: **205.439.2800**

Level: <input type="checkbox"/> Early Learning Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary (PK-5/ 6) <input type="checkbox"/> K-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Middle (6 - 8 or 9) <input type="checkbox"/> High (9 or 10-12)	School Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private/ Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Charter <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet	How would you describe your school? <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural	District Name <u>Hoover City Schools</u>
			Total Enrolled: 657
Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	% receiving FRPL <u>23.4%</u> % limited English proficient <u>2.6%</u> Other measures _____		Graduation rate: <u>N/A</u> Attendance rate: <u>98.47%</u>

Cross-Cutting Question: Participation in green school programs

Summary Narrative: Provide a narrative describing your school’s efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Focus on unique and innovative practices and partnerships.

Bluff Park Elementary is the original Hoover school. This year we celebrate 90 years of excellence as staff, students, and families move as one to provide innovative and useful holistic methods designed to nurture our students to become “confident and competent learners”.

As the first school in the Hoover area we have a deep history. Our community is a unique blend of third and fourth generation families as well as new families who are drawn to the community for the consistent high academic standards and the small hometown feel. The Bluff Park population has students from over 20 countries speaking 13 different languages with diversity in regards to ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic status. Bluff Park staff members work with students and parents to provide the consistency and structure needed to give our students “roots and wings”; roots to come home to and wings to soar to untold heights.

How do we give wings to our students? By using tried and true methods which have been adapted to the 21st century. Our teachers are always refining best practices to meet the needs of a new generation of learners. Knowing that students learn more effectively using hands on methods, Bluff Park transformed a weedy lot into the beginnings of an Outdoor Classroom in 2009. The entire Bluff Park staff completed Project Wild and Flying Wild standards with April Waltz in order to gain Outdoor Classroom certification that would help us integrate environmental studies effectively.

Being globally minded and locally active is a trait of “Bluff Parkers”. This was the mind set of Nancy McGowan’s 4th grade enrichment class in 2012. Team Green was established due to the intense interest of this unique group whose motto became: “All Hands on Earth”. The class worked in coordination with Alabama Power and our Hoover HVAC specialists to follow up on questions students posed after completing a Cool Schools informal energy audit. Students from all grade levels met to disseminate information about the energy audit and plan conservation efforts. Students also worked in coordination with our PTO to launch the first Outdoor Social family night. Students served as tour guides to educate families and community partners about environmental education in the Outdoor Classroom. Team Green led the entire school to meet EcoSchool criteria in energy, healthy living, school grounds, and habitat diversity to earn Bluff Park the NWF Green Flag May 2014.

The tenets of environmental education, healthy living, and our impact on the environment are ever present in our K-5 curriculum. Students can begin their day at 7:15 with Coach Uhlman and Coach Seleman’s “Run Club”, followed by a great breakfast in the lunchroom served by our cafeteria staff who set the mark for Alabama Schools by becoming the first to achieve the Gold Award of Distinction. When leaving the lunchroom, students recycle plastic milk bottle tops and empty plastic salad containers. Weather permitting, you will find students in the Outdoor Classroom studying bugs, micro worlds, releasing butterflies, collecting rock samples, identifying trees & plants, or planting in our raised beds gardens. Language arts classes can be found in our grassy courtyard or by the gazebo writing poetry or having a funeral to proclaim “Said is Dead!”. A newly refurbished playground allows students daily outdoor time in addition to daily scheduled physical education classes. Our coaches recently completed an “Ice Bucket Challenge” as our school reached over 250 entrants for the Kids Mercedes which supports the Bell Center, an early intervention program aiding children who are developmentally delayed.

Art classes in coordination with enrichment and Team Green recycled three bikes found for curbside pickup into a Big ‘Ol Bug project for the Moss Rock Preserve annual environmental art/science project. Recycled water bottles serve as winter feeders for

resident or migratory birds. Students in 5th grade created Earth Bricks by stuffing plastic water bottles with recycled plastic bags. These bricks will be used to create an Earth Bench in our Outdoor Classroom.

Our school grounds also host many Citizen Science projects which includes the Community Collaborative for Rain, Hail, and Snow where we monitoring precipitation and enter the data each morning at 7 AM. Our Audubon sponsored Blue Bird Trail has been home to at least two clutches of bluebirds in one season. The tulip patches usher in spring for kindergarten classes.

Small hands can change the world and we practice “All Hands on Earth”.

1. Is your school participating in a local, state or national school program, such as EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, EcoSchools, Project Learning Tree, or others, which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars? (X) Yes () No

Program(s) and level(s) achieved: **All programs listed are ongoing. The date listed indicates the first year of participation. Arbor Day (1998), Jump Rope for Heart (2000), No Idling Program (2000), USDA Gold Award of Distinction (first in Alabama) (2007), Alabama Certified Outdoor Classroom (2009), EPA Energy Star (2009), 3rd Grade Cabbage Program (2011), Project Learning Tree School (2011), CoCoRAHs weather monitoring site (2011), Healthy School Alliance, W.A.Y. Model School (2011), Institute for America’s Health (2011), EcoSchools (2012), Cornell University Backyard Bird Count (2012), Cool School Challenge 2012, Alabama P.A.L.S. Clean Campus Program (2013), HEAL (Healthy Eating/ Active Living), 100 Mile Club (2013), United Way Walk to School Safe Routes/Walking School Bus (2013), Edible Schoolyard Network (2013), World School Milk Day (2013), Junior Master Gardener (2013), GASP Flag Program, Green Apple Day of Service (2014)**

2. Has your school, staff or student body received any awards for facilities, health or environment?

(X) Yes () No

Award(s) and year(s) **Alabama Certified Outdoor Classroom 2009, Healthy Schools USA Gold Award 2011, Jefferson County Health Award of 100 twice per year since 2009, Institute for America’s Healthy grant for Earthboxes and composting stations 2012, Bird Sleuth Ambassador 2012, Healthy School Alliance Silver Award 2013, ING US Get Kids Moving 2013, EcoSchool Bronze Award (2013), Silver Award (2013), Eco School Green Flag Award 5/2014, Project GLOBE, Selected as an “Ag In the Classroom” summer workshop site 2014, Audubon Grant for Bluebird Trail 2012, Blue Cross/Blue Shield Fitness Grant (\$9,600), ING Grant (\$2,500), 100 Mile Club (\$1,000), Hoover Foundation (\$1,000)**

Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Energy

1. Can your school demonstrate a reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions? (X) Yes () No
Percentage reduction: 1.38% Over (9/2012-10/2014)

Initial GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person): 178 pounds

Final GHG emissions rate (MT eCO₂/person): 128 pounds

Offsets: 50 pounds

How did you calculate the reduction? EcoSchools Carbon Calculator Tally Sheet

2. Do you track resource use in EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager? (X) Yes () No
If yes, what is your score? 58

If score is above a 75, have you applied for and received ENERGY STAR certification?

() Yes () No Year: _____

3. Has your school reduced its total non-transportation energy use from an initial baseline?

(X) Yes () No

Current energy usage (kBTU/student/year): 15,339

Current energy usage (kBTU/sq. ft./year): 164

Percentage reduction: 28.7% over (m/yy - mm/yy): 08/09-08/14

How did you document this reduction? Using schools energy direct account

4. What percentage of your school's energy is obtained from:

On-site renewable energy generation: N/A Type _____

Purchased renewable energy: 100% Type: Electricity fueled by Hydroelectric plants

Participation in USDA Fuel for Schools, DOE Wind for Schools or other federal or state school energy program: N/A

5. In what year was your school originally constructed? 1994

What is the total building area of your school? 66,665 sq. ft.

6. Has your school constructed or renovated building(s) in the past ten years? () Yes (X) No

For new building(s): Percentage building area that meets green building standards: N/A

Certification and year received: N/A Total constructed area N/A

For renovated building(s): Percentage of the building area that meets green building standards: N/A Certification and year: N/A

Total renovated area: N/A

Water and Grounds

7. Can you demonstrate a reduction in your school's total water consumption from an initial baseline?

Average Baseline water use (gallons per occupant): 169 gal/month

Current water use (gallons per occupant): 130 gal/month

Percentage reduction in domestic water use: 23%

Percentage reduction in irrigation water use: Irrigation has been turned off since 2010

Time period measured (mm/yyyy - mm/yyyy): 08/2010-07-2014

8. What percentage of your landscaping is considered water-efficient and/or regionally appropriate? 85%

Types of plants used and location: A variety of evergreen trees & shrubs around buildings to reduce heating and cooling as well as plants and trees of various heights and coverage to encourage diversity of species inhabiting school green areas. Irrigation systems are not used. All plants survive on rain water.

9. Describe alternate water sources used for irrigation. (50 word max)

Our Outdoor Garden area has a rain barrel that we use for hand watering in growing seasons.

10. Describe any efforts to reduce stormwater runoff and/or reduce impermeable surfaces. (50 word max)

Hardy shrubs and native plants are used around the school building. A rain garden/bog area was developed to take advantage of large amounts of rain water. Rocks arrange in river beds help guide high volumes of rain water and a rain barrel has been installed to use in gardens.

11. Our school's drinking water comes from:

Municipal water source

Well on school property

Other: _____

12. Describe how the water source is protected from potential contaminants. (50 word max) **A back flow device was installed in line with Bluff Park’s water main and is tested annually to insure the device is in proper working order. Vacuum breakers are installed throughout the facility where cross contamination could be a problem and as code requires (i.e., kitchen sinks, mop closets etc.).**

13. Describe the program you have in place to control lead in drinking water. (50 word max)
Water is tested routinely by Birmingham Water Works Board.

14. What percentage of the school grounds are devoted to ecologically beneficial uses? (50 word max) **80% Well-kept Tree trails, native plants, edible garden, rain garden, composting bins, raised beds, blue bird and a weather station along with areas for organized and free play provide interactive hands on opportunities for students in K-5.**

Waste

15. What percentage of solid waste is diverted from landfilling or incinerating due to reduction, recycling and/or composting? Complete all the calculations below to receive points.

A. Monthly garbage service in cubic yards (garbage dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): **18,700**

B. Monthly recycling volume in cubic yards (recycling dumpster sizes(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): **1,300**

C. Monthly compostable materials volume(s) in cubic yards (food scrap/food soiled paper dumpster size(s) x number of collections per month x percentage full when emptied or collected): **The composting bins utilize organic plant materials collected from trees and garden plants in our Outdoor Classroom.**

Recycling Rate = $((B + C) \div (A + B + C) \times 100)$: **6.65**

Monthly waste generated per person = $(A/\text{number of students and staff})$: **26**

16. What percentage of your school's total office/classroom paper content is post-consumer material, fiber from forests certified as responsibly managed and/or chlorine-free? **Not calculated**

17. List the types and amounts of hazardous waste generated at your school:

Flammable liquids	Corrosive liquids	Toxics	Mercury	Other:
None	Starbrite multi acid cleaner	None	None	Household batteries

How is this measured? **Material Safety Data Sheets and purchase orders.**

How is hazardous waste disposal tracked? **Hoover City has implemented a Hazardous Waste Day in April so that citizens can safely dispose of materials from homes and/or schools.**

Describe other measures taken to reduce solid waste and eliminate hazardous waste. (100 words max)

Bluff Park follows guidelines outlined by the city of Hoover to safely dispose of hazardous materials and to follow best practices outlined the the Alabama Department of Public Health.

18. Which green cleaning custodial standard is used? **Custodial services are outsourced.**

What percentage of all products is certified? **Unknown**

What specific third party certified green cleaning product standard does your school use?
Unknown

Alternative Transportation

19. What percentage of your students walk, bike, bus, or carpool (2 + student in the car) to/from school? (Note if your school does not use school buses) **Car= 53%; Bus= 10%; Walk/Bike=19%; Other=18%**

How is this data calculated? (50 word max)

Our system uses INOW to collect and inform teachers of student information

20. Has your school implemented?

designated carpool parking stalls.

a well-publicized no idling policy that applies to all vehicles (including school buses).

Vehicle loading/unloading areas are at least 25 feet from building air intakes, doors, and windows.

Safe Pedestrian Routes to school or Safe Routes to School

Describe activities in your safe routes program (50 word max): **Our PTO coordinates the monthly Walk/Bike to school program with United Way using three different meeting spots convenient for students from any neighborhood to join.**

21. Describe how your school transportation use is efficient and has reduced its environmental impact. (50 word max)

Hoover buses that service Bluff Park follow the idling guidelines set by the State Department of Education Pupil Transportation which limits idling to 5 minutes. New buses are also equipped with diesel particulate filters. No vehicles are permitted to load or unload near air intakes.

22. Describe any other efforts toward reducing environmental impact, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max)

Bluff Park parents have instituted the “Walking School Bus” and promote safe routes to school. Our school nurse uses the GASP flags for awareness of Air Quality.

Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of students and staff

Environmental Health

1. Describe your school’s Integrated Pest Management efforts, including IPM/green certifications earned, routine inspections, pest identification, monitoring, record-keeping, etc.:

This is outsourced.

2. What is the volume of your annual pesticide use (gal/student/year)? N/A Describe efforts to reduce use: _____

3. Which of the following practices does your school employ to minimize exposure to hazardous contaminants? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice.

Our school prohibits smoking on campus and in public school buses.

All school facilities are designated no smoking zones per Hoover City Schools policy.

Our school has identified and properly removed sources of elemental mercury and prohibits its purchase and use in the school.

Our school uses fuel burning appliances and has taken steps to protect occupants from carbon monoxide (CO) **All equipment that utilizes fossil fuels are installed or stored outside building in well ventilated areas**

Our school does not have any fuel burning combustion appliances

Our school has tested all frequently occupied rooms at or below ground level for radon gas and has fixed and retested all rooms with levels that tested at or above 4 pCi/L OR our school was built with radon resistant construction features and tested to confirm levels below 4 pCi/L. **Testing was requested and confirmed within limits.**

[X] Our school has identified any wood playground or other structures that contain chromate copper arsenate and has taken steps to eliminate exposure. **Bluff Park installed a new playground system 8/2013 with a playground surface manufactured from recycled tires. The playground construction initiated a scout troop project to utilize the playground pea gravel for Outdoor Classroom pathways.**

4. Describe how your school controls and manages chemicals routinely used in the school to minimize student and staff exposure. (100 word max) **Hoover City Schools uses a certified extermination service for pest control and all chemicals are managed according to Hoover City regulations and health codes for schools.**
5. Describe actions your school takes to prevent exposure to asthma triggers in and around the school. (100 word max)
No pets allowed or use of scented candles or smells that trigger asthmatic reactions. Bluff Park has custodial services that clean daily to curb dust, mold, and mildew. Our school nurse pre-treats students who have exercise induced asthma.
6. Describe actions your school takes to control moisture from leaks, condensation, and excess humidity and promptly cleanup mold or removes moldy materials when it is found. (100 word max)
All equipment that utilizes fossil fuels are installed or stored outside building in well ventilated areas.
7. Our school has installed local exhaust systems for major airborne contaminant sources.
()Yes (X)No
8. Describe your school's practices for inspecting and maintaining the building's ventilation system and all unit ventilators to ensure they are clean and operating properly. (100 word max)
Ventilation systems are serviced and inspected by maintenance personal regularly as part of an ongoing preventive maintenance program to insure all equipment is in proper working order.
9. Describe actions your school takes to ensure that all classrooms and other spaces are adequately ventilated with outside air, consistent with state or local codes, or national ventilation standards. (100 word max) **Classroom units are equipped with outside air dampers in order to maintain ASHRA recommended fresh air standards and in compliance with all state and local building codes.**
10. Describe other steps your school takes to protect indoor environmental quality such as implementing EPA IAQ Tools for Schools and/or conducting other periodic, comprehensive inspections of the school facility to identify environmental health and safety issues and take corrective action. (200 word max)
Building envelope is checked periodically to insure building pressure is positive. This helps to prevent infiltration of unconditioned and unfiltered outdoor air as well as the Infiltration of ground level pollutants, such as car exhaust, pesticide/herbicide odors, pollen, etc.

Nutrition and Fitness

11. Which practices does your school employ to promote nutrition, physical activity and overall school health? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, focusing on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max each)

Bluff Park was the first school in Alabama to receive the USDA's Healthier US School Challenge Award. Level and year: Gold Award/2008

Our school participates in a Farm to School program to use local, fresh food. **Our nutrition coordinator for Hoover City Schools bids on local produce and incorporates food from local farmers as well.**

Our school has an on-site food garden. **Our onsite food garden is in its second year of production.**

Our school garden supplies food for our students in the cafeteria, a cooking or garden class or to the community. **Our school garden is in the developing stages with two to three different types of vegetables which the cafeteria staff uses to provide side dishes for our students.**

Our students spent at least 120 minutes per week over the past year in school supervised physical education. **All student receive 30 minutes of daily supervised physical education five times per week per Alabama state law.**

At least 50% of our students' annual physical education takes place outdoors. **Physical education instructors design activities that maximize opportunities to be outdoors.**

Health measures are integrated into assessments. **Our physical education instructors for the NASPE Guidelines as well as include Alabama Fitness standards which are parallel to FITNESSGRAM.**

At least 50% of our students have participated in the EPA's Sunwise (or equivalent program). **Our school nurse provides information via email and website to parents and students regarding risks of overexposure and preventative measures to take.**

Food purchased by our school is certified as "environmentally preferable."

Percentage: Unknown Type: _____

12. Describe the type of outdoor education, exercise and recreation available. (100 word max)

Outdoor activities begin as early as 7 AM with CoCoRAHs data collection and 7:15 AM with Run Club. During the school day, students enjoy a track and lower field area for structured physical education as well as a state of the art playground for freeplay. All grades use the Outdoor Classroom for planting of vegetables and collecting data on birds, trees, plants, and insects of all types for individual research or online Citizen Science projects such as eBird, Project Noah, or iNaturalist. An historical cabin hosts students throughout the year for a unique opportunity to live as we did 100 years ago.

13. Describe any other efforts to improve nutrition and fitness, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (100 word max)

Mercedes Marathon and Jump Rope for Heart allow students to set personal fitness goals while supporting worthy causes. To highlight our unique history and to incorporate fitness and environmental awareness we have hosted our own Outdoor Classroom Social since 2013. Students demonstrate family fitness night activities, tours of the Outdoor Classroom are given, and we host a variety of local individuals/businesses who educate our families on beekeeping, raising chickens, gardening, hydroponics, cheese from sheep, and environmental projects by Scout Troops.

Coordinated School Health, Mental Health, School Climate, and Safety

14. Does your school use a Coordinated School Health approach or other health-related initiatives to address overall school health issues? (X) Yes () No

If yes, describe the health-related initiatives or approaches used by the school:

Bluff Park works in coordination with the local health department to inform them of illness trends within the school as well as to receive information about possible health risks and prevention methods that will be helpful to parents. In addition, our school nurse receives annual continuing education with local doctors to stay informed of current health topics. Speakers including, but not limited to, are: Dentists, ophthalmologists, orthopedists, allergy/asthma specialists, and dermatologists. The entire Hoover nursing staff attend an annual summer conference at Children's Hospital to keep apprised of local issues, current care methods, and to coordinate care for the children of Hoover City Schools.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, our staff members can volunteer to be trained as a First Aid responder.

15. Does your school partner with any postsecondary institutions, businesses, nonprofit organizations, or community groups to support student health and/or safety? (X) Yes () No
If yes, describe these partnerships:

TGFD (Too Good for Drugs (5th grade) provided by SRO, Hoover High School TNT student group provides prevention messages during Red Ribbon Week, hearing exams (Bell Center) and vision exams(volunteers), UAB Vision research for K & 2 pictures of eyes, United Way provides walking guides for monthly Walk/Bike to school days, Alabama Power: Safe-T-Opolis exhibition for 4th graders on safety with electricity, and James Spann speaks to 2nd grade students about weather safety. K-2nd grade students have an annual visit from Hoover Fire Department's Firehouse, Flumist available to students through PEEHIP and through pharmaceutical company, 5th grade Scoliosis screening Children's Hospital, adolescent pediatric dentist speaks to kindergarten, Dr. Davis speaks to 1st grade regarding dental care.

16. Does your school have a school nurse and/or a school-based health center? (X) Yes () No

17. Describe your school's efforts to support student mental health and school climate (e.g. anti-bullying programs, peer counseling, etc.):

Hoover City Schools employs Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) strategies to reduce disciplinary problems with a special emphasis on student bullying. Each morning our principal, Dr. Fancher, provides a character lesson via intercom which focuses on kindness, being respectful, and working towards being the best person you can be. In addition, Bluff Park students and staff follow the 3 B's: Be respectful! Be responsible! Be safe! To further impress upon students the need for care, kindness, and understanding for everyone.

Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

1. Which practices does your school employ to help ensure effective environmental and sustainability education? Provide specific examples of actions taken for each checked practice, highlighting innovative or unique practices and partnerships.

Our school has an environmental or sustainability literacy requirement. (200 word max)

Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated throughout the curriculum. (200 word max)

Our curriculum is rich in literature which supports environmental and conservation themes. Teachers utilize this information in all subject areas to aid students in making cross curricular connections. Alabama Wildlife Resources and Junior Master Gardener "Literature in the Garden" series provide concepts that can be adjusted to specific understandings and grade levels. This information provides a natural transition to real world problem solving, purposeful writing, and the design of projects based upon student questions.

Environmental and sustainability concepts are integrated into assessments. (200 word max)

The projects designed for and by students have standards embedded which result in the assessment being part of the circle of learning. Students design EXPO projects, Girls Engaged in Math & Science projects, and Team Green projects. In addition to learning about the environment through hands on activities in the classroom and our outdoor spaces, students have creative products in the form of Stop Motion movies which are being sent to AWF, GASP, Alabama PALS, Cartoon Network's Stop Bullying campaign, and Dauphin Island Sea Lab to address topics such as air pollution, animal conservation, recycling, and the impact we have on our environment.

[X] Students demonstrate high levels of proficiency in these assessments. (100 word max)

The assessments for student projects and products are not directly part of a normed assessment, however the impact of integrated curriculum components: Reading, science, math, and language arts is demonstrated in Global Scholars scores, ASPIRE results, and overall achievement. Demonstrating high levels of proficiency occurs when our students take the information and put their knowledge to use in a real world project that is shared with fellow students.

[X] Professional development in environmental and sustainability education is provided to all teachers. (200 word max)

The entire Bluff Park staff received training in order for our school to achieve Outdoor Classroom certification. In the interim, those trained have offered training for those new to Bluff Park. AWF delivers monthly emails for additional workshops in environmental education. In addition, the Birmingham Audubon Society offers free classroom reading sets for students and teachers, grants, and the Audubon Education director, Helena Uber-Wamble has trained students and staff in nestbox procedures for monitoring of blue birds.

2. For schools serving grades 9-12, provide:

Percentage of last year's eligible graduates who completed the AP Environmental Science course during their high school career: N/A

Percentage scoring a 3 or higher: N/A

3. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning science, technology, engineering and mathematics thinking skills and content knowledge? (200 word max)

Bluff Park incorporates environment and sustainability in each grade level through a variety of student oriented projects. Studying plant growth, looking up weather stats, and mapping out plots become very real when a student is engaged in developing a garden spot or planting tulips. Even though projects are varied and utilize many technologies and multiple levels of math, the consistent portion is the development of the project using the scientific process. This method requires students to plan, write, think of a hypothesis, and draw conclusions based upon research, experimentation, and logical reasoning.

4. How does your school use sustainability and the environment as a context for learning green technologies and career pathways? (200 word max)

We have been very fortunate to have access to speakers who will share their knowledge: Audubon, Alabama Power, GLOBE, ACES (Alabama Cooperative Extension), Owls Hollow Farm, and Dayspring Dairy who provide information on green technologies and career pathways.

5. Describe students' civic/community engagement projects integrating environment and sustainability topics. (200 word max)

Bluff Park's enrichment program offers students in any grade the opportunity to complete a Type III. The development of Team Green developed from a 4th grader concerned about the environment. Our current recycling of plastic bottle tops stemmed from a GEMS project on the Pacific Vortex and our connection with Dauphin Island Sea Lab educator Rachel Gamble who provided even more information. Currently Team Green consists of approximately 100 students with a passion for learning and an even bigger desire to do.

6. Describe students' meaningful outdoor learning experiences at every grade level. (200 word max)

Outdoor learning experiences start at Bluff Park with bug catchers, nature walks, tree identification, vegetable gardens, Backyard Bird Count, nestbox data, and weather monitoring, but extend beyond the school grounds as students learn about the broader world through field trips in and around our areas. Kindergarten students travel to Baker's Farm, first grade to Birmingham-Southern's Environmental Center, 2nd grade students learn about composting and erosion at Aldridge Gardens, 3rd grade see the wonders of caves at DeSoto Caverns and learn about the rocks that make up Alabama at Vulcan Materials rock quarry. 5th grade students travel to Dauphin Island to learn about watersheds, sea life, and inhabitants of various ocean depths. As with all effective experiences the preparation before and the follow up afterward leads students to identify prior knowledge and make future connections.

7. Describe how outdoor learning is used to teach an array of subjects in context, engage the broader community, and develop civic skills. (200 word max)

Outdoor learning is unique in that students are already "hooked" due to the different learning environment. It is possible to incorporate all subjects into the environment as students already feel a sense of accomplishment in getting their hands dirty, looking for live creatures, gathering data, writing, formulating logical connections, and the following through with real world projects that have school and community impact.

8. Describe your partnerships to help your school and other schools achieve in the 3 Pillars. Include both the scope and impact of these partnerships. (Maximum 200 words)

Our Outdoor Classroom began with the guidance of AWF, April Waltz and Doyle Keasel. They continually assist with questions regarding native plants and conservation matters. The space was designed by parent/Landscape architect, Jennafer Collins. She extends her expertise as former Bluff Park students return wishing to plan Eagle Scout projects. To date, we have had five projects become part of our Outdoor Classroom. Collin Conner, our city forester and the ACES group provide data needed for plants and trees. Helena Uber-Wamble, Audubon educator director for McWane, has led Nestbox training for Team Green members and has conducted bird walks for our environmental group. Mr. Wes Wilbanks, Hoover City Schools, was critical to the success of our energy audit and water conservation data. Debbie Therrell of Alabama Power worked with our Team Green to complete an official energy audit. In the area of health and fitness our cafeteria manager and staff and our physical education teachers go above and beyond by seeking out and educating our students and staff in the tenets of HealthierUS, HEAL, WAY, and providing daily guidance.

9. Describe any other ways that your school integrates core environment, sustainability, STEM, green technology and civics into curricula to provide effective environmental and sustainability education, highlighting on innovative or unique practices and partnerships. (Maximum 200 words)

The staff at Bluff Park capitalizes on our young students' zest for being a productive part of the community and their high interest in science and math as it pertains to the environment and health. Students start now working in citizen science activities and developing healthy living and nutrition habits that will stay with them for a lifetime. Learners for life developing confident and competent learners.

10. Submit 5 of photos (with appropriate permissions) or up to 5 minutes of video content.





Citizen Science Projects



Recycling, Reusing, & Math!

