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

☐ Charter ☐ Title I x Magnet ☐ Private ☐ Independent

Name of Principal: Ms. Cathleen Cummings

Official School Name: Rogers International School
Official School Name Mailing Address: 202 Blachley Rd, Stamford CT 06902

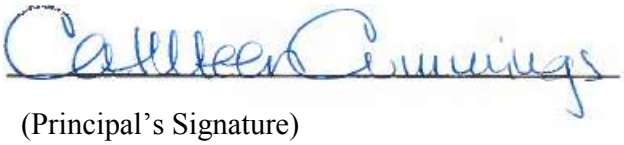
County: Fairfield State School Code Number *:

Telephone: (203) 977-4560 Fax:

Web site/URL:
http://teacherweb.com/CT/RogersInternationalSchool/SchoolHomePage/sdhp1.aspx

E-mail: sschwartz@stamfordct.gov

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



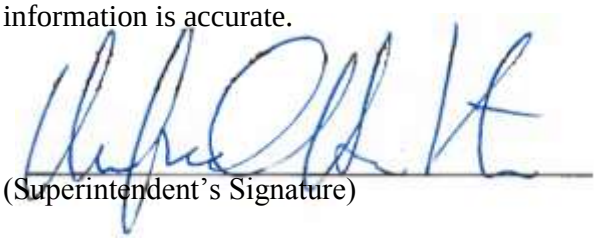
Date: January 29, 2015

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: Dr. Winifred Hamilton
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)

District Name: Stamford Public Schools

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



Date: January 29, 2015

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

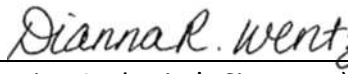
The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

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: Connecticut State Department of Education

Name of Nominating Authority: Dr Dianna R. Wentzell, Interim Commissioner

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



Date: January 22, 2015

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Rogers International School, a magnet school with an environmental focus, is located in Stamford Connecticut and serves 804 students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Approximately 51% of the Students in the district receive free and reduced price lunches and 13% of the students are limited English proficient. Rogers is also an International Baccalaureate school and states on it's website that it is an environment where "students engage in inquiry-based units focusing on building global awareness and the application of scientific skills in all subject areas." Part of this program includes 'Units of Inquiry' which cover material outside of Stamford's required curriculum for grades K-4. These units give teachers the flexibility of introducing lessons they feel are relevant and important. Many of these units have environmental and health themes, including units on nutrition, energy and recycling, helping student to learn by doing. Many lessons are taught in our outdoor learning environment (Fig. 1).Teachers approach every lesson with the idea that students should learn the 'nuts and bolts' of a problem along with 'why we are learning this,' for students to gain a better understanding of each topic. Environmental literacy is strongly demonstrated throughout all grades. Many lessons and projects are hands-on and students are able to demonstrate their knowledge through presentations focused on the environment. Students are fortunate to be able to use the school's surrounding natural environment as a learning tool. Projects, field trips, and assemblies with environmental themes are very common at Rogers. Rogers also has a good relationship with local organizations, including Audubon Greenwich and SoundWaters.

Figure 1 Rogers International School Outdoor Learning Environment

Rogers stresses the importance of healthy eating, nutrition, and physical activity to all of its students. Students learn about the importance of nutrition throughout their time at Rogers and all students participate in an annual event that promotes physical activity. The school is a HealthierUS Schools Challenge Bronze awardee.

Rogers has a very active Green Team that is made up of students, faculty and parents. They are responsible for maintaining the grounds in the spring and also pursuing additional goals to make the school more sustainable. They have developed a successful pilot program to eliminate Styrofoam trays from the school cafeteria, with a goal to extend this solution to all of Stamford's schools. The team also sends out environmental tips to parents in the school's electronic newsletter every month, helping all to decrease their environmental impact, while at the same time eliminating paper waste.

Roger's building is LEED Certified Silver and has many sustainable and health-related features built in or on the grounds. Some of the features include dual flush toilets, low VOC paint, and solar panels on the roof. The natural meadow and marsh habitat that surrounds the school is an official U.S Fish and Wildlife Service's Schoolyard Habitat Program. It is used by students to learn, as well as maintain a natural habitat to benefit the local wildlife. Our school, along with the Stamford District, is 100% compliant with the Connecticut school environmental compliance laws, including radon testing, pesticide use, vehicle idling, building facility operation checklists, posting of shared information, IAQ program implementation, recycling, green cleaning, CO monitoring and asbestos requirements.

Step 1: Green and Healthy Outlook

Rogers International School is a magnet school with an environmental theme so an environmental-conscious mentality is very prominent within the students, faculty, and staff. Rogers Green Team is composed of interested parents, faculty, and students who are responsible for maintaining the natural habitat (Fig. 2) that surrounds the school. The team is very active in the Rogers community and has worked on projects such as improving recycling in school.

Fig. 2 Rogers School's Wildlife Meadow

Rogers works closely with the Greenwich Audubon, which typically holds 3-4 schoolwide assemblies per year to teach students about many different environmental topics. Rogers also has a partnership with the Long Island Sound education facility SoundWaters. Trips to SoundWaters are just some of the many field trips with environmental themes that students take while attending Rogers. Students also take trips to the Stamford Museum and Nature Center, eeSmarts energy efficiency learning center, the Bartlett Arboretum and more. This year, the Greenwich Audubon has been working with the school to plant new trees around the playground to improve the air quality as well as to provide natural shading for the area. Students participate annually in the district-wide Stamford Lettuce Challenge (Fig. 3) where students work to grow the best lettuce plant in all of Stamford.

Fig. 3 Rogers Lettuce Challenge Participants

Recycling at Rogers is a top priority. Recycling bins are places in classrooms and around the school. Students learn about recycling in class and are encouraged to use the bins in school and out of school. This year, the Green Team worked with the city of Stamford to introduce a recycling pilot in the cafeteria in an effort to eliminate the use of Styrofoam trays. The school also collects electronics for recycling as well as school uniforms to be reused by new students. Rogers hosts an

in-school food pantry year round and is constantly updating their needs list to provide food for needy Rogers families. Students are encouraged to bring in non-perishable foods to donate to the project.

Rogers' new building, a LEED Certified Silver structure, has been designated as a Wildlife Sanctuary by the National Audubon Society. It has also been designated as participating Official Schoolyard Habitat Program member, a partnership program from the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, the Long Island Sound Study, and the National Audubon Society. The Schoolyard Habitat Program helps students and teachers create wildlife habitats at their schools through projects including wetlands, meadows, and forests based on school location. The program works with schools to support these habitats through teacher training, technical assistance, and lesson materials. In 2012, 500 students participated in an event planting native plant species in the meadow surrounding the school. Since then, more planting and restoration events have taken place. Some energy saving features of this building include a garden on the roof, a cooling system using ice storage technology, and a self-sustaining ecosystem built surrounding the school. Students are able to use the surrounding habitat to learn in many different areas, including using the outdoor learning cataloging wildlife. In order to share successes with the school and local community, the Green Team provides updates through the school's weekly electronic newsletter. Stamford School District's Energy Managers also created a Green LEAF social media page to spread the word about Roger's sustainability efforts. Rogers International School is a very successful environmental and healthy learning environment inside and out. Students are encouraged to explore the world around them while always thinking about the environment and how their actions affect it.

Step 2: Environmental and Sustainability Literacy

Roger's "Units of Inquiry" give students a chance to learn about material that goes beyond the district curriculum. Because these units are not mandated by the city, they can easily be changed as faculty decide to develop a new unit. Two specific units of inquiry are "Grow Baby Grow", where second graders learn about healthy eating and human body growth and "Living Together" where students learn about conservation and preservation and recycling. Roger's faculty and staff are constantly setting new goals and making sure that the school is constantly moving towards its goals of environmental excellence.

Rogers students are learning about the environment and sustainability through lessons that are district mandated as well as additional lessons. Students in kindergarten learn about

weather, animals and explore the outdoor ecosystem. Students in 2nd grade learn about soil and plant growth through outdoor exploration, as well as nutrition, natural resources and conservation. Students in 3rd grade learn about nature and animals, materials conservation, and ecosystems. Students in 4th grade learn about ecosystems, energy circuits and power, oceans and conservation, trash, overfishing, and climate change. Students in 5th grade learn about renewable energy and ecology. Students in 6th grade learn about water conservation, pollution, climate change and ecology. Students in 8th grade have an extensive energy unit, and participate in the Trout in the Classroom program. With this program, students help rear 200 trout eggs and will release them into the Mianus River to help restock the population in the spring. Students also learn about the environment through non-fiction reading and outdoor exploration. Many teachers bring students on nature walks, and students learn about invasive plants in the school's meadow. Students in kindergarten and second grade plant in the meadow as well. Students learn about career opportunities in scientific fields and demonstrate their learning through projects and presentations.

Fig. 4 Students working in the Rogers Garden

Fig. 5 Young Mariners Program with Sound Waters

Rogers has two outdoor learning features: an outdoor classroom, including the garden (Fig. 4) and the natural self-sustaining habitat surrounding the school. Students use the habitat surrounding their school for many different facets of learning. Students learn about invasive species, catalog wildlife, and examine soil and other features of their surrounding ecosystem. This year, Audubon Greenwich hopes to increase professional development for the Staff at Rogers to improve education using the schoolyard habitat.

There are also many after school environmental learning opportunities at Rogers, including a school garden club, a green action squad for 3rd and 4th grade students, a "Young

Mariners" program with local partner SoundWaters (Fig. 5), and the Green Team that preserves the grounds around the school and pursues goals to make Rogers a more sustainable environment. The student green action squad's new project will be to promote the single stream recycling program in the school. Recently the squad audited cafeteria waste production by weighing the amount of trash and food that was being thrown away at lunch with a goal to reduce the waste produced. Many of these student activities encourage students to be proactive and to positively influence their environment outside of school. Environmentally focused field trips include the eeSmarts Learning Center to learn about energy efficiency, the Bartlett Arboretum to explore the environment, SoundWaters to learn about Long Island Sound, the town's water treatment plant, Minus River Park, Natures Classroom and the Stamford Museum and Nature Center.

Rogers students are able to demonstrate their environmental literacy through both projects and presentation. Some projects worth noting include a 4th grade project where students examined the pros and cons of oil in soil, and a 6th grade project where students visited the local water treatment plant, and learned to test water quality at several sites to determine the effects of human activity on ground water. Student projects provide active learning and demonstrate student achievement, allowing students to explore topics in depth. Because Rogers is an environmental magnet school, sustainability and the environment are incredibly important and are stressed both inside and outside of the classroom. Students learn not just about typical career pathways but also about more scientific and environmental careers. For example, during the 4th grade oceans units, students explored careers by become junior "oceanographers," modeling skills needed in this career path. STEM is a prominent theme throughout Roger's curriculum and students approach every lesson with the thinking of "what are the advantages and disadvantages" of every problem presented.

Professional development is provided for teachers to learn how to use Rogers's outdoor learning environment as a teaching tool in classrooms and this year, Audubon Greenwich will work with the teachers to increase professional development using the schoolyard habitat. There is also district-wide professional development to help teachers learn how to use and teach non-fiction text in their classroom. Many of these non-fiction texts are science and environmentally-related texts.

Step 3: Healthy School Environment

Rogers opened in 2009 as a brand new facility. Because Rogers is LEED Silver Certified, the building has many features that ensure better indoor air quality such as low VOC paints, and the garden on the roof to recycle the exhaust air. Many of the building materials such as tiles and carpets also have a high percentage of recycled content, limiting VOC emissions.

Rogers families are encouraged to take advantage of the provided busses to minimize the number of cars that are picking up and dropping off students. Rogers enforces a zero idling policy outside of the school building. For families that chose to drive, Rogers encourages networking for carpooling through the school directory. Rogers' busses are also compliant with the zero-idling law. All new busses that are purchased in Stamford are the most fuel efficient models, set on continuous routes between schools to reduce emissions and idling off school grounds. Rogers is also compliant with the CT Green Products in Schools Law and uses only Green Seal labeled soaps, floor finishes, cleaners and mops. Rogers also complies with the CT School Pesticide law. The Green Team and the facilities department are working together to implement and sustain the Tools for Schools program. Recently, the district held two Tools for Schools training programs and conducted a walk through with all the teams in the district. Rogers School features environmental topics in the curriculum, with students learning about pollution and the effects of hazardous materials have on the environment and human health. Students in 6th grade explore the effects of hazardous material in further detail and study sites like Love Canal and Five Mile Island while discussing how to effectively deal with dangerous chemicals that are already in or may have been released into our environments.

Audubon Greenwich has worked with the Green Team to plant forty-one new trees on Rogers Campus. These trees not only provide natural shading but will improve the air quality outside of the school as well. The school worked with students and parent volunteers to set up a Purple Martin nest house on the school's campus with the goal to establish a second Purple Martin colony in the area.

Step 4: Healthy Nutrition

District wide, school faculty and parents provide input to the district Health and Wellness team, which works directly with Stamford's food provider, Chartwells. At Rogers, fresh fruit and vegetables are available every day and deep fried food is not allowed in the cafeteria.

Additionally, vegetarian and vegan options are available daily. Chartwells also works with FreshPoint in Hartford, CT to provide locally sourced fruits and vegetables when available.

Rogers participates in the HealthierUS program and is currently Bronze HealthierUS certified. Healthy snacks are encouraged. Rogers also has a rooftop garden that is maintained by an afterschool club. Students learn about nutrition in gym class as well as in a 2nd grade unit "Grow Baby Grow", where students learn about healthy eating habits as well as healthy lifestyles. Students also grow plants to compete in the Stamford Lettuce Challenge.

Step 5: Physical Well-Being

All students at Rogers are given the daily 20 minutes of outdoor (weather permitting) recess that is required by the district. Students have an hour long gym class at least once a week. Grades 5-8 are able to participate in after school sports program, and students also have a dance unit in addition to weekly gym class.

Every year, Rogers holds a program called Destination Fitness, where students walk during the school year to log miles and learn about the importance of fitness in their every day lives. Destination Fitness commences with the annual "Turtle Trot" where students walk their grade level number in miles and finish out the day with a celebration at SoundWaters (Fig. 6). Students in grades 5-8 also have to track their fitness in a weekly personal fitness journal. This promotes physical activity in as well as outside of school. Students also learn about health, nutrition and good eating habits in physical education and in a special unit with their primary teacher. Students are always encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunches.

Fig. 6. Rogers "Turtle Trot"

Step 6: Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation

Rogers International is a LEED Certified Silver building and has many environmental and energy efficient features. One energy efficient feature of the building is the air-cooling system. Ice is made during less expensive off-peak hours and chilled water/sludge is circulated throughout the system to produce energy efficient cooled air in the warm weather. The building was also designed to maximize the use of natural light with many floor-to-ceiling windows. All lights have sensors to turn them off when rooms are not in use. The windows are double-paned to keep the winter heat in, and summer heat out. Many materials were either reused or had recycled content when possible. Foundation walls of the former building on the site were kept for the retention system, boiler and mechanical spaces. Rogers has a rainwater retention system, and a green roof which hosts the school's garden and acts as additional insulation.

Rogers is benchmarked through Portfolio Manager, and has an Energy Star score of 58. In February 2013, a retro-commissioning walk-through took place. Several efficiency and upgrade projects were identified and will be further investigated in the upcoming year. The Stamford School District has two Energy Managers who work with the school to increase energy efficiency of the building and promote conservation behaviors. Rogers has solar panels on the roof, which are part of a 15.2 KW system. There is a demonstration wind turbine on the roof that provides students with the opportunity to learn about renewable energy. Students learn about solar energy in 5th grade.

Rogers has automatic sinks in all of the bathrooms and dual flush toilets to reduce its water consumption. Rogers's rainwater retention system is used to irrigate the green roof. Students explore energy and water issues in the classroom, learning about energy in their 4th, 5th and 8th grade energy units and water conservation in their 4th grade oceans unit.

Although many students do not live close enough to walk, Rogers does promote walking and carpooling to school on its website and parent handbook. All new busses purchased are the most fuel efficient models available and busses have continuous routes to reduce environmental impacts.

Step 7: Green Purchasing and Waste Management

All of the products used at Rogers for cleaning and maintenance are Green Seal certified. Cleaning products are purchased in concentrated form to save on shipping costs and impacts, and to reduce storage space. All floor finishers and floor strippers are green products, and all bathroom materials and trash liners have recycled content. The mops are also made of a certified green microfiber.

Recycling bins are placed around the school and students learn about recycling during school assemblies as well as during a special unit (Fig. 7). There is also signage around the school encouraging students to use the proper bins and students are encouraged to use the proper bins while in the classroom. Rogers has begun to work with "Cafeteria Culture" of NY to improve the single stream recycling program signage and hopefully introduce composting once the recycling program has been perfected. Teachers and members of the student Green Action Squad will become recycling ambassadors to improve the rate of recycling around the school. This past fall, the Green Team worked with the facilities department to ensure that there was a garbage and recycling bin pair at every waste station throughout the school.

Fig. 7 Recycling Bin in Cafeteria

The Green Team is currently working with Chartwells to eliminate Styrofoam trays with in collaboration with Stamford's Solid Waste and Recycling Supervisor, and the "Cafeteria Culture" group. In spring 2014, cardboard "boats" were piloted in the cafeteria in the place of the Styrofoam trays when possible. To date, this pilot has proven to be successful and the Green Team hopes to spread this program throughout the district.