Missouri Green Schools Honors 18 Schools for Sustainability Strides

Missouri Green Schools (MGS) today announced its 2023 honorees, recognizing 18 schools for their commitment to improving the health and wellness of students and staff, lowering their environmental impact, and providing place-based education.

"By achieving Sprout, Seedling and Sapling level recognition these Missouri schools are embracing green and healthy practices within their campuses, curriculum, and culture," said Hope Gribble, MGS co-director.

MGS is a state level recognition and support program co-managed by the Missouri Gateway Green Building Council and the Missouri Environmental Education Association. MGS annually recognizes schools for initiatives ranging from designing accessible gardens to establishing diverse Green Teams which foster Whole-School Sustainability.

**MGS 2023 Honorees**

**Sprout**

- Bridgeway Elementary School
- Central High School
- City Garden Montessori School
- Holland Elementary
- Marvin Elementary School
- Normandy Early Childhood Center
- Oakville Elementary School
- St. Teresa’s Academy

Show-Me Green Schools is a collaboration of the Missouri Gateway Green Building Council and Missouri Environmental Education Association that includes the Green Schools Quest, Missouri Green Schools, and U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools programs.
Sprout schools are honored for involving school administration, beginning to benchmark and track improvement, and setting goals towards further advancement of green and healthy practices. Seedling schools additionally document a sustainability-related achievement in at least one educational program. Sapling schools additionally document their long term impacts, such as reduction of energy or water usage over a 1 to 3 year period.

Missouri Green Schools will continue to support these 18 schools as they track achievements, set new goals, and strive to make a difference in the lives of their students and staff and in their communities. Interested in learning more about becoming a Missouri Green School or assisting schools in the program? Visit showmegreenschools.org.

“2023 Honorees: Their MGS Experience”

- “At Central High School, sustainability initiatives have the potential to positively transform school communities by fostering environmental awareness, reducing costs, providing educational opportunities, and promoting a sense of community and responsibility. These changes contribute to a more vibrant and forward-thinking school environment.” Paul Epps, Central High School
- “The students at Hixson Middle School have stepped up and started making meaningful changes in both our building as well as our community. Learning about, and putting into place action plans that have a positive impact on their surroundings such as creating a classroom recycling program and creating a large outdoor sustainable classroom area. We plan to continue our learning journey, one step at a time, trying our best to make positive differences in the lives of those around us.” Eric Hayes, Hixson Middle School
- “Flance continues to be a tremendous resource by providing children and their families with the education surrounding sustainability and equipping them with the foundational knowledge needed to carry these principles into the future.” Stefanie Ayotte, Flance Early Learning Center
• “At Principia, I love that as we increase our intentionality around sustainability, our community can understand how these actions are a powerful way to love our planet, care for our resources, and support the wellbeing of people.” Lynne Scott, Principia School

• “Missouri Green Schools has provided us with a framework to help us implement sustainability initiatives in our school. Our students are very invested in making positive change within our school and community and we look forward to achieving our goals!” Sarah Holmes, St. Teresa’s Academy

• “The best part about incorporating sustainability practices at Bridgeway has been seeing the impact it has had on students and staff. From students teaching other students about the importance of reducing waste to classrooms raising, tagging and releasing monarch butterflies in the garden, we know that little steps of change can make a big difference. Some students have said it best! Eli says, "When we do good things for Earth, we also do good things for people!" Chloe added that, "My favorite part about teaching classrooms was seeing kids get excited about making less trash and saving the earth!” Jeanne Fernandez, Eli, and Chloe, Bridgeway Elementary School

• “Members of the Forsyth School community strive to be better caretakers of the Earth with the help of the Missouri Green School’s sustainability suggestions. Last year, students led these efforts with their enthusiasm and developing knowledge through the Waste Ambassador group as well as through a “turn the lights off campaign.” Susan Zareh and Christine Torlina, Forsyth School

• “Through our commitment to sustainable practices, we have created a culture of responsibility and empathy for our environment and all living things. Crestwood Elementary is not just a place of learning, it’s a real life example of how small actions can make a big impact and inspire positive change in the world.” Beth Bridwell, Crestwood Elementary

• “At Brittany Woods Middle School, students apply the principles of sustainability not just to the planet, but to their own lives. Our community is lifted as students develop personal and group empowerment, manage their resources with increasing thoughtfulness, and work together to create a supportive school environment.” Anne Cummings, Brittany Woods Middle School

• “Marvin Elementary is proud to be honored this year at the Sprout level with Missouri Green Schools. Marvin has adopted a new cultivation of curiosity mindset when it comes to sustainability. We are looking forward this year to growing our green team and expanding our sustainability efforts within our school, district, and community. Our efforts are aimed to make our school a more ‘green’ place to be! This year we have our sights set on achieving the Seedling level by establishing a ‘Green Team’ and creating a school-wide goal centered around sustainability. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Missouri Green Schools and are grateful for the support of the Green Schools Community!” Ashley Heede, Marvin Elementary School

• “Sustainability has made our school community better in so many ways! We now do things to take care of our planet, like recycling and using less energy. Our school garden teaches us about growing our own food, and it’s fun too. We’ve learned about saving water and using less plastic. It's not just good for the Earth; it's good for us too, because we're healthier and happier when we help the environment!” Michelle Peak, Holland Elementary School
• “At City Garden Montessori School, students are exposed to many nature learning opportunities in our outdoor learning spaces. Alongside our goal to instill a great sense of social justice and global citizenship, students are empowered to work towards social change, environmental protection, and community transformation. It is our goal to continue to build on our foundation of school-wide sustainability measures by making more connections with our growing community. We are really looking forward to our student-led nature-play outdoor equipment STEAM project and new chicken coop initiative involving students and families. We appreciate all the support of Missouri Green Schools! Thank you for the Sprout Level recognition this year!” Lauren Denney, City Garden Montessori

• "This is awesome." Ms. Johnson, Normandy Early Childhood Center

• “The Patrick Henry Downtown Academy community has benefited greatly by the vast sustainability efforts we’ve put into place. Our hope is that the merger of environmental and academic education will open the window of opportunities for our scholars in a way that cultivates their growth and prepares them for the future." Dr. Chavon Curry, Patrick Henry Downtown Academy

• “Our students have graciously embraced environmental consciousness. Their work in the garden and with recycling is something in which they take great pride. They have a grasp of the importance of sustainability that most kids their age don’t show. It's encouraging to know we're imparting this knowledge on a generation that cares about this cause." Coach McBride, Sunrise R-9 School