



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bill Reinhard, 410-767-0486

MARYLAND BEGINS NEW SEARCH FOR GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS

ENTERING ITS THIRD YEAR, PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS SCHOOLS WITH TOP ENVIRONMENTAL RECORDS

BALTIMORE (October 3, 2013) – Maryland has scores of schools that have learned how to save energy and reduce costs; provide a healthy environment for students and staff; and promote environmental literacy. The search is on to provide those schools with national recognition.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is participating in the 2014 National Green Ribbon Schools Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, by casting a net for the State's outstanding environmental schools.

Maryland schools have had a long history of involvement in environmental education, according to State Superintendent of Schools Lillian Lowery, creating interest in the Green Ribbon program.

“Maryland students and educators pay attention to their place in this world, living so close to the ocean, the Chesapeake Bay, and the mountains,” Dr. Lowery said. “By taking part in the Green Ribbon program, schools raise their profile for the work they have been doing.”

Public and private schools are eligible for the honor, patterned after the long-running National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. In the program's first two years, six schools and the Montgomery County Public School System have been honored with Green Ribbons.

Maryland has developed a national reputation as an environmental education leader, and in 2011 became the first State in the nation to include environmental literacy as a graduation requirement. The State currently boasts more than 400 ‘green schools,’ designated by the Green Schools and Centers Initiative sponsored by the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education. Schools gain that recognition by using the environment as context for learning, demonstrating best management practices, and establishing community partners.

The federal Green Ribbon Schools program encourages schools to:

- Implement energy conservation measures that pave the way for reduced environmental impact, cost savings, and job creation;

(more)

MarylandPublicSchools.org

MARYLAND BEGINS NEW SEARCH FOR GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS (Page Two)

- Undertake environmental and behavioral changes in schools that ensure the health, wellness, and productivity of students, teachers, and staff, and;
- Promote environmental education that supports students' strong civic skills, environmental stewardship, and workforce preparedness.

More information about the 2014 Green Ribbon Schools program is available at:

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/environment/grs.html>

Interested schools will complete the application and submit them to MSDE for review by January 3, 2014. After review of the applications, MSDE will nominate up to four schools and one district to the U.S. Department of Education for the Green Ribbon designation. At least one nominee will be from a public school with a 40 percent economically disadvantaged population, and at least one will be a private school.

Honorees will be announced on Earth Day, April 22, 2014.

###