



## Virginia Green Ribbon Schools Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: Where can I find resources to help my school progress in the three Pillars?**

A: The [Green Strides Resources Page](#) and [Webinar Series](#) provide all schools with free information on the tools that help them move toward the Pillars of the recognition award. The award is not tied to any one program or standard, but instead encourages schools to use any or all the many helpful resources available. Additional resources and support can be found on the [VDOE Virginia Green Ribbon Schools](#) website.

### **Q: Who fills out the application?**

A: It is recommended that a team be assembled to complete the application. Ideally, this team should include: a facilities manager, physical education director, medical director or school nurse, food services director, curriculum director, finance department representatives, teachers and students.

### **Q: What are some common application mistakes made by schools?**

A: Applicants repeat answers for multiple questions and/or discuss the same achievement throughout much of the application. Not using the sub-questions and answer prompts for guidance in an applicant's response is another frequent mistake. These sub-questions are used by the Virginia GRS Review team in determining applications to move forward to the USDOE GRS program.

### **Q: Where can I view examples of past applications?**

A: All past national honorees' submissions are posted at this [link](#). Please note that ED has a submission page limit of 20 pages. In most cases state authorities have condensed longer state applications and submitted summaries to ED. Reach out to Laura Casdorff ([laura.casdorph@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:laura.casdorph@doe.virginia.gov)) for sample Virginia applications.

### **Q: When should a school begin the application process?**

A: Most honorees spend years working on their sustainability efforts by using the many resources and programs previously referenced. The Virginia application **deadline is on December 6, 2024**, but it is helpful to get started as early as possible.

### **Q: Do guest speakers and partnerships with local organizations such as garden clubs meet the requirement for Pillar III?**

A: Yes, when the activities listed above align with key components of the Pillar, they are applicable.

Additional Q&A's are available [here](#).