

Department of Energy and Environment

Watershed Protection Division

Schoolyard Conservation Site Program:

“RiverSmart Schools”

The Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), Watershed Protection Division is proud to offer funding and training to **five (5) DC schools** through its Schoolyard Conservation Site (SCS) Programcalled, “**RiverSmart Schools**.”   
Selected schools will receive a new schoolyard greenspace, maintenance, classroom resources, professional development, and technical assistance worth **$3,500 to $170,000.**In addition to installing new schoolyard greenspaces, the RiverSmart Schools program **provides teachers with training and resources on how to use their schoolyard as an outdoor classroom.** The schoolyard can serve as a permanent outdoor learning tool that will enhance many areas of study including science, reading, and math. Teachers will also receive a minimum of **6 hours of professional development** on watershed ecology, designing and installing a school garden, and an outdoor learning curriculum that supports DC content standards. Further benefits of the schoolyard green space include wildlife habitat, improved aesthetics of school grounds, water conservation, stormwater management, and student and community pride.

**What do RiverSmart Schools receive?**

* Training on how to design and install your schoolyard greenspace site;
* Schoolyard greenspace installation from grantee or contractors hired by DOEE worth $3,500-$170,000;
* $500 for site maintenance for five (5) consecutive years post-installation;
* Seat hour for the time you spend in training;
* $100 stipend for all teachers that attend all training and participate in at least one community action day;
* Technical assistance specific to your site’s needs;
* DCPS standards of learning curricula specific to your schoolyard, grade level, and subject area; and
* A boat trip with your students on the Anacostia and Potomac River.

**Who is eligible to participate?**   
 All District of Columbia Public Schools, Charter Schools, and private schools located within the District are eligible.

Teachers and staff wishing to be involved in this exciting program must:

* Be interested in using their school grounds as a hands-on classroom for teaching
* Be able to organize and participate in a Garden Team that is committed to long-term use and upkeep of the site

**What is required to participate?**

* Three (3) teachers must attend three (3) professional development workshops organized by DOEE   
  *The training sessions (virtual and in-person) will take place after school and last two hours (4 pm-6 pm).*
* Plan and attend team meetings specifically for your schoolyard site;
* Meet regularly with contractors providing technical assistance;
* Prepare a budget detailing how you will use the money for plant materials, tools, and curricula;
* Plan and lead community action days to install your garden site; and
* Incorporate the schoolyard garden into your existing curriculum.

For additional information contact P. Trinh Doan at 202-535-1653 or [patricia.doan@dc.gov](mailto:patricia.doan@dc.gov)   
  
To participate fill out the application and return it to: P. Trinh Doan, Watershed Protection Specialist ([patricia.doan@dc.gov](mailto:patricia.doan@dc.gov)) *Department Energy and Environment - Watershed Protection Division, 1200 First Street, NE. 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20002.* The annual application deadline is the last Friday of the month of February.

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**“RiverSmart Schools”**

**Application Form**

*(Please Note: This application must be typed and contain good grammar and spelling. Handwritten and/or illegible applications will be disqualified.)*

Name of School:

School Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

**Participating Team** - Teams must include at least **three teachers** and two to three other concerned individuals such as a principal, parent, maintenance/grounds representative, or community member. Please indicate a project leader/head contact with an asterisk (\*).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| First and Last Name | Relationship to school (teacher, parent) | Grade/Subject Taught | Email Address | Home Phone Number |
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**Note: At least two participating teachers from the Garden Team must attend each training (trainings include four paid four-hour training sessions in the spring and two days of training in the summer).**

The Current State of your Schoolyard:

1) Are there any plans for construction at your school or on your school grounds in the near future? (Answering “yes” to this question disqualifies your school as a RiverSmart Schools applicant)

2) Provide a rough estimate of the size of your schoolyard.

a. What percentage of the grounds is covered in asphalt?

b. What percentage is greenspace?

c. How close is the nearest source of water?

3) Is there greenspace of any kind (i.e. city parks, athletic fields, etc.) surrounding your school in which students have access to during and/or after school?

4) Please briefly describe the current state of the school grounds. If possible, provide pictures of your school grounds, specifically areas that you believe would benefit from a greening project (maximum of 3 photos).

Educational Vision:

5) What schoolyard greening projects would you like to create and how do you hope your school will benefit from a schoolyard greening project?

6) How do you hope to engage your students in the schoolyard greening project? What type of educational activities and/or youth programs do you envision developing and/or using?

Community Support:

7) Please list any organizations, community members, or businesses from the surrounding community that could be involved with your project. Have they already agreed to participate? (Please attach any letters of support.)

8) How do you envision maintaining your schoolyard greening project? Who will participate and how will they be involved?

9) What other funding sources (if any) has your schoolyard green project received and/or solicited for this coming year?

Part of the success of a schoolyard conservation site depends on the help and approval of a school’s principal and grounds maintenance staff. As such, the Schoolyard Conservation Staff will occasionally meet with involved teachers, their principal, and the school’s maintenance crew in order to foster communication and understanding about the project, its importance, and its care and maintenance needs.

**Principal Approval -** Please have your principal sign below or attach a letter with their signature indicating that they are aware of your application and support your potential involvement in the schoolyard program.

Principal Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Facilities/Grounds Maintenance Acknowledgement -** Please have your maintenance supervisor sign below indicating that they are aware of your application and support the installation of a schoolyard conservation site.

Maintenance Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Maintenance Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**DCPS Headquarter Acknowledgement –** If your school is a DCPS facility, please have the Office of the Chief Operating Officer sign below indicating that they are aware of your application and support.

Operating Officer Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Operating Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_