

**Edison Named Green Ribbon School**  
**by State and Federal Departments of Education**  
*School honored for its environmental leadership and advocacy*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Alameda, Calif. — April 23, 2020 —** Edison Elementary School, a K-5 school in the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD), was named as both a California Green Ribbon School and a US Department of Education Green Ribbon School winner in a virtual ceremony on Wednesday.

The state Green Ribbon Schools program honors schools, school districts, and institutes of higher education for excellence in resource efficiency, health and wellness, and environmental and sustainability education. Edison was named a "Green Achiever," the highest honor in the California Green Ribbon Schools recognition program.

Only five schools can be nominated for the federal award from each state. Across the country, 39 schools, 11 districts, and five post-secondary institutions are being honored for their innovative efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, improve health and wellness, and ensure effective sustainability education. A report with highlights on the 55 honorees can be found [here](#).

"The state and federal recognition of Edison's environmental efforts is a welcome bit of good news at this time," says Superintendent Pasquale Scuderi. "This kind of student engagement and staff and community commitment results in real-life learning experiences for kids while also serving the best interests of the public and, more importantly, the planet."

With this federal recognition Edison Elementary School joins Bay Farm School as the only schools in Alameda who have received both the state and federal "Green School" designations.

### **Environmental Leadership**

Both the CDE and the US DOE honored Edison for being a leader in improving environmental policies at the district, city, regional, and national level. Those actions have included:

- Lobbying AUSD to pilot fresh salad bars
- Helping to initiate and now model AUSD's Go Green recycling and compost program
- Leading outreach efforts for local and regional environmental initiatives such as the county's Reusable Bag Ordinance; the installation of three-stream recycling bins in Alameda's downtown areas; and Alameda's "Straws on Request" and compostable foodware ordinance for restaurants.
- Developing and maintaining a school garden with a butterfly habitat, fruit trees, herbs, and vegetables that is used for teaching about environmental science, sustainable agriculture, gardening, composting, cooking, and nutrition.
- Supporting community service by giving excess produce from Edison's school garden to Alameda's Food Shift Kitchen (a local 501-c3 catering business that cook and serves food that would otherwise go to waste), Edison's on-site and off-site after care programs, and the City of Alameda Food Bank.
- Encouraging students to use alternative transportation to get to school, including walking rolling (i.e., bicycle, scooter, or skateboard), and 2% carpooling, as well as establishing a "no-idling policy" for vehicles anywhere around campus to lower local air pollution.
- Integration of environmental education and sustainability concepts across the curriculum, including in art and music.
- The formation of a "Green Otters" student group focused on raising awareness around plastic pollution, fundraising for endangered animals, planting trees, and teaching peers about why eating too much meat is not healthy for people or the planet.
- The 5th-grade science retreat at Nature Bridge, a 2-day/3-night science retreat in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area offering an inclusive, hands-on learning experience in the Marin Headlands.

The winning schools were announced at a virtual news conference the morning of April 22, which was also Earth Day. A ceremony will be held in Washington DC on August 4.

"Every day at Edison, there are numerous efforts at raising environmental awareness issues among our students," says Edison Principal Greg Sahakian. "This occurs within classrooms, during the lunch period, and through school programs, events, assemblies, and field trips. It is part of the culture of the school, and has been for a long time. I am proud to be a part of such a caring community, one that brings the ideas of sustainability, responsibility, and service to forefront of our students' minds. The Go Green program at Edison School has been years in the making, and I am so glad to see it get the recognition it deserves, as well as all the people that make it happen; our families, our staff and most importantly, our students."

"It is beyond inspiring to be part of a school community that views environment as a priority," says Debi Ryan, the Edison Go Green PTA co-chair. "Edison has been stewarding change and driving sustainable impact in Alameda for at least 20 years. However, given the realities we face today with climate change, we've never been more motivated to keep going -- as well as to support and help influence other schools and districts to take their own green efforts to new innovative levels."

More information on the state award can be found [here](#). More information on the federal recognition can be found [here](#).