



Gulf Shores City Schools Named 2023 Alabama Green Ribbon School District

GSCS is only district to receive the state award this year and is nominated to receive the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon School Award

GULF SHORES, Ala. – March 13, 2023 – Gulf Shores City Schools (GSCS) is excited to announce that it was selected as a recipient of the 2023 Alabama Green Ribbon Schools Award. The award recognizes schools that nurture and promote environmental sustainability education and practices. GSCS is the only district to receive this award across the state and is now nominated to receive the national Green Ribbon School award from the U.S. Department of Education which will be awarded this summer.

Alabama Green Ribbon Schools recognizes schools, districts, and higher education institutions that nurture and promote environmental, health, and sustainability education and practices. This includes demonstrating responsible stewardship of Alabama's natural resources, promoting the safety and wellness of children and adults, and encouraging an appreciation of Alabama's rich natural heritage. The award focuses on the following pillars:

- Pillar I: Reducing environmental impact and costs
- Pillar II: Improving the health and wellness of students and staff
- Pillar III: Providing effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways

From its inception, the district established a set of core values that correlate with the standards of Alabama Green Ribbon Schools: *"to provide engaging learning environments, rigorous academics, and to incorporate unique resources of our community to empower all students to achieve success."* The district's core values will shape the future of our environment, our commitment to innovation, and our local community for generations to come.

Notable environmental sustainability education projects:

- Schneider Electric partnership to replace lighting and air conditioning systems, improved air quality, and installed solar features that are tied into the power grid to help reduce energy use.
- New STEAM building at Gulf Shores Elementary School
- Gulf Shores High School Farm-to-Table Program
- Upgraded transportation program at GSCS with half of the fleet of buses replaced with ultra-low sulfur, clean diesel engine models, reducing carbon emissions by 89.5%
- Science by the Shore outdoor, place-based science education program
- All students have access to bicycles throughout the day to support outdoor learning and physical activity.
- Comprehensive recycling efforts, composting, and water conservation
- Partnership with Center for Ecotourism including a school visit from Jean-Michel Cousteau
- Active health and wellness committee to support physical and mental health of students and staff

"Being acknowledged as a Green Ribbon School is a testament to our district's commitment to our core values and providing a learning atmosphere that is innovative and environmentally friendly." said **Gulf Shores City Schools Superintendent, Dr. Matt Akin**.

The district would like to not only thank students, faculty and staff, but also the Gulf Shores community for reaching this high achievement. The Alabama State Board of Education will recognize GSCS as a recipient of the award on May 11, 2023, in Montgomery.

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