

GREEN RIBBON DISTRICT

A U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee



Sustainability, Equity and Community

On April 25, 2022, The School District of University City was named a 2022 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee. The District was one of only two school systems in Missouri to be selected that year for the prestigious honor.

Judges noted the District's considerable work in integrating equity, student action and community well-being into its environmental learning activities, particularly on issues of scarcity, relationship-building and fair access to healthy resources for all citizens.

"In addition to tending to food gardens with garden facilitators at every site, students at The School District of University City's middle school also care for chickens and bees. The gardens are not only working laboratories to learn about ecosystems, environmental sustainability, and growing food, they also integrate the arts, student service projects, and other outdoor activities that demonstrate the district's commitment to social-emotional learning, trauma-informed schools, and racial equity."

- U.S. Department of Education

Learning about sustainability and equitable natural resources is a natural part of the District's vision of Learning Reimagined and its ongoing mission to humanize, personalize and problematize learning.

continued



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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
UNIVERSITY CITY
WWW.UCITYSCHOOLS.ORG

7

School Gardens

7

Garden Facilitators

4

Beehives in the Middle School apiary tended by students

20

Chickens roosting at the middle school

K-12

STEAM curriculum integrating sustainability and environmental science

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Key Programs

- Formal sustainability curriculum starting in middle school
- Learning gardens with designated learning facilitators at all schools
- Outdoor and environmental learning integrated in grades PreK-12 as part of the District's STEAM curriculum
- Annual district wide STEAM Expo with a significant focus on sustainability and environmentalism
- Thriving apiary maintained by student beekeepers at Brittany Woods Middle School
- Working chicken coup in the Brittany Woods Middle School Courtyard
- Creation and maintenance of a Giving Garden to grow food for refugees and families
- Growing Together community gardening project
- Revitalized Greenhouse at University City High School
- Integration of a Fresh Harvest 365 vertical hydroponic growing trailer at University City High School
- Partnerships with premier environmental and science institutions, including The Green Center, St. Louis Aquarium, St. Louis Science Center, the Saint Louis Zoo, U City in Bloom and Forest Park Forever

Key Accomplishments

- Construction of two LEED-certified elementary school buildings
- Creation of Brittany Brand student-made organic products, including honey, homegrown fruits and vegetables, fresh eggs, and nutrient-rich planting soil
- Implementation of the community-based Parsley Project to create healthy ecosystems for bees, butterflies and other pollinators
- Yearly Growing Together seedling and garden supply give-away event to encourage food gardening throughout University City
- Cooking and health campaigns utilizing food grown in District gardens
- Student activism regarding food and water scarcity, inequitable natural resources, racial inequity and community health
- 2021-2022 Green Schools Quest award, middle school division

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