

## Wall Township Public Schools Plants Trees with \$192,005 Trees for Schools Grant

[Wall], NJ – Wall Township Public Schools was awarded a \$192,005 Trees for Schools grant to cover costs associated with the purchase and planting of trees, including planning, site preparation, watering, monitoring, and maintenance over a three-year period.

“Wall Township Public Schools is grateful to the New Jersey Department of Education, Sustainable Jersey, and The College of New Jersey for having been selected as a recipient of the Trees for School Grant. The grant funds will be used to beautify, provide shade, and create outdoor learning laboratories for students at Wall High School, West Belmar School, and throughout other spaces on the district’s campuses. We are excited to work with community partners, including the Wall Township Environmental Advisory Committee, the Wall High School Environmental Club, and Wall Township Public Schools’ ground and maintenance team, to maximize the potential of the planting and maintenance of the trees. The trees will leave a legacy in the landscaping of the district that will continue to be enjoyed by others long after they have been planted and will make a permanent positive impact on the environment of Wall Township. We would like to thank Dr. Tracy Handerhan, Mr. Brian Smyth, Mr. Scott Krisanda, Mr. Kevin Davis, Mr. Anthony Abeal, Mr. Josh Tennant, and Dr. Krystyne Kennedy for their efforts in the application and execution of the grant process.”

The Trees for Schools program is a joint effort of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Sustainable Jersey, and The College of New Jersey. Funded by Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) auction proceeds, the Trees for Schools grant program will plant more than 4,500 trees at public schools, colleges, and universities across the state. These grants are part of the second round of funding through the program; the first round of grants was awarded in 2023 and resulted in the planting of nearly 3,000 trees at 33 school campuses.

“The planting of trees in urban areas is an incredible tool in our work to mitigate the impacts of climate change,” **Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette said.** “Expanding tree canopies at school campuses will make it easier for students, staff, and residents to find shade on hot days while providing numerous environmental benefits. My DEP colleagues and I are proud to support this work to promote the importance of trees in fighting climate change.”

“The Trees for Schools grants make local sustainability real, practical, and achievable,” **said Randall Solomon, director of Sustainable Jersey.** “Congratulations to the schools, colleges, and universities awarded a grant. They are stepping up, taking advantage of resources, and showing that meaningful climate action isn’t an abstract idea. It’s happening now, in communities across

New Jersey. We look forward to working with these schools to expand their tree canopy and provide students with rich educational opportunities and a vital connection to nature.”

The tree planting projects will increase shade coverage to mitigate the effects of rising temperatures due to climate change, beautify school campuses, mitigate and filter stormwater runoff, and reduce the state’s carbon footprint.

Tree plantings are happening now on the Wall Township Public Schools campuses. For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/TreesforSchools>.