

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# GreenRibbonSchools



## Highlights from the 2015 Honorees



U.S. Department of Education - 400 Maryland Ave, SW - Washington, DC 20202  
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## 2015 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

### Ohio

#### Old Trail School, Bath, Ohio

##### *Green energy and award-winning initiatives*

Old Trail School is a coeducational independent day school for 520 students in grades prekindergarten through eight. Located in the heart of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Old Trail has a long history of providing a comprehensive curriculum with a commitment to academic excellence, service learning and global sustainability.

Old Trail strives to reduce its carbon footprint while introducing students to their natural world through hands-on, collaborative science lessons, gardening, and habitat restoration. The school has created a model for school environmental sustainability programs, focusing on five major components: facility, food, operations, recycling, and water. Each of these is continuously evaluated by the administration, with a goal of improvement and direct connection to the curriculum.

The 62-acre campus allows the school to focus on place-based education. The school takes advantage of its unique surroundings by encouraging students, families, faculty, and staff to examine and explore the outdoors, using the campus as an environmental learning center.

Old Trail uses software to regulate the thermostat throughout the entire campus changed T-12 to T-8 and LED bulbs, installed HVAC automation and building motion sensors, implemented a behavioral change campaign, and uses extensive daylighting. It has installed a 320 kW/h solar array, includes an outdoor amphitheater, a UV-treated pool, and an impressive Living Machine that treats the school's wastewater completely through the use of natural resources. Housed in a greenhouse (the school's Living Classroom), the Living Machine serves as a laboratory for students as well as other schools and organizations in the region. In the Living Classroom, students perform water quality experiments and use a demonstration pond.

One hundred percent of produce served in the cafeteria is grown on campus. The Edible Education Program is led by four of faculty members who were trained by Alice Waters and her Edible Schoolyard Program. The campus is home to three honey-producing beehives. The school's curriculum includes: laying hens, an environmental education center, farm, composting and waste, cooking, farm curriculum, work with a regional food bank, public health, and meteorology. Old Trail

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hosts the Countryside Conservancy Farmers' Markets during the winter season and incorporates the Education for Sustainability Standards and Cloud Institute Curriculum.

Old Trail has formed partnerships with organizations including Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Countryside Conservancy, and Hattie Larlham Services for Adults and Children with Developmental Disabilities. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park is a wonderful neighbor and partner of Old Trail in a variety of programs implemented at the school. Hattie Larlham Services manages its working organic farm, Hattie's Gardens, on campus, providing farming instruction and service opportunities for students, who gain hands-on experience working on the farm planting or tending bee hives, and working with farm staff and their clients. The gardens provide 100 percent of the produce used in the school's kitchen.

Grades four through eight gain extensive experience working with Eco-Schools USA, which allows students on the school's Green Team to become familiar with a variety of sustainability initiatives and carefully monitor the school's environmental efforts. The Green Team is responsible for tracking conservation efforts and results that have been achieved by the school.

An entire issue of the school's periodical, the *Old Trail Magazine*, is devoted to sustainability on the campus and in the homes of the students. Members of the school's community, including parents and alumni, share about how they embrace sustainability.

