



# Award Checklist

## Green Flag Renewal

Use this handy checklist to help track the school's progress through the Eco-Schools USA program and confirm the team is meeting criteria to reapply for a Green Flag-level award. **300 points are required to qualify for a Green Flag award.**

CRITERIA	POINTS	COMPLETED	NOTES	TIPS
<b>Eco-Action Team   40 Points   Required documentation for upload: Eco-Action team list.</b>				
50% of the Eco-Action team is composed of students in addition to teachers, community members and other school staff.	15			Maintain or improve upon the team's makeup, by adding more students and connecting to community leaders and other resource professionals from local government, conservation or academia.
The Eco-Action team meets a minimum of eight times a year.	15			Maintain the team's level of engagement. Consider utilizing subcommittees to reach goals and allow students and other team member to focus on the tasks for which they are most passionate.
As appropriate, students take significant responsibility for conducting the meetings, are part of the team's decision-making process and help keep minutes.	5			If students are old enough, give them the opportunity to lead some or all of the team meetings. Reminder keeping minutes, while traditionally written, can also be recorded and shared via video summary.
Students actively engage other students and take suggestions from the student body.	5			It remains critical to engage the entire school. Allow students to determine how they will share information and in what formats and solicit participation and calls to action.



CRITERIA	POINTS	COMPLETED	NOTES	TIPS
<b>Pathway Audit   50 points   Required documentation for upload: Baseline Audits</b>				
The audits for at least three pathways are conducted on a formal and comprehensive basis utilizing the Eco-Schools USA audit forms.	20			This can be any combination of new pathways not yet addressed and continued progress on the school's original three pathways from their first Green Flag.
Students are involved in conducting the environmental audit and engaging resource specialists in the community.	20			Maintain student safety and utilize volunteers and rely on the expertise of community leaders and organizations.
Results of the audit are shared with the whole school and wider community.	5			Go over audit results at an assembly, PTA meeting, post on bulletin boards, and/or write an article for the school website or newsletter.
A baseline pathway audit is conducted and the audit is completed each year.	5			To maintain standards of sustainability and to support a culture shift, each year it is a good practice to review results from the previous year, establishing a benchmark before moving forward.
<b>Eco-Action Plan   Total 50 points   Required documentation for upload: Action Plans</b>				
Develop an action plan using the provided blank <i>Eco-Action Plan worksheet</i> , and based on audit results, goals should be inclusive, accessible and quantifiable.	20			Action plans are thoughtful and represent goals that are inclusive of the needs of the school community and informed by scientific investigation and research. Start this process by asking the community what they need. What do they envision?



CRITERIA	POINTS	COMPLETED	NOTES	TIPS
<b>Eco-Action Plan, Continued</b>				
The action plan is shared with the entire school and local community.	10			Use morning announcements or other school methods of communication to share the team's plan.
A range of actions are planned to mitigate environmental problems, targets are prioritized and cost-benefit information is provided for each action.	20			Prioritize actions by dividing them into what is achievable in the short, medium and the long term.
<b>Monitor and Evaluate   Total 50 points   Required documentation for upload: Post-Action Audit</b>				
The Eco-Action team monitors and reviews progress against timeframes and targets outlined in the action plan.	15			The procedure for monitoring progress should be developed in parallel with the action plan.
Conduct the post-action pathway audit. Metrics data is entered on the award application for the pathway(s) the school is focusing on.	20			The team should be able to pull metrics (data) from the post-action pathway audit form.
Progress and challenges are communicated to the whole school and wider community.	5			Progress and challenges should also be recorded in meeting minutes.
The school shows significant progress on several <b>large</b> -scale projects that are focused on <b>three</b> Eco-Schools USA pathways.	5			Adequate progress can be used as evidence to move forward in the awards process. Remember: This can be any combination of new pathways not yet addressed and continued progress on the original three pathways from the first Green Flag.



**Monitor and Evaluate (continued)**

Students are engaged in monitoring and evaluation. Data is used in academic classes, where applicable.	5			Encourage students to use the data, do computations, develop equations, solve problems, and chart and graph data over time.
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**Link to Curriculum | Total 50 points | Required documentation for upload: None**

Environmental topics are integrated into the classroom at <b>all</b> grade levels and <b>across disciplines</b> .	20			At this point, an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to teaching is evident in most classrooms throughout the school. Sustainability is one of the vehicles used to deliver instruction and support academic growth and success.
Student learning experiences are authentic, place-based and inquiry driven.	15			In addition to content from Eco-Schools USA, the school has acquired and has access to content where standards intersect with sustainability.
School staff are provided with professional development and training in association with best practices and knowledge and skills for environment-based education.	15			Professional development around education for sustainable development for new and existing staff is critical to maintaining and improving sustainability at the school and should include, topics in economics, equity and the environment.

**Engage and Build Community | Total 30 points | Required documentation for upload: None**

The school has a bulletin board, display case, website and/or newsletter which details Eco-Schools USA activities.	10			Have students write blogs, newsletter copy, or website content through their English or journalism class. Young students can use hand-made or digital art to showcase Eco-Schools USA activities.
The entire school, along with volunteers from the community, engage in a number of Eco-Schools USA activities.	5			With input from the community, host events to raise awareness and provide ways for all to take action. Do not be shy about seeking help and/or donations from the community.



Engaging and Building Community (continued)				
A special event is planned that engages the greater community in learning about and helping with Eco-Schools USA projects.	5			Build on past year's events or try a new event. Consider hosting gardening events, a farmer's market or market day, walk/bike to school event, and/or an event to celebrate Earth Day.
Students write about Eco-Schools USA projects for local papers, magazines and/or digital outlets.	5			Engaging the local news outlets is a great way to build a lasting relationship with a member of the community – a partnership that can be cultivated over time to share the school's sustainability work whether it's a campaign, event, or celebration.
The school shares its Eco-Schools USA projects with other schools in the U.S. and with the global community through digital communications, e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Tag other schools, districts and Eco-Schools in other countries.	5			Continue reaching out to Eco-Schools around the world. If the school has already built a relationship with another school, maintain and strengthen the work you are doing together. If help is needed, reach out to Eco-Schools USA staff.
Eco-Code   Total 30 points   Required documentation for upload: Eco-Code				
An Eco-Code is developed that includes input from the whole school, and is agreed upon and adopted.	15			Ensure that the Eco-Code reflects the input and voice of the school community. If the code was originally developed within the team alone, then develop a way to include the school community in its creation.
The finished Eco-Code is prominently displayed for all to read as they enter the school and is prominent in common areas around the school.	10			Review current placement of the Eco-Code. Are their new traffic patterns at school that require Eco-Codes to be moved? Did some of the codes get taken down for maintenance over the summer and need to be put up again?
Every other year the Eco-Code is reviewed as part of a review process and in preparation for the next Green Flag award.	5			The Eco-Code is a fluid document that is meant to change throughout a school's sustainability journey. Frequently, reviewing and revising the Eco-Code is a good practice.

## RENEWING THE SCHOOL'S GREEN FLAG

## STEPS

1

Before applying ensure the team has all the evidence ready to upload, principal's feedback and are ready to answer the Green Flag Award questions. We advise doing this over 2-4 sessions. [Download a copy of the Green Flag Award questions](#) that also include the administrator's section.

2

[Login](#) to your Eco-Schools USA dashboard.

3

Once on the school's dashboard, click on "Apply for an Award" in the left side navigation. Click on the "Green Flag Award" button.

4

Fill-out the award application and click 'submit'. If the application is only partially completed, click 'save' and return to it at a later point.

5

If the application is successfully entered and all criteria met, the school's submission will be reviewed by a member of the Eco-Schools USA team. The review process takes approximately 2-3 weeks. Once approved, you will receive an email and the Green Flag Award badge (2-Time Recipient, 3-Time Recipient or Life Time Recipient) will appear on the school's dashboard.