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October 18, 2016

TO: Superintendents
Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Private School Leads

FROM: Bernard E. Piaia, Jr., Director
Office of School Facilities

SUBJECT: 2017 Green Ribbon Schools Program Announcement

The New Jersey Department of Education is pleased to announce that New Jersey will participate in the 2016-17 federal Green Ribbon Schools Program and invites all school districts, and both public and private schools, to apply for this national recognition.

The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools launched the annual award in 2011 to recognize the highest performing green schools in the nation. This award recognizes exemplary achievement in reducing environmental impacts and costs; improving health and wellness; and providing effective environmental and sustainability education. The award also serves as a clearinghouse of resources that help advance these complementary goals. Visit the [Green Ribbon Schools website](#) for more information.

The recognition award is considered the first comprehensive federal program addressing the environmental impact, health and education of our schools. The award lays out a thoughtful vision for schools, and it raises the profile of green schools and the states whose policies encourage them.

New Jersey is permitted to nominate up to five applicants to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) for consideration. The USDE, in turn, will select the national award winners.

Potential applicants can obtain Green Ribbon Schools information, an application form, and supporting documents by accessing New Jersey Audubon's website for [New Jersey Green Ribbon Schools Program Information](#).

The timeline for submission of materials to the NJ Audubon contact is included in the above link. A letter of intent to participate should be submitted to the New Jersey Audubon by November 16, 2016, and a completed application must be submitted by December 16, 2016.

The winning schools and district will be announced on April 24, 2017, and recognized at a national ceremony in July 2017. The nominated New Jersey applicants will be recognized at a state ceremony in March of 2017, and will be asked to present a summary of their achievements at the ceremony.

Please contact Bernard E. Piaia, Jr., Director, Office of School Facilities, at (609) 984-5351 or Leonard Colner at (609) 943-5926 with any questions on this issue.

KD/BP:

c: Members, State Board of Education
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