



# Award Checklist: Green Flag

Use this handy checklist to help track your school’s progress through the Eco-Schools USA program and confirm that you are meeting criteria to apply 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 (Total 40 points)</b>				
50% of the Eco-Action team is composed of students in addition to teachers, community members and other school staff.	15			Consider connecting with resource professionals from local government, conservation or academic entities.
The Eco-Action Team meets a minimum of eight times a year.	15			Some schools meet more frequently in the beginning and then scale back meetings once their program has become established.
Students take significant responsibility, as appropriate, 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.
Students actively engage other students and take suggestions from the student body.	5			Allow students to determine how they will share information and in what formats.



CRITERIA	POINTS	COMPLETED	NOTES	TIPS
<b>Environmental Audit (Total 50 points)</b>				
The audits for at least three pathway, one of which must be energy, are conducted on a formal and comprehensive basis utilizing the Eco-Schools USA audit forms	20			Include as many members of the school community in the auditing process as possible and be inclusive of the larger community and pathway experts.
Students are involved in conducting the environmental audit and engaging resource specialists in the community.	20			Determine which audit steps are safe for students to complete and which should be completed or facilitated by an adult.
Results of the audit are shared with the whole school and wider community.	5			Go over audits results at an assembly PTA meeting, post on bulletin boards, and/or write an article for the school website or newsletter.
A baseline and post-action audit are conducted and the audits are completed each year.	5			Before completing the audit every year review results from the previous year to establish a benchmark.
<b>Eco-Action Plan (Total 50 points)</b>				
Develop an action plan using the provided blank action plan worksheet, and based on audit results Targets should be quantifiable. Your action plan should <b>must focus on energy</b> and two other pathways.  In addition to energy, list the other two pathways addressed.	20			Two pathways can be the pathways teams focused on when applying for the bronze and silver-level awards. They could also represent work toward two new environmental focus areas or be work addressed prior to joining Eco-Schools USA. In any case, <b>energy must be addressed.</b>



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 social media, PTA and open house events to share progress and accomplishments. Contact your local newspaper(s) and ask them to publicize details about the success of your Eco-Schools USA program. Use the sample press release.
A range of action s are planned to mitigate environmental problems, targets are prioritized and cost-benefit information is provided for each action.	20			Prioritize your actions by dividing them into what is achievable in the short, medium and long term.
<b>Monitor and Evaluate (Total 50 points)</b>				
The Eco-Action team monitors and reviews progress against timeframes and targets outlined in the action plan.	15			Your procedure for monitoring progress should be developed in parallel with the action plan.
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 project that is focused on the <b>three</b> Eco-Schools pathways.	5			You are required to focus on the energy pathway as one of the three environmental focus areas.
Students are engaged in monitoring and evaluation. Data is used in academic classes, where applicable.	5			Encourage students to make computations, develop equations and chart and graph data.



## Monitor and Evaluate (continued)

Metrics data is entered on the award application for the pathway(s) your school is focusing on.	20			You should be able to pull metrics data from the pathway audit forms.
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## Link to Curriculum (Total 50 points)

Environmental issues are integrated into the classroom at <b>all</b> grade levels and <b>across disciplines</b> .	20			You may not be able to integrate across as many disciplines as you'd like, but you should make an effort to integrate across as many as possible to show it is a whole school effort.
Student learning experiences are authentic, place-based and inquiry driven.	15			Eco-Schools USA has several lesson plans and curricula available.
School staff are provide with professional development and training in association with best practices and knowledge and skills for environment-based education.	15			Reach out to organizations in the community, such as a nature center or the parks and recreation department, who can train staff on environmental education.

## Engage and Build Community (Total 30 points)

The school has a bulletin board, display case, website or newsletter which details Eco-Schools USA activities.	10			Have students write blogs, newsletter copy, or website content through their English or journalism class.
The entire school, along with volunteers from the community engage in a number of Eco-Schools activities	5			Consider holding special events or rally to educate people and get them engaged in taking action. Do not be shy about seeking out 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 projects	5			Consider holding an audit part or holding an event to celebrate Earth Day.
Students write about Eco-Schools projects for local papers, magazines and/or digital outlets.	5			Encourage students to participate in Young Reporters for the Environment, <a href="http://www.nwf.org/yre-usa">www.nwf.org/yre-usa</a> .
The school shares its Eco-Schools project with other schools in the U.S. and with the global community through Eco-Schools USA website and other communication tools.	5			Reach out to Eco-Schools staff and let us know if you'd like to connect with an Eco-Schools in another country.

## Eco-Code (Total 30 points)

An Eco-Code is developed that includes input from the whole school, and is agreed upon and adopted and is displayed prominently in the school for all who enter and visit the school.	15			The Eco-Code should demonstrate, in a clear and imaginative way, your school's commitment to improving its environmental performance.
The finished Eco-Code is prominently displayed for all to read as they enter the school and in prominent locations around the school.	10			Design several ways to creatively display the Eco-Code so visitors, staff, volunteers and students see it frequently.
Every other year the Eco-Code is reviewed as part of a review process and in preparation the second Green Flag award.	5			Consider whether it might make sense to add something new to the Eco-Code as the community changes and as the program grows.



## APPLYING FOR A GREEN FLAG AWARD

### Steps

- 1** Check the [Eco-Schools USA map](#) to find out if your school is already registered as an Eco- School. If not, go to our [registration page](#) and sign-up! Complete the registration form and click 'submit'.
- 2** If you previously registered as an Eco-School, login to access your school's profile, <https://www.nwf.org/EcoSchools/Login.aspx>. You will need to enter your email.
- 3** Once on your school's profile page, locate the 'submit new form' section. Using the pull down menu select the Green Flag award level and click 'submit'.
- 4** Fill-out the award application and click 'submit'. If the application is only partially completed you can click 'save' and return to it at a later point.
- 5** Once the Green Flag application materials have been successfully submitted, an Eco-Schools USA staff will assess your application and contact you regarding the status.