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Boston Latin Recognized as Nation's First Public 'Green Flag' School

Once home to Declaration signers, storied school makes sustainability history

Reston, VA (June 9, 2011) – Boston Latin School (<https://www.bls.org/>) was named the nation's first public Green Flag Eco-School (<http://www.nwf.org/Global-Warming/School-Solutions/Eco-Schools-USA.aspx>) and the second overall in a ceremony today, signifying exceptional achievement in 'greening' school grounds, operations and curricula.

The Eco-Schools USA program, which is hosted by National Wildlife Federation, counts nearly 500 schools and some 205,000 students among its participants, but only one other, Georgia's private Savannah Country Day School, has achieved the program's highest honor, the Green Flag. Boston Latin School Youth Climate Action Network (CAN), a student group, directed the effort to achieve the honor.

"The Green Flag is special – and only awarded to those schools who have demonstrated a commitment to environmental sustainability and increasing environmental literacy for its students, faculty, and wider school community," said Elizabeth Soper (<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/Media-Center/Faces-of-NWF/Liz-Soper.aspx>), Associate Director of Eco-Schools USA, on hand for the official flag-raising. "I look forward to seeing your school continue its commitment and hope someday to see every Boston Public School flying an Eco-Schools Green Flag award."

Also in attendance at the event were Jim Hunt, Chief of Environmental Services, City of Boston; Susan Cascino, Recycling Director, Boston Public Works Department; Peter Kelly, President, Boston Latin School Association and Lynne Mooney-Teta, Headmaster of Boston Latin School

The Green Flag award comes just weeks after the fifth annual climate summit at MIT planned and hosted by students in the Boston Latin School Youth CAN, and represents only the latest in a long line of environmental honors bestowed upon the celebrated school, which counts five signers of the Declaration of Independence among its former matriculants.

Boston Latin students began the year by planting a school garden, holding school-wide assemblies on sustainability and starting a 'farm to school' program in the cafeteria to bring local farm fresh food into cafeteria lunches each week. Organizers also launched a

successful zero-sort recycling pilot that reduced school waste by 50% and prompted plans to implement similar programs in all other Boston Public Schools.

The physical structure of the school is no less dynamic, featuring rooftop solar panels and a 350-plant native garden light court. A ‘green roof’ has been proposed as well.

Many schools have implemented the Eco-Schools USA program, some earning Bronze- and Silver-level awards for their progress (Massachusetts alone boasts 14 Eco-Schools). The Green Flag (<http://www.nwf.org/Global-Warming/School-Solutions/Eco-Schools-USA/Become-an-Eco-School/Awards/Green-Flag-Award-Criteria.aspx>) requires a rigorous combination of environmental audits, curriculum reinvention and internal and external monitoring.

The Eco-Schools (<http://www.eco-schools.org/>) program is an international network of 38,000 K-12 schools in 51 countries, started in 1994 by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) with support by the European Commission. It was named by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) as a model initiative for Education for Sustainable Development in 2003. NWF was named the stateside host in 2008, thus formally launching Eco-Schools USA (<http://www.nwf.org/Global-Warming/School-Solutions/Eco-Schools-USA.aspx>).

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