



PROJECT GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

HANDS-ON SCHOOL- OR COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECT: The Ocean Guardian School program funds watershed and/or ocean stewardship projects. Schools propose hands-on projects that make a difference in the health and protection of their local watersheds and/or ocean. Below is a list of the five general pathways and examples of projects that are commonly funded by the Ocean Guardian School program. **A proposed project must have a connection to the health of the watershed and/or ocean.** If your project idea does not relate to this list, but meets the goals of the program, please contact the program director to discuss your idea before applying. For additional examples of past and presently funded Ocean Guardian School projects, please visit http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/ocean_guardian/examples.html .

Remember to keep the proposal focused on a single project.

- **Restoration** - watershed/wetland restoration, fish habitat creation, shoreline/bank stabilization
- **REFUSE/Reduce/Reuse/Recycle/Rot **** - school-wide recycling/composting programs, redesign and implementation of school-based wastewater system, school-wide green purchasing program, zero waste lunch programs
- **Marine Debris** - reducing single-use plastics in school, promoting reusable bags in local community/stores
- **Schoolyard Habitats/Gardens** - creating or improving school gardens/schoolyard habitats with an **emphasis** on native plants, low water use, rain catchment systems, etc. while *clearly connecting these activities to the health and preservation of the local watershed and/or the ocean*
- **Energy & Ocean Health** - school energy audits/carbon footprint calculations resulting in energy saving plans (i.e., “power down” campaign, “no idling” campaign, bike to school days, light bulb/computer energy saving plans, etc.), clean energy alternatives such as wind/solar projects, water savings projects, tree planting projects

**** IMPORTANT update for California proposals in the 5R PATHWAY:**

To those California schools that are proposing a school-based waste reduction project focusing on single-use plastic items, please note the following: An additional **\$500** (for a total of \$4,500) may be requested for a proposed project that includes goals to reduce single use plastic items **above and beyond** the cafeteria/classroom activities. The proposal must communicate plans to reduce single use plastic items in at least 2 or more of the following school-based areas: PTA/parent sponsored meetings, class parties, school sporting practices and/or events, staff meetings/staff rooms, etc.



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OCEAN CONNECTION: Your proposed project must make a connection to the health and preservation of your local watershed, ocean and special ocean areas like national marine sanctuaries. During your project period, you are required to incorporate the following into your project activities and/or supplemental lessons:

- **National Marine Sanctuaries:** As a participant in the Ocean Guardian School grant program, you are required to educate your students about the national marine sanctuary system including at least one of the sanctuaries, preferably the one that is closest to your school and/or connected to your grant project. This topic should be included in your “Project Introduction” presentation (see below). Upon receipt of your grant award, you will receive some educational material that you may use to help introduce this information to your school community. Additional information can also be found online at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov> .
- **Watershed Education:** In addition to national marine sanctuaries, all projects are expected to include learning opportunities around watershed identification. This topic should also be incorporated into the “Project Introduction” presentation (see below). By the end of the year, students should be able to identify in what watershed their school is located as well as some of the surrounding watersheds. Table-top, interactive watershed models will be available on loan to all grant recipients during their project period to use as a classroom teaching tool.

OUTREACH

- **Outreach to School Community:**

Project Introduction Presentation - Once your project has been funded, you will be required to formally present/communicate your Ocean Guardian project to your school community. You will be asked to let the Ocean Guardian School office know the date of your Project Introduction presentation which should be scheduled **within the first eight weeks of the school year**. There is no mandated format for this initial outreach. Please select the best means for your school to let your students, teachers, staff and even parents know what your project entails and who will be participating. Recommended presentation formats include:

- School-wide assembly
- Individual classroom presentations given by teachers and/or students
- Series of morning announcements
- Series of email/newsletter articles.



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Please include the following in your Project Introduction to your school-wide audience:

- Brief summary of your school's funded project description, goals, and objectives;
- How your project is connected to your local watershed/ocean and how it will contribute to the protection and/or conservation of the local watersheds/ocean. What does it mean to be an Ocean Guardian School?
- Introductory information about the National Marine Sanctuary System, watersheds and land-ocean connection.

Funded schools will have access to an introductory PowerPoint presentation and an introductory short video that covers national marine sanctuaries, watersheds and marine debris which they may use as needed for their project introductory presentation.

The Project Introduction Presentation is a grant program requirement and is included in the evaluation process for final Ocean Guardian recognition. You will be asked about your Project Introduction in the Final Report Survey at the end of the school year.

Project Wrap-up - At the end of the school year, students who have been involved with the Ocean Guardian project will present some aspect of the project to the entire student body (i.e., their project experiences, lessons learned, best practices, community outreach, future plans, etc.). Presentations can take the form of formal presentations, videos, readings, art work, songs, plays, poems, etc.

The Project Wrap-up is a grant program requirement and is included in the evaluation process for final Ocean Guardian recognition. You will be asked about your Project Wrap-up in the Final Report Survey at the end of the school year.

- **Outreach to Larger Community:**

Your Ocean Guardian School project must include some element of community outreach led by a group of students who are involved in the project. Please do not limit your outreach to postings on your school website.

Examples of **Community Outreach** include:

- STUDENT presentations to Parent-Teachers Association, School Board, City Council, other schools
- STUDENT presentations/participation in local community festivals/fairs/events
- STUDENT written letters to local papers, political representatives, business leaders, community organizations, etc.
- STUDENT created educational information distributed to community neighborhoods, businesses, etc

Project Outreach is a grant program requirement and is included in the evaluation process for final Ocean Guardian recognition. You will be asked about your Project Outreach in the Final Report Survey at the end of the school year.



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Please note: The Ocean Guardian School program does not typically fund projects that are focused only on web page development including social networking related web pages unless the applicant provides documentation as to how the development of the web page is an integral and necessary component of the project.

FINAL REPORT SURVEY: A final project report is *required* at the end of your project period. Instructions on how to complete this online Final Report Survey will be sent out towards the end of the school year.

MEASURABLE DATA: Your quantitative data is another program requirement. Your data helps to tell not only your unique story, but together with all the other schools, your data helps to communicate the impact of the Ocean Guardian School program. The Ocean Guardian School program office will share your data with our NOAA colleagues who in turn, work to shape federal priorities and programs around ocean stewardship.

Your Ocean Guardian School project application must include information about the quantitative data you plant to collect during your project period. You will be asked for your measurable data in the Final Report Survey. It is important to keep track of your measurable data as your project unfolds.

Below are examples of measurable data. This is not a complete list.

RESTORATION ACTIVITIES	OUTREACH ACTIVITIES
# of trees planted (designate native, fruit, etc.)	# of students reached outside your school
# of native perennials/annuals/grasses planted	# of teachers reached outside your school
# of rain barrels installed	# of parents reached within and/or outside your school community
Sq. ft. of non-native invasive plants removed	# of community members reached
Sq. ft. of turf removed	# of storm drains stenciled
Linear ft. of bank stabilization	# of publications produced
# of wildlife habitat structures installed	# of articles, blogs, etc. uploaded to websites
REDUCE/REUSE/RECYCLE/ROT ACTIVITIES	# of presentations/workshops
# of recycling bins installed	# of videos/films/power points produced
# of composting bins installed	# of media hits (e.g., newspaper articles, TV and radio stories, etc.)
Pounds of trash/debris removed from school and/or community sites	ENERGY & OCEAN HEALTH
# of reusable bottles distributed	# of trees planted
# of reusable bags distributed	# of LED light bulbs installed
# of single use plastic bottles NOT used due to reusable bottles used at water filtration system	# of Energy Smart power strips installed
Gallons of water reclaimed from use of water catchment system	Total savings of carbon emissions
WATER QUALITY MONITORING	Increase in days of bike-to-school campaign
# of sites sampled	
# of times samples were taken and tested	
# of times samples read other than normal readings	



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BUDGET

- **Field Trips:** The Ocean Guardian School grant will fund field trips. *Field trip costs are limited to 30% of the total project budget.* Field trips are intended to supplement the project activities and learning opportunities. Field trip expenses may include entrance fees and transportation.
- **Stipends:** The Ocean Guardian School grant will fund stipends for teachers, staff, parents, and/or community partners. *Total stipend amounts are limited to 30% of the total project budget.* Stipends may also include payment for substitute teachers that are needed during project activities.

BECOMING AN OCEAN GUARDIAN SCHOOL

You are not officially recognized as an Ocean Guardian School until after your project period has ended and you have met all grant requirements.

- **Recognition Rubric:** The Recognition Rubric is the basis for determining final Ocean Guardian School status and awarding the official Ocean Guardian School banner. To help you track your progress towards becoming an Ocean Guardian School, you will receive an electronic copy of the Recognition Rubric at the start of your project year. We will be using this rubric to score how well your school meets the grant requirements.

At the end of your project period, after you have submitted the online Final Report Survey, your project will be evaluated to determine if your school has successfully fulfilled the grant requirements for official recognition by NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries as an Ocean Guardian School.

Your school will be officially recognized as an Ocean Guardian School only when the required number of criteria points has been earned on the Ocean Guardian Recognition Rubric. This includes receipt of your final report with final budget information and measurable data. A score of 75 or higher is needed to receive official Ocean Guardian recognition and the Ocean Guardian banner. We encourage you to refer to the Rubric throughout the year.

Criteria items included in the Recognition Rubric are:

Examples of criteria items included in the Recognition Rubric	
Goals and Outcomes	Project Outreach Activities
Measureable Data	Final Report Survey
Project Introduction	Communications
Project Wrap-up	



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OCEAN LITERACY PRINCIPLES

In accordance with the National Science Education Standards, NOAA and many partners have developed seven Ocean Literacy Principles and supporting Fundamental Concepts for grades K-12. Although the Ocean Literacy Principles are not a required component of the Ocean Guardian School grant, they can be very useful during your Ocean Guardian School project and activities. We strongly suggest that you review the tables below and the Ocean Literacy Principles website, <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy.html>.

Ocean Literacy Principles

1. The Earth has one big ocean with many features.
2. The ocean and life in the ocean shape the features of the Earth.
3. The ocean is a major influence on weather and climate.
4. The ocean makes Earth habitable.
5. The ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems.
6. The ocean and humans are inextricably interconnected.
7. The ocean is largely unexplored.

Ocean Literacy is “an understanding of the ocean’s influence on you and your influence on the ocean.”

An ocean-literate person:

- understands the Essential Principles and Fundamental Concepts about the functioning of the ocean;
- can communicate about the ocean in a meaningful way; and
- is able to make informed and responsible decisions regarding the ocean and its resources.

CLIMATE LITERACY PRINCIPLES

With the growing awareness of how the ocean’s health is related to climate change and energy use, it is more important than ever for students to become climate and energy literate as they are guided by the Climate Literacy Principles in their Ocean Guardian School efforts. In addition to reviewing [A Climate Literacy: The Essential Principles of Climate Sciences](#), you will find a more complete list of educational resources related to climate change and energy education at [Energy and Ocean Health](#).