



CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

**TOM TORLAKSON**  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

September 8, 2016

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, and Principals:

**CALIFORNIA GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS RECOGNITION PROGRAM  
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS 2016-17**

The California Department of Education (CDE) is pleased to announce application availability for the fourth cycle of our California Green Ribbon Schools (CA-GRS) recognition program. The purpose of this program is to honor excellence in whole-school sustainability while spotlighting replicable best practices.

Green and sustainable schools are efficient, innovative, resourceful, and inspiring. They conserve and protect our natural resources, prioritize health and wellness, and use sustainability and the environment as the context for interdisciplinary learning. Schools like these are flourishing across our state while families, schools, and communities are reaping the benefits, which include lower utility consumption and costs, reduced student illness and absenteeism, and improved academic outcomes—especially in the STEM fields, as students build their environmental literacy.

Schools are natural leaders and centers of community, helping to set the direction for our entire state as incubators for young, creative minds. I invite you to share your “Journey to Green” by applying to CA-GRS this year.

Eligible award recipients include school districts, county offices of education, K-12 public and private schools, and early education centers. Interested parties may request an electronic application and review program information on our Web page: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/sf/greenribbonprog.asp>. While CA-GRS awards are not limited in number, five CA-GRS honorees will receive my nomination for additional recognition by the Secretary of Education as U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools and District Sustainability Award winners.

If you have any questions regarding this subject, please contact Lesley Taylor, Field Representative in the School Facilities and Transportation Services Division, by phone at 916-322-0310 or by e-mail at [greenribbonschools@cde.ca.gov](mailto:greenribbonschools@cde.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Torlakson".

Tom Torlakson

TT:lt  
2016-06579