



## Pearl School Award Program Information & Resources for 2023-2024

The Pearl School Award is a recognition for schools teaching and doing environmentally relevant projects and programs. Designed to honor those that go beyond the standard curriculum, this recognition highlights the outstanding efforts made by schools in Virginia Beach and beyond. Teachers throughout Virginia Beach and beyond are some of the most effective spokespeople for water stewardship. Our teachers do an exceptional job helping students understand watershed concepts and developing an ethic of environmental responsibility and stewardship.

### How the Pearl School Program Works

The goal of the Pearl School Award Program is to encourage, support and recognize the efforts of schools working with Virginia Beach students. Through the Pearl School Award Program, schools will earn points toward the Award by carrying out educational lessons and service projects in their schools including activities recognized by LRNow (Lynnhaven River NOW) as outlined in this brochure. These lessons and projects will address environmental concepts, while encouraging students to take an active role in the environmental challenges we face today and in the coming years. The purpose of this program is to foster good stewards through sustainability and environmental education. **This is not a competition, and schools do not compete.**

To earn a Pearl School Award, the initial year and in subsequent years, a school must complete projects that add up to its level's required number of points. The lessons and projects must be documented, listing the teacher, and project points. **Having multiple grade levels and teachers involved in these lessons and projects is strongly encouraged. This gives the entire school "ownership" of this award.**

POINT REQUIREMENTS		
ELEMENTARY & PRESCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS
<b>First Year - 100 points</b> <i>50 points in subsequent years</i>	<b>First Year - 150 points</b> <i>75 points in subsequent years</i>	<b>First Year - 150 points</b> <i>75 points in subsequent years</i>

**NOTE:** Schools that achieve their initial award must apply within the next two years to be eligible for "subsequent year" scoring. *Schools waiting longer than two years to submit their next application must meet the first year's criteria to receive their award.*

**Award applications MUST be received by the end of day Sunday, May 5, 2024,** to be eligible for the 2023-2024 award.

Schools, teams, and teachers are urged to review the [online application](#) at the beginning of the school year. Ideas for programs or projects not on the list should be designed and submitted in advance for approval.

Please note that a large, completed project will receive maximum credit in its completion year and can be counted at half value in subsequent years if the project continues to be maintained, used in lessons, and is documented and explained on the application. Limits may apply to some programs.

Schools earning Pearl School status for the first time will be awarded a large attractive banner for hanging in the school's lobby. The initial year that the school earns the award will be on the banner. Each additional year the school earns their award, a new set of dates will be sent to the school to be added to the banner.



LRNow will work to present the initial year's banner at a school event, meeting, etc. New awardees should consider this date as you fill out your Pearl School application. Advanced planning for this presentation helps ensure students who have worked to achieve this award can enjoy the recognition of their achievement. Subsequent years' award materials will be mailed to the school unless other arrangements are made.

The LRNow Pearl School Award Program provides a school's award banner at no cost to the school when the first award is achieved. However, if banners are lost or misplaced between award years, the school is responsible for the cost of replacing the banner and replacement year(s) stickers.

## Award Eligibility for 2023-2024 School Year:

Applications are due by the end of day Sunday, **May 5, 2024**. Applications must be complete and received by the deadline for consideration. All lessons and projects should be completed between June 1, 2023, and May 5, 2024, are eligible for this award.

**Email:** [education@LRNow.org](mailto:education@LRNow.org)

**Phone:** (757) 962-5398

**Mailing Address:** LRNow, Pearl School Award Program, 3712 Holland Road, VB, VA 23452

If you have problems with your submission, please contact us immediately. Schools will be notified when their application is received. Do not assume your application has been received if you have not received an acknowledgement from us. **Always keep a detailed copy of your application.**

# PROJECT CATEGORIES & RESOURCES

Below are project categories, explanations, and resources to help you plan and execute projects in each category. Please see the Pearl School Award Application for the FULL list of projects.

## Individual Study Projects: 3 Points Each

These are actions that students have completed either as part of a team or individually. They can be projects completed through a club/organization outside of school (4-H, scouts, etc.), in school or with their family. This list reflects only a few ways students can participate. Other activities may satisfy points in this category.

### Competitions in which students can participate:

- Tidewater Science & Engineering Fair <http://www.tidewatersciencecongress.org>
- Blue Crab Bowl <https://masweb.vims.edu/bcb/>
- Envirothon <https://www.envirothon.org/the-competition/current-competition>
- Kid Wind Challenge <https://www.kidwind.org/challenge>

**Pearl Home Block Captain** - To be a PH Block Captain, a student must sign up at least 6 of their neighbors/friends to be Pearl Homes. They will receive a certificate and have their name listed in our Annual Report. Contact Terri Gorman, our Pearl Homes Coordinator, at [Terri@LRNow.org](mailto:Terri@LRNow.org) for more information.

### Help with Social Media Campaigns-

- Take a picture of your dog(s) and write about the importance of Scoop the Poop.
- Celebrate your favorite tree through written words, pictures, drawings, etc.
- Take pictures of you and/or your students participating in a LRNow event or cleanup.
- Photograph or draw a waterway in Virginia Beach and tell us why clean water is important to you.
- Take a picture of yourself or family member using a plastic alternative, like reusable bag, reusable water bottle, or skipping a straw or produce bag at local restaurant or grocery store.

Contact Dominique Denson, our Communications Coordinator, at [Dominique@LRNow.org](mailto:Dominique@LRNow.org) for more information and to sign up.

## Group I Projects: 5 Points Each

Group I Projects give schools credit for one-time interactions or basic environmental projects, such as school-dictated recycling efforts. Group I Projects have no limit, except for individual attendance of workshops or lectures.

- **Storm Drain Marking & Adoption Programs:** Adopt-a-drain or educate your neighborhood about their watershed through storm drain marking and/or adopting a storm drain. These programs are run through the City of Virginia Beach Public Works Department <https://drains.vbgov.com>.
- **Rain Barrels:** You can purchase rain barrels through LRNow. Check with the Virginia Beach Farmers Market, the Virginia Beach Master Naturalists, and askHRGreen.org for rain barrel workshop information if you want to build your own.

- **Do Not use balloons** in your schools for celebrations and activities. Help educate your students and coworkers on the detrimental effects of balloons. Check out these websites for other ideas on how to memorialize or celebrate events without balloons:  
<https://balloonsblow.org/> <https://joyfulsendoff.org>  
<https://greenecofriend.co.uk/eco-friendly-alternatives-to-balloons/>  
[www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/balloons](http://www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/balloons)
- **LRNow Bucket Programs:** You can check out an LRNow Learning Bucket to take to a local park, or your schoolyard to learn about your local watershed. Different topics are available. See LRNow website for more details.
- **Easy Group 1 Pearl School Points:**
  - Host a speaker (in person or virtually) on an environmental topic.
  - Display your [Watershed Map](#).
  - Reuse Paper and Trash for Art or classroom projects.
  - School-wide recycling programs.
  - Avoid using Balloons for classroom or school-wide events.
  - Document how stormwater travels from your property to the nearest waterway. Label pervious and impervious surfaces.
  - Help promote LRNow programs through the school newsletter or social media.

## Group II Projects: 10 Points Each

Group II Projects give schools credit for grade level-wide or school-wide interactions and recurring environmental projects, such as regularly scheduled schoolyard trash clean-ups and recycling efforts.

- Recycling Projects outside of curbside recycling:  
<https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/brigades>  
<http://www.earth911.com/recycling-center-search-guides/>  
<https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/brigades/kroger>
- Participate in Green Apple Day of Service. Information at <http://www.mygreenapple.org/>
- Receive the Green Ribbon School Award, Virginia Naturally Award or another environmental award. Information at:  
<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/school-operations-support-services/facility-construction-maintenance/virginia-green-ribbon-schools>
- Citizen Science/Community Science Projects:  
<https://scistarter.com/citizenscience.html>  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/idea/citizen-science-projects/>  
<https://citynaturechallenge.org/>  
[www.monitorwater.org](http://www.monitorwater.org)
- **Easy Group II Projects:**
  - Run a Pearl Home Campaign (contact [Terri@LRNow.org](mailto:Terri@LRNow.org) for more information.)
  - Pick up trash in and around the school on a regular basis.
  - Participate in the City Nature Challenge or other citizen science project.
  - Run a Green Club.
  - Add plants to existing gardens.

### Group III Projects: 20 Points Each

Group III projects give schools credit for school- or community-wide programs and projects that have a sustaining impact on the school population and beyond.

- Adopt a roadway or waterway through the City of Virginia Beach's Adopt-a-Space Program.
- <https://parks.virginiabeach.gov/outdoors/caring-for-our-parks/adopt-a-programs>
- Oyster Gardening - contact: Oyster Reef Keepers [oysterreefkeeper@yahoo.com](mailto:oysterreefkeeper@yahoo.com)
- Ocean Friendly Garden Info Surfrider Foundation <https://www.surfrider.org/programs/ocean-friendly-gardens>
- Spat Catcher Program <https://www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/spat-collector-program/>
- Add information about your Pearl School Award on your social media pages and/or webpage and link it to our social media page or website.
- Easy Group III Projects:
  - Sponsor a special event for Earth Day
  - Talk about your Pearl School Award progress on your social media page and/or website and link it to LRNow's social media page.

*Restoring Virginia Beach Waterways*