

Leading the Effort to “Green” Maryland’s Public Schools

Home to the town of Columbia, a planned community built around the central idea of enhancing its residents’ lives and eliminating socio-economic barriers, Howard County, Maryland has a reputation for change that dates back to the 1960s. Today, Howard County continues its long tradition of innovation through a variety of programs aimed at achieving environmental sustainability among its businesses, residents and schools.

On June 25, 2009, the Howard County Public School System’s Office of Custodial Services demonstrated its commitment to the environment and the health of its K-12 students countywide by completing the Building Wellness Institute’s Green Seal™ GS-42 compliant Building Wellness Certification Training program. On that day, Howard County became the first K-12 school system in the state of Maryland to complete a green cleaning certification training program.

As demonstrated through green cleaning best practices and the renovation of existing schools to meet the LEED standard, Howard County understands the long-term benefits of going green. Howard County also understands that procuring green cleaning products for its schools, as mandated by Maryland House Bill 1363, is a great start to protecting the health of its students, but that a sustainable green cleaning program also requires best practices and procedures designed to ensure proper cleaning and document effectiveness. “We believe that the GS-42 accredited training provided by Building Wellness Institute will help us streamline our processes and clean more efficiently,” said Claus. “We now have a solid foundation from which to measure our own success.”

“We’ve now raised the bar by protecting the health of our students and faculty, and by providing our staff with the knowledge and hands-on skills they need to become leaders in environmental wellness.”

Olivia Claus, Manager,
Office of Custodial Services
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