



## Lynnhaven River NOW Pearl School Award Program Information & Resources for 2024-2025

The *Pearl School Award Program* encourages and supports teachers within their schools who work to provide their students with relevant and timely environmental lessons. Through the program, schools can earn points toward the Pearl School Award by carrying out environmental education and service projects in and around their schools. These projects should focus on environmental concepts, such as understanding watersheds with their unique characteristics and problems, water quality and ecosystems functions. Projects and lessons should encourage and engage students to take an active role in tackling the challenges that their school, local and regional communities face.

Public and private school teachers throughout the City of Virginia Beach (and beyond) are some of the most effective spokespeople in our community for water stewardship. Not only do they help students understand watershed concepts, but also guide them to develop an ethic of environmental responsibility and stewardship.



### How the Pearl School Award Program Works

The *Pearl School Award* recognizes schools that provide their students with a variety of environmental activities, *exceeding* the requirements of their curriculum, and including activities recognized by the program as outlined in this brochure. The purpose of this program is to foster good environmental stewards through excellence in environmental sustainability education. This is **not** a competition during which schools compete against each other.

To earn a Pearl School Award, a school must complete projects that add up to or exceed the required number of points for the school's category. These projects must be documented, listing the teacher, and project points. Photos should be submitted along with the application (no more than 5 please.)

**Having multiple grade levels and teachers involved in these projects is strongly encouraged. This gives the entire school "ownership" of this award and in some cases, additional points are awarded.**

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 achieving an award initially must then apply within the next two years to be eligible for the *subsequent year scoring* requirements. Schools waiting longer than two years must meet the first year's criteria again to receive the next award.

Award applications **MUST be submitted by 5pm Monday, May 5, 2025** to be eligible for the 2024-2025 award. You may edit your application at any time up until the submission date.

Schools, teams, and teachers are urged to review the on-line application <https://www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/pearl-school-award/> for ideas and point assignments. Ideas for programs and projects not on the list may be designed and submitted in advance for approval.

Please note that a large project completed and receiving maximum credit in its completion year can be counted at half value in subsequent years if the project continues to be maintained, used in a learning capacity, and is documented and explained on the application. Limits may apply on some programs. \*See application form for specific details.

Schools earning the Pearl School status for the first time will be awarded with a large attractive banner to hang in the lobby of the school, as pictured on the front cover of this flyer. The initial year that the school earns the award will appear 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.

Lynnhaven River NOW will work to the best of our ability to present the initial year's banner at a school event, meeting or on the school's televised announcements. Please think about this date as you fill out your Pearl School application. Advanced planning for this initial presentation helps to ensure that the students who have worked to achieve this award are able to enjoy the recognition of this achievement. Subsequent years' award materials will be mailed to the school unless other arrangements are required.

Below are project categories and explanation or resources to help you plan and execute projects in that category. Please see the Application for the FULL listing of projects.

To learn more about our Pearl School program, please call us at 757-962-5398 or email [Education@LRNow.org](mailto:Education@LRNow.org).

## **PROJECT CATEGORIES/RESOURCES**

For all the resources, please check the websites to see if the competition, event or opportunity has been changed or canceled.

### **Individual Study Projects: 3 Points Each**

*These are projects 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.*

### **Competitions students can take part in:**

- Tidewater Science & Engineering Fair [www.tidewatersciencecongress.org](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 Pearl Homes 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, Pearl Homes Coordinator [Terri@LRNow.org](mailto:Terri@LRNow.org) for more information and to sign up.

### **Help with Social Media Campaigns-**

- Take pictures of your dogs and write something about how important it is to Scoop the Poop.
- Celebrate your favorite tree through written words, pictures, drawings, etc.

- Download Wally the Water Drop from the website and take him to your favorite neighborhood park. Take a picture and send it to us, along with Wally's location.

Contact Dominique Denson, LRNow 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 the category 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. For more information visit, [Adopt-a-Drain](#).
- **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://joyfulexcess.org/>

<https://greenecofriend.co.uk/eco-friendly-alternatives-to-balloons/>

### **Group II Projects: 10 Points Each**

Group II Projects give schools credit for grade level 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: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/environmental\\_literacy/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/environmental_literacy/index.shtml)

- Citizen Science/Community Science Projects:  
<https://scistarter.com/citizenscience.html>  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/idea/citizen-science-projects/>  
<https://citynaturechallenge.org/>

### **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.  
[www.vbgov.com/government/departments/parks-recreation/parks-trails/caring-for-our-parks/Pages/adopt-a-programs.aspx](http://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/parks-recreation/parks-trails/caring-for-our-parks/Pages/adopt-a-programs.aspx)
- Oyster Gardening - contact: Oyster Reef Keepers [laurie@oysterreefkeeper.org](mailto:laurie@oysterreefkeeper.org)
- LRNow SOS (Save Oyster Shell) Program -  
<http://www.lynnhavenrivernow.org/saving-oyster-shells>
- Ocean Friendly Garden Info Surfrider Foundation –  
<https://www.surfrider.org/programs/ocean-friendly-gardens>

### **Award Eligibility for 2024-2025 School Year-**

Applications are due by **5 pm on Monday, May 5, 2025**

All projects completed between June 1, 2024 and May 1, 2025 are eligible for this award. Applications are done on Google Forms and can be scanned, emailed, mailed, or hand delivered to the address below.

Applications must be complete and received by the deadline for consideration.

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

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

**Mailing Address:** Pearl School Programs 3712 Holland Road, VA Beach, VA 23452

Any problems with the submission, please contact us right away. 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.