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Somerville Elementary School awarded a sustainability grant

Ridgewood, NJ – Somerville Elementary School was awarded a \$2,000 Sustainable Jersey capacity-building grant funded by the PSEG Foundation. Five \$10,000 grants and twenty-five \$2,000 grants were awarded to elementary through high-school public schools and school districts across the state.

The grants fund on-the-ground, sustainability and capacity building projects such as sustainable food production programs, waste reduction and recycling initiatives, health and wellness programs, outdoor classrooms and more.

“Somerville Elementary is thrilled to be awarded the Sustainable Jersey grant. This demonstrates a strong commitment from PSE&G and Somerville School toward sustainability and the environment,” said Joanna Hanrahan of the Somerville Green Team. “As part of a schoolwide project, the Green Fair in 2021 will be the culmination of a yearlong focus on the environmental importance of trees and the critically important role trees have in mitigating the adverse effects of climate change and industrial air pollution.”

“We’re proud to be able to support these important projects and look forward to hearing more from each grantee about how they make a difference in schools across New Jersey,” said Randall Solomon, executive director for Sustainable Jersey. He extended his congratulations to all of the schools and school districts that received grants. “These grants will add momentum to solving our sustainability challenges while helping to ensure our future wellbeing,” Solomon added.

The PSEG Foundation has contributed \$2.2 million dollars in funding to the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program for municipalities and schools. “The PSEG Foundation is committed to helping build sustainable and thriving communities by empowering and investing in the people, environment and infrastructure of the communities we serve, embodying our mission to help build better places to live and work,” said Rick Thigpen, senior vice president of Corporate Citizenship at PSEG and chairman of the PSEG Foundation. “Supporting Sustainable Jersey and local schools and school districts as they build sustainability programs puts resources where they’re needed to positively impact the environment and local communities, having a lasting impact on neighborhoods throughout New Jersey.”

Proposals were evaluated by an independent Blue-Ribbon Selection Committee. The Sustainable Jersey for Schools grants are intended to help school districts and schools make progress toward a sustainable future in general, and specifically toward Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification. Currently 351 districts and 965 schools have registered to work toward Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification.

The theme for Somerville’s Green Fair in April 2021 will be trees. Various science experiments, nature trails, technology, tree planting and games will demonstrate the importance of trees in the community and globally to



combat climate change. An arborist will open the fair to talk to students about the benefits of trees and different species. The grant will also be applied to improve Somerville's outdoor garden with hoop houses to extend the growing season by an additional four months. Both projects will strengthen the children's relationship with their environment and encourage more time outside.

About Sustainable Jersey for Schools

Sustainable Jersey for Schools is a certification program for public schools in New Jersey. It was launched by Sustainable Jersey, an organization that provides tools, training and financial incentives to support and reward municipalities and schools as they pursue sustainability programs. To date, 351 school districts and 965 schools are participating in the program. Sustainable Jersey for Schools has awarded over \$2 million in grants to schools and school districts.

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