



**ROMEO  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOLS**

## **GOOD NEWS ACROSS 'R' DISTRICT**

May 7, 2024



*RHS Environment Club members, back row from left: Filip Vignjevik, Hannah Liedke, Ava Webler, Hadley Trudeau, Bianca Testagrossa, Cora Adamczak and Addison Rienas; front row: Aurelia Woodcock, Brooklynn Meissner, Reese Pfannes and Ella Kumfer.*

## **Romeo High School named a Green School**

Romeo High School's Environment Club was invited to the Tri-County Green Schools celebration event at the Detroit Zoo on April 23 in recognition of its newly earned status.

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RHS SERVE Coordinator Pam Gedert started the club during the 2019-20 school year. Since then, many students have joined, but this year's group was especially motivated and excited, she said.

While Romeo High School had been designated as a Green School in the past, plans to get this designation reinstated fell by the wayside during COVID. This year's club members put the wheels in motion, beginning with a rigorous application process.

Michigan Green Schools certifies schools for various levels of stewardship. In the application, the students earned points by documenting activities in the four categories of Reduce/Reuse/Recycle, Energy, Environmental Protection, and Miscellaneous Environmental Activities. Recognition levels are based upon points and include Green School - 10 total activities; Emerald School - 15 total activities; and Evergreen School – 20 total activities. For each designation, a minimum of two activities must take place in each category.

Recycling was a major component of RHS's Environment Club. The students recycle paper, printer cartridges, clothing and textiles. Last year they wrote a grant to the Four County Community Foundation for new recycling bins. The addition of a Thrift Store this fall also contributed to their overall score.



To earn points toward the Energy category, students documented how classroom lights automatically turn off. They also sent a survey to their peers with questions aimed at increasing awareness, such as whether they turn off the water when they brush their teeth or turn off lights when they leave a room.

The students also participated in A.D.O.P.T.S., a symbolic animal adoption to support the conservation of animals at the Detroit Zoo as well as endangered

species around the world. The club's support of Gus, a North American river otter, will help provide the best in animal and veterinary care for the animals at the zoo.

Another initiative was participating in the Macomb County Road Commission's Adopt a Road program. The RHS Environment Club adopted a mile on Jewell Road between 28 and 29 Mile. In the fall and spring, the students are responsible for picking up trash along the roadside.

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RHS qualified for Green Status this year, meeting the Environment Club members' goal of reinstating the school's designation, but leaving room for improvement next year.

While this marks a major milestone, Mrs. Gedert said the students want to achieve a higher status next year.

Meanwhile they got to enjoy the fruits of their labor when they participated in the tri-county recognition event, which included free entry into the Detroit Zoo.

"In high school they don't get field trips purely for fun," Mrs. Gedert pointed out. "They had to put work in to earn it, but they got a day when they could explore a little bit, hang out with their friends, shop at the gift shop. I feel like those are the memories the kids will carry with them well past high school."

*Pictured above, from left, are Ava Webler, Brooklynn Meissner, Bianca Testagrossa and Environment Club adviser Pam Gedert.*

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