

# Transforming the Way We Think About Schools

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For the last four years I have been able to see the green schools movement grow out of the communities USGBC represents. The Green Schools Committee volunteers and the chapter staff that support them are working around the clock, every day of the year to improve learning environments in their communities. The people I have the privilege of working with over email, phone and webcast are making real change happen at the local, state and national level. And being at USGBC's mid-year meeting this past week, I was reminded that the people I get to work with are just one part of the impact our "USGBC family" continues to have.

I've been in this family for a little over four years now, and I've seen many of the members doing great things. Each of our events have marked a turning point for the green building movement, and you all were there with us. You are the developers, the early adopters, the advocates and champions.

We applaud you and thank you...but we're not done with you.

We are calling on our community once again to contribute your support, your expertise and your insistence that buildings can be better to a new challenge. On September 29, the Green Apple Day of Service will show the world that we are going to continue to shake up the way people think about the places they and their children learn.

More than 200 communities around the world have already committed to spend one day – just one day – to transform the way they think about schools:

- In Miami, the [South Florida Chapter](#) will lead a school garden project at an elementary school.
- In Ethiopia, an NGO will introduce composting programs to local schools.
- In London Ohio, a public middle school will celebrate a LEED Platinum plaque ceremony.
- In Shanghai, a design firm will host a discussion about sustainable school design.
- In Seattle, [the Mariners](#) will plant trees at a local school.
- In Romania, a community will celebrate the opening of a new green library.
- In Staten Island, New York, they'll integrate the arts into energy conservation efforts.
- Throughout the southeast one company – [TLC Engineering](#) – has committed to projects in nine different cities – on one day.

We can do incredible things on September 29, but not without your help. Many of you have already committed to organizing a project on Green Apple Day of Service. More than 200 communities have put themselves on the map at [mygreenapple.org](#), telling us and the world that where we learn really does matter, and that on one day, they're going to do something about it.

Who of you will make a commitment today to transform learning environments in your own back yard?

Once you've got your project on the map – and for those of you here tonight who already have – there's another way for you to show your support for better learning environments.

Pick up a green apple – they're easy to find...you can even use a fake one. Take it to a place where you learn and take a picture. Upload that picture to [mygreenapple.org/welearnhere](#). You can start today!

By collecting photos of real schools, for better or worse, we can show the world what a healthy, high-performing school looks like, or remind them of the work we still need to do. Both are equally important. By sharing your photo with us, you're taking meaningful action to show that you support healthy, high performing and sustainable schools. You're showing us where you or your child learns. And you're demonstrating that [where we learn matters](#).

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