



### School Registration Requirements

- Each school must submit a registration form providing contact information for ALL teachers interested in participating.
- Enrollment is **free** and on-going throughout the school year.
- Policy agreement must be read and acknowledged prior to submitting registration to qualify for monetary awards.

### Challenge Entries and Deadlines

- Each registered school must submit one completed Challenge Entry Form for each challenge they compete in, not for each individual student entry.
- Each challenge entry must be clearly marked with the school's and students' names.
- Entries must follow the guidelines, or they will be penalized or disqualified. Please read the rubrics and descriptions for each challenge carefully.
- Entries are considered on time if received at Phipps on or prior to the entry deadline.
- Entries should be mailed to Phipps Conservatory\* or dropped off at our offices (in the Center for Sustainable Landscapes (CSL) directly behind Phipps Conservatory). For certain challenges, entries may be submitted electronically.
  - If you are planning to drop entries off at the CSL, it must be during the business hours of 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. unless other arrangements have been made.
  - Some entries can be submitted by **email**, while others **cannot** be accepted electronically due to the nature of the challenge. Please thoroughly read the challenge description for specified delivery method.

*\* Mailed entries should be addressed to:*

**Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens  
c/o the Fairchild Challenge Coordinator  
One Schenley Park  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213**

- Schools should encourage as many students as possible to attempt each challenge  
**\*Please see “Earning Points” section for NEW information\***
- Phipps suggests that each school form a screening committee including students to select their best entries to be submitted to the Fairchild Challenge competition.

### Student Work

- All work submitted must be completed by students only.
- Participants are expected to follow a strict honor code: All work must be original or quoted from a referenced source.

- Plagiarism or the use of AI will result in disqualification of all work submitted by the students involved.
- Teachers and parents are encouraged to support student participation, but all entries must be entirely student work.
- Entries may not contain, as determined by Phipps, in its sole discretion, any content that is sexually explicit or suggestive, violent, derogatory, obscene, offensive, profane or pornographic; promotes alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, firearms or other weapons; promotes any activities that may appear unsafe or dangerous; promotes any particular political or religious agenda or message; overtly endorses any religious or political message or group; defames, misrepresents or contains disparaging remarks about other people or companies; contains trademarks, logos, or other copyrighted materials owned by others; contains any personal identification, such as license plate numbers, email addresses or street addresses; communicates messages or images inconsistent with the positive images and/or good will to which we wish to associate; and/or violates any law.

### **Earning Points**

- Each challenge has a maximum number for student entries that may be submitted and a maximum number of points for the challenge (see Challenges at a Glance.)
- The highest scoring entry from each school will be counted for points for each challenge. Schools are encouraged to send the maximum number of entries for each challenge for better chances of receiving a higher score.
- The key to winning an award at the end of the year is to earn the most points by carefully reading the provided rubrics and completing every challenge possible.
- To offer a more equitable opportunity for schools to win awards, Phipps will drop each school's lowest entry score at the end of the year before tallying points. This will include a score of zero if the school was not able to complete one of the challenges. We still strongly encourage schools to complete every challenge possible.
- **\*NEW\*** This year, participating schools are being offered the opportunity to earn additional points for their Engagement. If more than 50 students engage with the challenge, the school will be awarded an additional 5 points to their final score. Furthermore, if more than 100 students engage in the challenge, they school will be awarded 10 points, over 150 student engagements, 15 points, and so on. This will be applicable to all 6 challenges. This will be based on a strict honor code.

### **Entry Judging and Scoring**

- The panel of judges is selected by Phipps Conservatory. Judges will be selected from the community, Phipps Conservatory volunteers and staff, and other professionals in the Pittsburgh area.
- Panelists judge student entries based on the criteria set for each challenge and by using the evaluation rubrics that are provided with each challenge.
- All results are final and score sheets will not be shared.
- Phipps Conservatory will credit each school for the total points awarded and report to the school only their own total score. Final ranking of schools will not be released until the awards ceremony at the end of the school year.

## **Awards**

- All schools that participate in the Fairchild Challenge will receive recognition.
- Middle Schools and High Schools that earn 650 points or more will receive the Fairchild Challenge Award.
- The top middle and high schools will receive monetary awards to support their environmental science education programs or green initiatives.
- For each challenge, the top placing schools and students will be recognized (1st, 2nd and 3rd place for every challenge).
- \*NEW\* In order for a school to receive a monetary award, a representative (either students or educator) MUST be present at their designated ceremony to receive the award. If no one is in attendance to receive the award, the awards will be altered, and given to the next highest scoring school. Winning schools will be notified prior to the Award Ceremony to let them know of their required attendance.

## **Consent**

- Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens is not responsible for any materials that are lost, stolen, or damaged.
- Students' entries can be picked up immediately following the awards ceremony, unless the piece has been specifically requested by Phipps for its gallery space. If requested, the entries may be picked up when the gallery closes.
- Phipps Conservatory will not return unclaimed entries; these entries become property of Phipps and will be used for samples of student work or discarded.
- Photos may be taken at a Fairchild Challenge event or school visit. If a participating student wishes for his or her photo not to be used by Phipps Conservatory, a written request must be sent.
- Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens reserves the right to use any submitted materials for its own promotional purpose. If you wish to exclude your entries from these conditions, you must submit a written request with your entry forms.

***If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Fairchild Challenge Coordinator at [amule@phipps.conservatory.org](mailto:amule@phipps.conservatory.org) or 412-622-6915, ext. 3905.***