

Sandy Spring Friends School | Green Schools Application | Objective 3

3.2 Additional Achievements

Pen Y Bryn Upper School Building | [SSFS Webpage: Pen y Bryn](#)

In 2020, SSFS opened the first high school in the U.S. to earn WELL Gold certification with our new Upper School building. Designed for health, sustainability, and environmental wellness, the building prioritizes air and water quality, natural light, and overall comfort for students and staff. This achievement was made possible through the support and funding of the entire SSFS community, reflecting our shared commitment to a learning environment that cares for both people and the planet.

Solar Panels | [News Article](#)

SSFS has a 473.7 kW ground-mounted solar array on campus, developed in partnership with Standard Solar and UGI Performance Solutions. The system generates clean electricity for the school, helping reduce energy costs and decrease reliance on fossil fuels. Producing renewable energy on our own grounds reflects SSFS's long-term commitment to sustainability and gives students a visible, real-world example of how schools can invest in clean energy solutions.

Maryland Big Tree – Dawn Redwood (BT-4335) | [MD Big Trees Website](#)

SSFS is home to a registered Maryland Big Tree, a Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*). Once known only from fossils and thought extinct, the species was rediscovered in China in the 1940s and is now considered endangered in the wild. This deciduous conifer, one of only three remaining redwood species, can grow over 160 feet tall. The tree serves as a living example of biodiversity, conservation, and natural history on our campus, supporting environmental education and stewardship.

Certified Wildlife Habitat | [National Wildlife Federation](#)

The garden area in front of our Lower School is recognized as a Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. It provides food, shelter, and habitat for native wildlife. Students pass through and learn from this space as part of their daily school experience.

Photo attached below

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION®

Certified
**WILDLIFE
Habitat**®

This property provides the four basic
habitat elements needed for wildlife
to thrive: food, water, cover,
and places to raise young.



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
FEDERATION®

nwf.org