



## PEABODY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY SNAPSHOT



District of Columbia  
Office of the State  
Superintendent of Education

#### 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

- Aligned authentic, engaging activities with Peabody Elementary School's existing curriculum, so the minimal changes the teachers needed to make resulted in great outcomes.
- Focused planning to make field trips more meaningful helped students have a better understanding of their surrounding environment and their impact on it.
- Worked with the school's Wellness Committee to bridge their agenda with environmental literacy resources.

#### ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Peabody Elementary School is purely an early childhood campus, with students only enrolled in grades pre-K 3, pre-K 4, and kindergarten. The pre-K grades follow the Creative Curriculum, which allows students to engage in various studies throughout the school year. Families are heavily involved in the school through volunteering and financial support. In the outdoor classroom, parents have worked to build many of the outdoor structures, including digging boxes for the young learners. Parents are also eager to volunteer for our FoodPrints classes, and many can be seen at any given class. They assist the teachers in working in the garden and making food with the children.



"I've seen how excited and engaged the children are to be learning about their environment during the school day. I'm so excited to utilize this plan and dig in next year!" – Annie Slattery, pre-K teacher, Peabody Elementary School



## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROGRAM

Students in pre-K 3 complete a Creative Curriculum Trees Study in the fall and visit a farm to learn about animals and habitat. They also investigate pumpkin growth and pick pumpkins. Pre-K 4 students continue to investigate trees through a Creative Curriculum study and complete the Creative Curriculum Recycling Study. Students also visit the Washington Youth Garden and Anacostia Park. Kindergarten students engage in a Life Cycle study and go on visits to an apple orchard and the National Zoo. All classes have the opportunity to utilize the school's outdoor classroom (which includes digging boxes), FoodPrints lessons, worm composting, and Earth Day activities.

## NEXT STEPS

Before the start of the school year, there will be a meeting with the Wellness Committee to establish goals, timeline for the school year, and implementation plan. Some engaging field trips have already been scheduled, as well as FoodPrints classes and new outdoor learning experiences. Since the pre-K 3 team has discussed how the environmental literacy plan and resources will guide learning in their classrooms, this grade will be a model for the other grade levels and support the teachers in the other grades to use the plan as much as they are able. Each child will engage in environmental field trips, experiences, and lessons throughout the school year.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Put in the effort to work with your staff to get buy in, otherwise the plan will fall apart. It took months to lay out a plan and employ it, and even then, certain things were not accomplished and needed to be pushed back to the next school year. Be ready to roll out the plan slowly.
- Collaborate not only with colleagues at your own school, but with many schools and organizations. Talking to people with similar and different experiences allows you to bounce around ideas and reflect on the learning and implementation process that will work best for your school.
- Tackle one goal at a time. In the beginning, there was concern that teachers would feel overwhelmed with even more activities and field trips. Consider starting with one grade level and extending the plan to all grades over time.

