

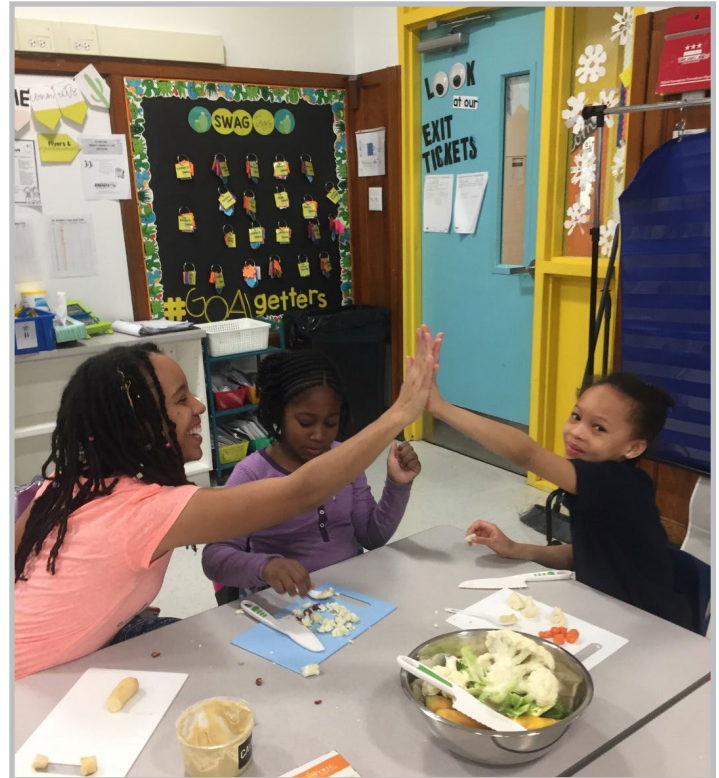
ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY SNAPSHOT

2017-19 HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2018, all students in pre-K 3 through grade 1 participated in the FoodPrints program, which included activities to engage them in learning about nutrition, plants, food preparation, and gardening. Students gain hands-on experience in the school garden and with food preparation.
- Second graders learned about waste management and brought their learning to life by visiting several waste management facilities in the area.
- Students in grade 4 participated in a program with the Anacostia Watershed Society that gave them the opportunity to take a boat ride on the Anacostia and learn first-hand the problems that face their community and local watershed.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Anne Beers Elementary School is a school community dedicated to sustaining, enriching and empowering a learning community focused on academic excellence and character building. Anne Beers Elementary is a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-focused school, and through environmental partnerships, teachers aim to foster student learning for life and encourage them to grapple with real-world problems. Located on Alabama Avenue in Ward 7, Anne Beers Elementary has a strong family engagement program, through partnership with the Flamboyant Foundation, and has an active Parent Teacher Organization. At Anne Beers Elementary, teachers and families work together to ensure students experience success and nothing less.



“My students have truly loved their time with FoodPrints, made possible through the environmental literacy program. They have learned so much about different fruits and vegetables, how plants grow, and what they can do to assist the process. But more importantly, they learned how to prepare nutritious meals from the fruits and vegetables we grow in our garden! They are pushed out of their comfort zone by trying new foods, resulting in the development of a new love for nutritious food. FoodPrints days are the most exciting days for my students and they look forward to it all month!”

— Constance Thayer, kindergarten teacher,
Anne Beers Elementary School



ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROGRAM

The environmental literacy program at Anne Beers Elementary provides students an opportunity to apply STEM learning in their community. Starting in pre-K, students take their learning outside to understand how the scientific concepts they are engaging with apply to the real world. In the younger grades, this means exploring the school's garden and growing food to use when students learn to prepare easy, nutritious meals. As students get older, their real-world learning opportunities expand. In second grade, students explore the impacts of different types of waste on their communities, and visit local facilities that are dealing with these issues to bring their learning to life. In fourth grade, students learn about the Anacostia Watershed and the threats to its health and survival. Finally, when students are in fifth grade, they are able to explore how trees affect air quality, apply their learning to the school community, and have the opportunity to take informed action and plant trees, through a partnership with Casey Trees and Clean Air Partners.

NEXT STEPS

In late 2018, Anne Beers Elementary formed a Wellness Committee to improve the efficacy of its environmental learning, especially programs that focus on food and nutrition. The groups' goals include increasing family engagement through family FoodPrints experiences and working to reduce food waste at school. In 2019, fifth grade students will complete their learning experience with Casey Trees and Clean Air Partners and plant trees around the school. The school will continue to use its garden as a resource for environmental science learning experiences for students.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Work with classroom teachers to align experiences with district curriculum resources and standards. By ensuring that these experiences complement the work already being done in classrooms, teachers will feel more excited and less overwhelmed by the new opportunities.
- Find high-impact areas that can be addressed with small changes. By focusing on small changes, you can make big shifts in your school's focus.
- Recruit a team to help you. This year, in forming the Wellness Committee, the school is better able to tackle projects because it established a team of individuals who are interested and committed to strengthening the environmental literacy program at Anne Beers.

