



Powell Bilingual Elementary School



District of Columbia
Office of the State
Superintendent of Education

ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY SNAPSHOT

2022-23 HIGHLIGHTS

- Began FRESHFARM FoodPrints partnership in the 2021-22 school year, which included the expansion and improvement of a school garden.
- All students attended FoodPrints classes monthly for 90 minutes in the 2022-23 school year. Early childhood students began attending FoodPrints classes and working in the garden.
- Each grade level completed at least one unit grounded in environmental literacy, from units about trees and insects to the impact of humans on the environment.
- Students learned about the local Powell environment during the 2021-22 school year through Camp Fraser Outdoor Education experiences with Living Classrooms.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Powell Elementary is an award-winning community school in Petworth focused on academic success for all. Students demonstrate academic achievement through portfolios, performances, and assessments. Through the school's dual language program, students have the opportunity to become bilingual while acquiring the skills they need to succeed in a global society. The dual language program provides students at least 50 percent of their instruction in Spanish. Curriculum is designed so that instruction in Spanish builds upon instruction in English and vice versa. Students who complete the dual language program will have the foundation to be bilingual and biliterate, while also achieving academic success and cultural competency. Powell also has many community partners, including Mary's Center, AmeriCorps, DC Scores, FRESHFARM FoodPrints, and the Embassy of Spain.



“Our students love FoodPrints! It gives our students a chance to get outside and get dirty, and to know where their food comes from. They are so proud to make dishes like cornbread, chili, and pesto pasta, and to try these healthy foods. Students were recently served mushrooms with rosemary in the school cafeteria. They were able to go out to the garden and see a rosemary plant. The garden lets them see where their food is coming from.”

- Morgan Hall, Assistant Principal, Powell Elementary

ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROGRAM

Students at Powell Bilingual Elementary School participate in FRESHFARM FoodPrints classes monthly throughout the school year. These classes include hands on activities as well as garden and cooking experiences. The standards- and curriculum-based lessons provide all students with opportunities to grow their own food, cook with fresh ingredients, and learn about nutrition. Powell students also have at least one unit in language arts or science class that has a focus on environmental literacy. Pre-K students explore trees and insects, while kindergarteners learn about community workers and their impact on the environment. Both first and second graders think about the effects of weather on their environment, and second graders also learn about environmental activists. In third grade, students learn about different habitats and how changes to habitats can affect the organisms that live there. Fourth graders explore the Earth's natural resources, and fifth graders investigate the impact humans have on the Earth's systems.

NEXT STEPS

Next school year, staff hope to introduce a recycling program at Powell. All classrooms have recycling bins, but trash and recycling are not sorted correctly. Because of this, most of the classroom paper ends up in the regular trash. During the science unit on the impact of humans on Earth, the fifth graders will be enlisted to brainstorm ideas for how to recycle paper at Powell, create a plan to encourage recycling sorting in classrooms and collection, and then educate other grades on how to correctly recycle. Students could then help run this recycling program, taking ownership of this aspect of their impact on their environment.



LESSONS LEARNED

- If putting in a garden, consider where water will come from! It can be a challenge to get a water source installed and you want to be able to easily water your garden.
- Think about space for programs. When Powell first started with FoodPrints, the school did not have a designated space available. The FoodPrints team had to find solutions for storing materials and where they would hold their lessons when not in the garden.
- Find others to help. It can be overwhelming to try and plan and then implement something new.

