



## Whittier Education Campus



District of Columbia  
Office of the State  
Superintendent of Education

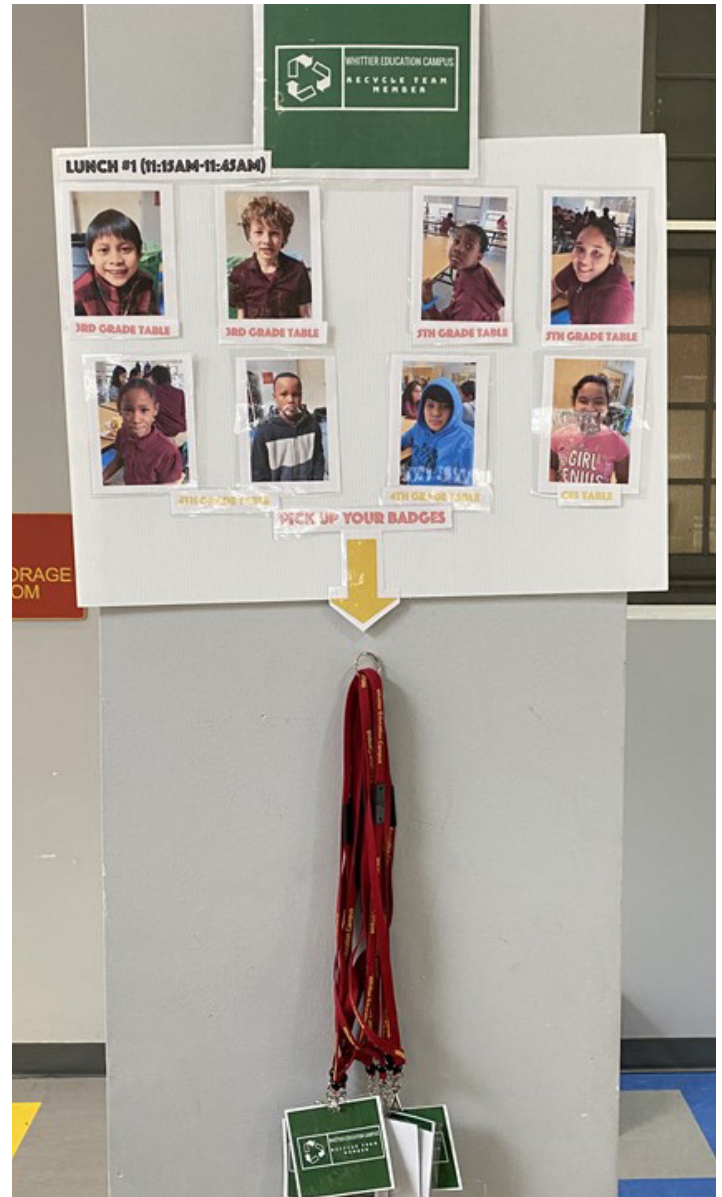
### ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY SNAPSHOT

#### 2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS

- The entire school engaged in recycling during lunch, where Recycle Team Captains from all grade levels collected and sorted lunches, and placed them into their correct bins.
- All grade levels began recycling paper and our second-grade and third-grade recycling team members assisted with its collection traveling to classrooms and offices after each school day.
- Pre-K and grade 2 students worked with the Audubon Naturalist Society.
- Pre-K through grade 8 students participated in half-day engagements and learning stations with STEM partners and professionals from all fields during our fall STEM Day and spring STEM Night.

#### ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whittier Education Campus, located in Ward 4 of Northwest Washington, DC, serves nearly 400 students from pre-K to grade 8. Whittier Education Campus serves a diverse population that consists of 21 percent English learners, 62 percent special education, and 100 percent economically disadvantaged students. Whittier Education Campus students in grades K-2 receive daily STEMscopes instruction and students in grades 2-8 participate in weekly STEM specials in our STEM Lab. Teachers utilize the outdoor classroom space, built with a community partner, Out Teach, to instruct lessons throughout the school year. Additionally, Whittier partnered with the Department of General Services to launch a school-wide recycling program that will help the school reduce its environmental footprint. Through the school's sustainability design, focus, and impact, Whittier hopes to become an innovative STEM school.



I really enjoy seeing the students learn about the environment and the excitement I see on their faces when they participate in engagements with our partners.”

- Kerel Thompson, STEM Coordinator, Whittier Education Campus



## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROGRAM

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The progression of the environmental literacy at Whittier Education Campus begins with exposure to our local habitat and backyard, Washington, DC. Partner organizations are aligned to an environmental need that aids students in seeing how their impact can affect the environment in which they live. Our pre-K through grade 8 students participate in various lessons with our partners from the Anacostia Watershed Society, Audubon Naturalist Society, Pepco, Casey Trees, Clean Air Partners, Department of General Services, and EcoRise Youth Innovations. All grade levels participate in a culminating project with their partner organizations that build upon their environmental learning, ranging from trash and recycling; studies of ecosystems, habitats, and restoration; climate change; and environmental audits (energy, water, air, trash, and food). In the end, the goal is for Whittier Education Campus students to use their understanding of interactions to engage in environmental sustainability practices at home and throughout their communities.

## NEXT STEPS

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During the 2020-21 school year, Whittier Education Campus will focus on urban sustainability to explore how a city can be self-reliant rather than dependent on resources from the surrounding area to thrive. The school will work toward practicing urban sustainability and educating students and the community about urban sustainability through continuation of the recycling and composting programs, and the expansion of the school garden. Additionally, the school hopes to provide more training and planning opportunities for teachers to align and integrate STEM content and resources into their instruction, thereby reinforcing environmental literacy, as well as engaging the community with monthly STEM talks hosted by STEM professionals from the sustainability fields. At the end of each quarter, Whittier plans to host a showcase where all grade levels have an opportunity to share, highlight, and explain their impact on the environment. The school hopes to engage students in projects, interactions with professionals, and trips throughout the school year to reinforce their learning. As the school continues in this mindset both in and out of the classroom, the hope is students will have a greater sense of independence and creativity, as well as pride in being residents of Washington, DC.



## LESSONS LEARNED

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- Establish consistent visits with partners throughout the school year.
- Provide opportunities for others to learn and grow in STEM.
- Make sure that you keep empathy as a focus throughout your planning.
- Keep student engagement at the heart of the work and ensure that they make connections.

