

Deer Creek School  
Metropolitan Greenspaces Education Grant  
FINAL REPORT  
June 2001

Deer Creek School's project, funded partially by the Metropolitan Greenspaces Education Grant is complete. Following is a summary of activities on how the project was completed, along with evaluation of what worked and what did not, and possible helpful hints for future projects.

The goal of this project was to create a children-to-children and children-to-adult mentorship in the teaching and learning relationship by creating opportunities for students to teach others the needs of the environment and how personal actions affect systems.

The specific objectives and activities included:

OBJECTIVE 1) Development of curriculum for both in class and after school stewardship activities that increases understanding about needs of the environment and human behavior.

Activity A) Deer Creek staff and volunteers developed lesson units on ecological principles and concepts that tie human behavior, the environment, and economics to meet Oregon benchmarks standards across the curriculum, including science, math, reading, writing, and public speaking.

Three major themes emerged in the curricular area:

Theme 1- WHAT WORKED: Teams of staff developed 3 "nature journals", each geared towards different grade levels (Kindergarten/1st, 2nd and 3rd grades, and 4th and 5th grades). These journals are designed to be used in our woodlands and wetlands area on our school campus and addressed skills of observation and identification of animals, plant cycles, and diversity in the environment. Students are encouraged to observe, reflect, draw, and write in these journals.

In addition, vocabulary pertinent to our woodlands and wetlands was incorporated into the Deer Creek School Writer's Handbook and Dictionary. This will be a resource used in the teaching and practice of writing throughout our school.

Working to integrate this work into a variety of subject areas such as writing, music, technology, and reading was a natural extension for Deer Creek School. We want to find more strategies to continue these practices.

HELPFUL HINTS: The nature guides are in the early part of field testing at this point in time. Teacher teams worked in separate units, and coincidentally there is some duplication of content areas. We will work to reduce the duplication in the next draft. In addition, we faced the challenge of trying to interface with district resources and expectations while the district was

beginning a science adoption and modifying the organization of what science concepts would be taught at which grade levels. We will also address this in the next draft.

Theme 2- WHAT WORKED: In conjunction with US Fish and Wildlife, Deer Creek 4th and 5th graders engaged in 2 cycles of raising fish fry. Salmon and trout eggs were secured from US Fish and Wildlife. Students set up with tanks and monitored the conditions needed for successful hatching. Data was recorded and graphed, which was tied to our study of measurement in math. Students took field trips to release the fish in appropriate waterways. Many students also did extra work in learning about trout and salmon in conjunction with the school science fair. A special category related to fish was developed and many students and student teams responded.

HELPFUL HINTS: It was difficult to include 8 to 9 classrooms of students in all aspects of the project. It was also difficult to include as many students as wanted to in the field trip experience. We created extra assignments for students to complete to qualify for the field trip experience. In the future, we are considering doing a fall salmon and spring trout project and organizing it so half of the classes do each session.

Theme 3- WHAT WORKED: Principles of stewardship were discussed in the development of a student musical performance, written and produced by students at Deer Creek. All 4th and 5th grade students put on the Deer Creek School version of STOMP. Students took the theme of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle literally and wrote and produced vignettes including music and percussion production only (no voice). The students were wildly enthusiastic about this project and surprised and delighted us many times over with their creativity, abilities to listen to each other, and appreciation for things we are in the habit of simply discarding.

HELPFUL HINTS: It would have been great to video some of the processes that students went through, especially in their discussion stages. That would have taken another adult volunteer.

Activity B) "Kits" housing materials and instructions for each lesson were put together to accompany the field guides.

WHAT WORKED: Kits have been developed and are housed in a central area of the school. They have been field tested by several classrooms. Teachers appreciate having the materials they need in a convenient format. Checkout is easy and teachers appreciate it doesn't involve a lot of bureaucracy. Adult volunteers have been key to researching and securing materials needed for the salmon and trout fry programs.

HELPFUL HINTS: While the checkout is easy, it would benefit from having someone check the materials to make sure the kit is complete and ready to go for the next group.

Activity C) Lesson units will be field tested across age groups at Deer Creek School both in the classroom with teachers and after school with volunteers and revised as appropriate.

WHAT WORKED: This is still in the beginning stages. Several classes have field tested the materials during school.

HELPFUL HINTS: This portion of our plan took more time than we anticipated. It wasn't just a matter of trying it out. We did not budget time for the revisions as a result of the field test. We plan to spend more time on this portion.

OBJECTIVE 2) Engaging children in arts based activities to assist in infusing the understanding of the relationships of human behavior and ecological systems.

Activity A) Deer Creek students will produce and/or perform art, music, and literature that speaks to the relationship between personal actions and the needs of the environment.

Activity B) Performance(s) and products will be showcased in events involving parents and other community members, such as school wide assemblies, programs, authors' teas, art fairs, etc.

WHAT WORKED: Nine classes of 4th and 5th graders wrote and produced vignettes on REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE in conjunction with their music program performance. This production was about 6 weeks in the making and involved close to 250 students. The program was performed 4 times for school and parent audiences. We were proud to see the leadership our students took in the creation of this production and how "totally cool" they felt doing it. The adults all thought they were cool, too.

HELPFUL HINTS: It was really helpful and appropriate to incorporate this thinking, knowledge, and production into an activity students were already scheduled to do. All our students do an annual music performance. We were able to tie this event into the already scheduled music production. We were also able to incorporate the teaching we would have done about rhythms and production into this event.

OBJECTIVE 3) Creating opportunities for students to demonstrate this knowledge and share this information and attitude with others.

Activity A) Deer Creek students will be taught mentoring skills to lead small groups of students and adults.

Activity B) Deer Creek students will act as leaders and mentors to lead small groups of students (Scouts, day care groups, church groups, neighborhood groups) to deliver the lessons developed in Objective 1.

WHAT WORKED: These activities are still in the infancy stages. We have worked on mentoring skills in a variety of forums, including computer application and math stations. We will continue to work on this with the science stations.

HELPFUL HINTS: Because the field testing of the journals took longer than expected, this portion of the plan did not get addressed as readily as we would have liked.

Activity C) Deer Creek students will produce arts based performance and activities to showcase their understanding of the needs of the environment and how personal actions affect systems.

See comments under Objective 2, Activity B.

### BUDGET SUMMARY:

The original budget was for a \$7979.00 project, including in-kind donations of personnel, volunteer labor and professional services. The actual budget came in at \$11,683. The additional in-kind "costs" came in the way of contributions of additional staff time and volunteer hours. In addition, we were able to add to the matching funds in materials and supplies. Materials and supplies were categorized in 3 areas: 1) supplies for kits and classroom usage, 2) supplies for HABITAT, and 3) supplies for music and art. A breakdown of hours and dollars actually generated by this grant project are listed on page 5 of this report.

In addition, copies of receipts are attached to this report, with a brief itemization of each receipt on page 6. Receipts are organized into the same 3 categories listed above. Each receipt was assigned a number that corresponds to the itemization sheet.

### OTHER:

Thank you for the opportunity and sharing of resources to engage in such meaningful learning for our students. We firmly believe that it is important for young Oregonians to understand the relationships between human activity and the environment. We believe that taking the small steps we have been taking is an experiential key to understanding for the age of our students. Partnerships such as ours help sustain that energy.

If I can answer any questions about the grant project, please give me a call. Thank you again.

# GREENSPACES ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANT BUDGET - ACTUAL

A	B	C	D	E
CATEGORY	REQUEST OF METRO	MATCHING FUNDS	MATCHING IN-KIND	SUB-TOTAL
PERSONNEL			Classroom teachers- 72 hrs@ \$20/hr  Music teacher -60 hrs @ \$20/hr	Classroom teachers-\$1400.  Music teacher - \$1200.
SUB-TOTAL			<b>\$2600.00</b>	
VOLUNTEER LABOR			286 hrs Wildlife Stewards + Habitat adult volunteers  155 hrs community/ student volunteers for HABITAT	Wildlife Stewards + Habitat adults- \$1573.  Student/Communi ty volunteers - \$852.50
SUB-TOTAL			<b>\$2425.50</b>	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES			10 hrs -Adult Project Millennium photo and video productions 10 hrs - Student time	Adult Project Millennium = \$200 Student time= \$55
SUB-TOTAL			<b>\$255.00</b>	
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES (receipts attached)	\$1000 supplies for kits \$800 supplies for HABITAT \$600 supplies for music & art	\$1404.65 supplies for kits \$141.58 supplies for Habitat \$2456.49 supplies for music & art		
SUB-TOTAL	<b>\$2400.00</b>	<b>\$4002.72</b>	<b>\$5280.50</b>	
RENTAL FEES				
INDIRECT/OVERHEAD				
CONTINGENCY				
OTHER				
GRANT BUDGET	<b>\$2400.00</b>	<b>\$1600.00</b>	<b>\$3970.00</b>	<b>\$7970.00</b>
ACTUAL TOTAL	<b>\$2400.00</b>	<b>\$4002.72</b>	<b>\$5280.50</b>	<b>\$11683.22</b>

