



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2018.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico

Program Title: Art, Reading, Science and Community: From a Tiny seed a Garden Grows

Program Category: Health and Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Victoria Davis

Title: Management Specialist

Department: County Manager's Office

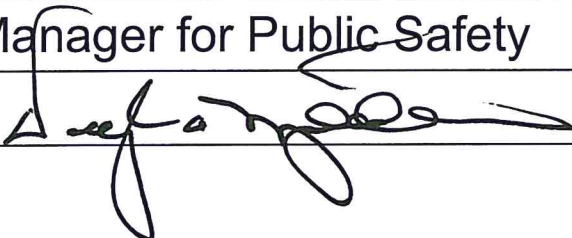
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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Douglas Middleton

Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety

Signature: 

1. Program Overview

“From a Tiny Seed a Garden Grows” was a collaborative project that combined visual arts, reading, and science at Fair Oaks Elementary School in Henrico County, Virginia.

Through a grant provided by the Henrico Education Foundation, students in kindergarten through fifth-grade received garden books and worked together to plan and paint a hallway mural and decorate rocks and plant flowers in the courtyard.

The project has created a community atmosphere among the school and increased reading levels. The program is taught under the guidance of a local Richmond artist. The project aims to foster community at the school, while deepening students’ knowledge of art, reading, and science.

2. Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

How can educational projects do double-duty? Fair Oaks’ project combined art, literacy and aspects of environmental science while improving the quality of time spent at school for students and staff members. The project gave students the opportunity to plan and paint a hallway mural; to plant a courtyard with flowers and seeds; and to water, weed and watch the flowers bloom. Splashes of color were also added to the courtyard with the rocks the students painted. The students worked together during all aspects of the project: from planning to painting, and from planting to pruning. The students were each given a garden-related book to keep and read, promoting a literacy connection. They also had the opportunity to work with a local Richmond artist, introducing them to art as a career. Additionally, components of the project addressed materials covered on Virginia’s Standards of Learning tests and promoted a positive sense of self and personal ownership. The hallway, once drab, is now a bright and cheerful walk. The school courtyard, overrun by weeds and in need of cleaning and planting, is now a welcoming and useable space.

3. How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

“From a Tiny Seed a Garden Grows” combines art, reading, and science to benefit students and build community in an elementary school. The project used the resources of the Henrico Educational Foundation, the school’s art teacher and librarian, other teachers, and the collaboration and creativity of students. The project increased community, student-ownership, and literacy and science awareness in a way not possible in a more isolated context.

Jointly conceived and directed by the school’s art teacher and librarian, the project incorporated visual arts with reading and science to promote a sense community, positive self-esteem, and ownership among the students. The project also aimed to improve students’ comfort and interest in checking out library books, increase reading program minutes, and improve test scores. The project began in April 2017, with several visits from a local Richmond art artist. The artist visited the school twice; once to work with the students in grades Kindergarten through second-grade and another time to work with the students in third-grade through fifth-grade in different planning stages for the mural. The Kindergarten through second-grade (K-2) students painted floral images on white paper that were then hung on walls. The older students used pencils and markers to draw images of flowers, rainbows, suns, clouds, and insects on long white sheets of paper. Images from both visits were used to design the mural.

4. How Program Was Carried Out

The work on the hallway mural began in June 2017. Under the Richmond artist’s guidance, students began to draw the images to be painted. A grid was created with tape and the drawings coordinated with the spaces. Once the mural was drawn, students began to apply the first layers of paint. The students worked with the artist, in groups of five to eight, for intervals of 15 to 30 minutes over two weeks. There were periods when the artist worked alone, and students of

different grades observed and asked questions. The artist and art teacher completed the mural's final stages.

In May 2017, the courtyard work began with rock painting. The students, teachers and staff members painted rocks for a rock garden. Courtyard planting began in May, continued through June, and began in September with the start of a new school year. Wildflower seeds were sown in June and some summer flowers were planted. In September, some fall flowers were planted, and haystacks were adorned with pumpkins. The courtyard was used for the school's fall festival in October.

At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, each student was given a garden-themed book to add to his or her personal library. The kindergarteners, first, and second graders received the book, "Flower Garden," written by Eve Bunting and illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. The third, fourth and fifth graders received the Newberry-winning book, "Weslandia," written by Paul Fleischman and illustrated by Kevin Hawkes.

5. Financing and Staffing

A grant from the Henrico Education Foundation allowed Fair Oaks Elementary School an opportunity to give students free art lessons, which expanded their talents and abilities. The Henrico Education Foundation grant totaled \$4,300. The foundation funding covered the cost of the art artist (\$2,000), art and courtyard supplies (\$630 for paint, brushes, markers, pencils, tape, gloss top coat, flower seeds, plants and rocks), and \$1,670 for the books. Existing staff time was also used.

6. Program Results

The mural is beautiful and makes for a bright and cheerful walk. You can hear students say, "I painted that part" or "I drew that bug" as they walk down the hallway. The students have taken

ownership of the work and share a sense of pride in the mural. The courtyard has been cleaned up and planted. It is a place classes can comfortably visit, read or have lunch.

Reading program minutes at Fair Oaks have increased. While it is not possible to show causation between the project and the subsequent spike in reading test scores, the schoolwide initiative gave each child a new book to keep and used literacy techniques to tie the books to hands-on activities.

7. Brief Summary

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Art, Reading, Science, and Community: From a tiny seed a garden grows

Video showing mural process:

<http://hcpstv.org/2017/10/19/new-mural-at-fair-oaks-es/>

Mural process photos:









Students with garden-themed books:

