



Nature Club



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# 2012 City Schools Sustainability Challenge Report

Green Team: Maria McCarthy & Susan Stork

Hilton Elementary School • May 29, 2012

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# Hilton Elementary

From a Blooming Spring to a Plentiful Harvest

*"Action is the foundational key to all success."  
- Pablo Picasso*

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## Project Evaluation:

**Grant Total \$998.68**

At Hilton Elementary the Baltimore City Sustainable Challenge became a huge contributor to continuing our successful labors of our Green Team. Being that this was our second year receiving this grant our student and staff have become more aware and mindful about living a more sustainable existence in Baltimore City. Our school has worked as an incredible example to the community, proving that when we all come together beautiful things can happen. Any green team member can give you a tour of fruit orchard, worm bins, rain barrel, and brief you on a chicken's life cycle. In addition, just by touring our classrooms you would see the hard work, dedication, excitement and engagement of the actions that took place via our green team this year because of the sustainability grant. We have fruiting trees, native perennial flower beds, worms making rich soil, baby chicks just about to hatch and kids recycling.

With the grant money we were able to purchase items such as additional fruit trees, more perennials & native Maryland plants for landscaping, an egg incubators, fertile eggs, planting containers, soil, additional raised bed materials.

We're waiting on the delivery of our window farms due to a delivery issue. These purchases will help for many years to come. In addition, these purchase have provided many teaching moments for about 300 students.

Due to the generosity of Greats Kids Farms we only needed to buy black cloth because Great Kids Farm donated worm bins and rain barrels --- which in turn allowed us to buy more native plants, fruit, garden vegetables and expand out chicken life cycle education in preparation for possibly securing a school coop next school year.

We also bought an assortment of different gardening containers to use in our school garden so the kids could replicate these gardening projects in small areas at home.

3) The highest point in our project is watching the garden transform into the beautiful green masterpiece over the few months. The students and families walk by daily and notice the transformations of leaves, blooms and fruits. We do however feel that if we have a successful hatching of chicks on June 4<sup>th</sup> we believe all students would agree that the baby chicks have been worth the wait and the highlight of our year.

4) We believe the lasting benefits of our projects such as using water bottles, recycling, teaching the students about where their food comes from via the chicken life cycle, the use of rain barrels and worm compost will continue to inspire conversations about how to better improve our school. Plus the kids now are informed about how to save energy and recycle. We have begun to recycle everyday items such as aluminum cans and plastic bottles. Our students are changing their water habits and are being more mindful when possible our school setting to reduce, reuse and recycle.

5 & 6) The only thing we would change is the timing of receiving the grant. If we could secure the grant money earlier we would have more time to get our projects moving. In addition, we would like to secure the funds in a special account outside the school in order to be paid back for our purchase more promptly in order to keep our vision moving along without any issues associated with the school accounts.

7) We know that 200 more students have been indirectly enriched by the grants. They have received tidbits on gardening from their sibling or samples of our harvest. In addition, the students have benefited from a more healthy and sustainable outlook within the school. Every student has received a water bottle. Further more, we have used the recycled materials in art class to develop recycled art to display in the building. Plus, we are never short of volunteers to help water in our orchard and plant in our garden.

8) We disturbed about 35 recycling bins, our garden and orchard are up to 13 garden beds & 13 fruit trees --- our building doesn't allow for CFL --- but 100 bulbs were given out via BEC.

9)

*"I loved this sandwich and I don't even like tomatoes... when there are tomatoes in my salad or hamburger I take them out.... but not on this... So good! - JA 4<sup>th</sup> grade*

*"I planted a TREE... its name is "Figgy" ... I'll come back and visit it next year" TL 5<sup>th</sup> grade*

10) We're working on certification currently and we paid the \$25 fee. Hilton plans to be a Green Certified in 2012-2013.

11) We did a Cool Earth Assembly through BEC and have jump-started our reducing our energy usage and recycling because of BEC's meetings with our students.

12) Thank you for all your continued help and assistance.



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