



Environmental Literacy Plan 2020-21

Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #4187

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Introduction

The Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School's Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) addresses how the school will implement its environmental education program (EE) and measure progress toward its contractual goals with our school authorizer, Osprey Wilds (OW). The ELP addresses how all students in the school will move along the awareness to action continuum toward becoming more environmentally literate.

The goals listed correspond to a strategy for implementation and an evaluation method for determining if the strategy effectively moved students toward the goal. It may be helpful to think of the goal as a destination, a strategy as the road map for getting there, and the evaluation method as a compass to tell if we're on track.

Meet our Environmental Education Coordinator



Taylor Scheele has worked in the field of environmental education for over 4 years. Taylor spent the last 4 years working at a residential environmental education center in upstate New York, delivering environmental education programs to elementary-high school students from New York City during the school year, and working for the summer camp adventure trips program in the summer months. She graduated from the College of Saint Benedict in 2016 with a major in Environmental Studies. She is passionate about outdoor recreation, environmental justice, and composting.

Taylor is serving as an AmeriCorps VISTA member. The focus for the year for the Environmental Education Coordinator is to create a culturally-responsive, social-justice oriented environmental education curriculum for Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori that will correspond to and compliment the Montessori method along the different levels of developmental planes. The curriculum will aim to break down the historically colonized environmental education by including the absent narratives of the land and the native people who came before, and ensuring content is relevant and accessible to all students at JJ Legacy. This year with distance learning, the coordinator will also be making videos for students as a consistent and equitable form of environmental education through the school year.

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Indicator Area 1: Awareness

Students demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between the environment and human life and the diversity of life that shares the earth with humans.

Goal

Students and staff at Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School have the awareness, or are increasing their awareness, of the relationship between the environment and human life.

Strategy 1.1

- Students in the Toddler Community will have the opportunity to maintain a garden and become aware of the dependence of all humans on the environment. Students will start seedlings inside and then transplant them to an outside garden. Any students participating through Distance Learning will be offered seeds to grow at home.

Evaluation method 1.1

- At least 90% of students in the Toddler Community will start seedlings and at least 90% of students in the Toddler Community will transplant seedlings to an outside garden according to teacher records.

Strategy 1.2

- Children's House students and all Elementary students will have nature journal observational prompts to complete throughout the school year and distance learning. The nature journal acts to provide students with a nature connection activity in which they will have some autonomy, and provide intentional awareness of the environment in the student's neighborhood and the student's own interactions with the environment.

Evaluation method 1.2

- All students will share their journal entries with teachers via photo, video, or other media via Seesaw.

Strategy 1.3

- The Environmental Education Coordinator will create weekly mini-lesson videos for all students in the fall season, aiming to increase students' awareness of their environment. These mini-lessons are intended to be supplemental to content covered in the classroom and provide an opportunity for culturally-relevant environmental education through this period of distance learning. There will also be related hands-on activities

for students to complete which go along with the videos, corresponding to the students ages.

Evaluation method 1.3

- 100% of students will view the videos and complete the activities when they are presented and submit via Seesaw.

Indicator Area 2: Knowledge

Students have knowledge of how natural systems function and how human systems interact with and depend on them.

Goal

Students and staff at Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School have the knowledge, or are increasing their knowledge, of human and natural systems and processes.

Strategy 2.1

- Children's House students will be presented lessons on living and non-living things and parts of plants and flowers.

Evaluation method 2.1

- At least 90% of all three- and four-year-old students presented this lesson in Children's House classrooms will successfully sort items into the categories "living" and "non-living."

Strategy 2.2

- The Environmental Education Coordinator will create weekly mini-lesson videos in the winter season for all students, aiming to increase environmental knowledge through a social justice lens, intending to decolonize conversations and knowledge about our local environment and the history of the land. There will also be related hands-on activities to be completed by the students.

Evaluation method 2.2

- 100% of students will view the videos and complete the activities when they are presented and submit via Seesaw.

Indicator Area 3: Attitudes

Students demonstrate respect and concern for the earth's health and the motivation to participate in environmental stewardship.

Goal

Students and faculty at Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School have an attitude, or are increasing their attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment.

Strategy 3.1

- Lower Elementary students will learn the differences between climate and weather. Through learning about climate and weather, students will develop appreciation for the power of climate and weather and concern for climate change and its far reaching effects on the global community.
 - The following specific lessons from ETC Montessori's Weather and Climate Curriculum 6-9 years will be given: "Weather or Climate?" "Climate Zone Stories" "Project for Climate Zones" "Weather Tools"
 - Content material will also be pulled from Climate Generation's Our Changing Climate Grades 3-6 Curriculum.

Evaluation method 3.1

- At least 90% of all Lower Elementary students will receive at least three of the four climate/weather lessons listed above.
- 100% of Lower Elementary students who received the lessons will practice with the material and show what they have learned orally, visually, and/or in writing from at least one of the four lessons and submit via Seesaw.

Strategy 3.2

- The Environmental Education Coordinator will create weekly mini-lesson videos in the spring season, with the intent for students to continue to form and reflect on their personal attitude and history with their environment. Focusing on social justice, the videos will pull in the absent narratives of non-western cultural beliefs of the environment. There will also be hands-on activities for students to complete to go along with the videos.

Evaluation method 3.2

- 100% of students will view the videos and complete the activities when they are presented via Seesaw.

Indicator Area 4: Skills

Students possess the skills needed to identify and critically analyze environmental issues, and to contribute to resolving the root of environmental challenges.

Goal

Students and faculty at Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School have or are increasing their problem solving and critical thinking skills as it relates to the environment and human life.

Strategy 4.1

- Upper Elementary students (Grades 4-6) will be presented lessons on the Minnesota environmental justice issue of metal mining, the associated environmental costs and impacts, as well as impacts and costs on human lives, and its relation to products that we, as consumers use.

Evaluation method 4.1

- All Upper Elementary students will participate in a group that prepares a report showing understanding of where the raw materials for products come from and the social and environmental costs and impacts.

Strategy 4.2

- Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary students will explore COVID-19's effect on the environment, and how humans going into quarantine has affected the natural environment.

Evaluation method 4.2

- 100% of the students who received the lessons will practice with the material and show what they have learned orally, visually, and/or in writing via submission on Seesaw.

Strategy 4.3

- The Environmental Education Coordinator will connect with local organizations to present meaningful and culturally-responsive conversations to Upper Elementary students about environmental issues within our local communities and our global community.

Evaluation 4.3

- Upper Elementary students will complete a group project aimed at identifying the root of a presented environmental issue, and what students and other communities can do to take action.

Indicator Area 5: Action

Students have the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to perceive and interpret the health of environmental and social systems and take appropriate action to maintain, restore, or improve the health of those systems.

Goal

Students and staff at Legacy of Dr. Josie R. Johnson Montessori School demonstrate the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment.

Strategy 5.1

- Composting food and paper towel waste will be introduced and implemented in all classrooms throughout the school.
 - Toddler Community staff will assist students in utilizing the classroom compost/waste system following each meal and snack time throughout the school year.
 - Children's House students will learn about different types of waste, and practice the different ways they are disposed of (compost, recycling, trash). They will also be invited to create eco-art from otherwise recycled waste.
 - Lower Elementary students will learn about food waste, and how to reduce food waste. They will also be invited to create eco-art from otherwise recycled waste.
 - Upper Elementary students will learn about food waste and how to compost at home using the Minneapolis composting program.

Evaluation method 5.1

- 100% of classrooms will have lessons and conversations about why we compost and its impact on the environment.

Strategy 5.2

- Children's House and Elementary students will participate in a waste reduction audit and challenge at home during distance learning, and will complete activities to take steps to increase awareness of their typical waste, modify their individual actions, and create change in their own communities at home.

Evaluation method 5.2

- All students will submit a record of a typical (unchanged) amount of daily garbage waste at the beginning of the challenge, which will be compared to the amount of waste they produce daily at the end of the challenge.