

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: 05/03/2019

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For INFORMATION X\_\_\_\_\_

Board Agenda: Yes \_\_\_

No X\_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Debra E. Lane, Ed.D., Director of Talent Development

**THROUGH:** Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Grant

### SUMMARY:

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), Chesapeake Bay Foundation, NOAA, and Earth Force are partnering to ensure that every middle school student in ACPS has the opportunity to develop a civic action project protecting the environment. The project is funded with a three year grant from NOAA and has three components:

- Teacher Professional Development – Every middle school science teacher is receiving a year-long professional development experience in PBL and civic engagement.
- Administrator Professional Development – Administrators are participating in a training program to help them support educators and students.
- Student projects – Students are developing civic action projects to improve their local communities.

In 2018/2019 middle school students developed projects to protect the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. In all, 6 educators guided 200 ACPS students in developing and implementing 13 civic action projects.

### BACKGROUND:

Students are:

- Developing civic skills
- Working on real-world problems
- Learning to apply STEM to improve problem solving
- Working with community leaders

Student Projects include:

- Investigating water usage in schools and working with school administrators to install low flow toilets
- Investigating and working with facilities staff to eradicate toxic mold in schools
- Working with facilities staff to control erosion on school grounds
- Developing plans to decrease the amount of standing water in school courtyards

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- Investigating and developing plans to decrease the amount of oil in storm water runoff
- Investigating the increase in invasive species on school grounds and developing a plan to replace them with native species

ACPS students excelled at the annual Caring for our Watersheds contest with 3 groups placing in the top 20 (out of 90 projects). Students from George Washington Middle School placed 7th and received a cash prize to complete their project.

In 2019 the project will grow substantially with 30 educators across ACPS participating within the grant.

### Upcoming Events

Educator Training I: June 24 – 28

Administrator (and School Board) Introduction: July 24 – 26

Educator Training II: August 5 & 6

**SUMMARY:** The Superintendent recommends the School Board review the information provided on this brief.

### **CONTACT:**

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Jennifer Lay, Science Curriculum Specialist