

Memorandum of Understanding

between
Montgomery County Public Schools
and
Audubon Naturalist Society

Whereas: Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) believes that, "The end goal of any curriculum must be to provide all students with the essential skills and knowledge to enable them to become productive citizens and lifelong learners." And, MCPS holds that "Curriculum must be both challenging and engaging so that students feel a sense of accomplishment and have a clear understanding of the value of what they are learning and its relevance to their lives."

Whereas: The mission of the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS) is to "foster stewardship of the region's environment by educating citizens about the natural world, promoting conservation of biodiversity and protecting natural habitat." And, ANS has 30 years experience conducting environmental education programs, summer camps and field trips for children and adults in the mid-Atlantic region.

Whereas: MCPS promotes curriculum that should

- "be interesting, challenging, and relevant to children;
- be developed in a participatory process involving major stakeholders;
- model instruction but allow for creative teacher delivery and meaningful student learning through an accessible, manageable, and flexible curriculum."

Whereas: ANS has developed the *GreenKids* program to

- Provide Montgomery County school children and their teachers with resources, funds, and field trips to foster environmental stewardship while meeting established curriculum goals;
- Help schools plan and integrate, hands-on environmental education activities specifically tailored to the needs and resources of each individual school site;
- Assist schools in applying for *Maryland Green Schools Certification* from the Maryland Association Environmental and Outdoor Education.

Whereas: The MCPS Board of Education priorities include encouraging schools to "continue to expand civic, business, and community partnerships that support improved student achievement."

Whereas: ANS has successfully run the *GreenKids* program in thirteen MCPS schools during the 2006-2007 school year, and has demonstrated the value of this program to administrators, teachers, students and parents in these schools. And, ANS has identified and fostered community partnerships for all thirteen schools participating in *GreenKids*.

Whereas: MCPS and ANS have expressed the desire to strategically expand *GreenKids* in MCPS. MCPS and ANS jointly agree to establish a partnership as follows:

ANS will:

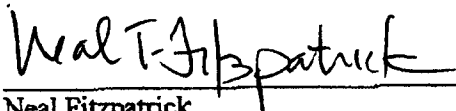
- Develop a strategic plan for the growth of *GreenKids* within MCPS. The plan will focus on maintaining the quality and positive outcomes of *GreenKids*.
- Align *GreenKids* instructional offerings with current MCPS curriculum standards to ensure that *GreenKids* activities support MCPS instructional objectives.
- Provide all management and resources required for complete, high quality execution of *GreenKids* within participating MCPS schools. In particular, ANS will secure the availability of qualified ANS naturalists to staff the program, will train these naturalists, and will provide oversight of their work in Montgomery County Public Schools on behalf of *GreenKids*.

MCPS will:

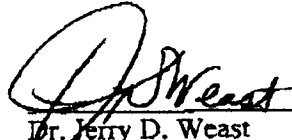
- Advise ANS on upcoming curriculum changes, especially in the science curriculum, to help ensure that *GreenKids* activities remain aligned with MCPS curriculum requirements.
- Review ANS *GreenKids* strategic plan and make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the plan for MCPS schools.
- Actively encourage schools to join *GreenKids* by disseminating information about the program to MCPS schools and by supporting those schools that participate.

MCPS and ANS will:

- Jointly seek funding for *GreenKids*, in accordance with the agreed upon strategic plan.
- Work cooperatively to identify the schools that are best targets for participation in *GreenKids*.
- Periodically review the progress of the program in schools, with the goal of improving the effectiveness of the program.



Neal Fitzpatrick
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Dr. Jerry D. Weast
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