

# Building a Strong School-based Foundation for a Sustainable DC By Developing an Environmental Literacy Framework

**DC Greens**, the **DC Environmental Education Consortium (DCEEC)**, and the **Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS)** are working toward realizing the Mayor's Vision of building a strong school-based foundation for a Sustainable DC by developing an Environmental Literacy Framework for the District of Columbia in collaboration with District schools.

In 2010 the D.C. Healthy Schools Act mandated the development of the DC Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP). The ELP develops an overall road map that lays the foundation for District-wide implementation and integration of environmental and sustainability education into the K-12 curriculum. The development of the Environmental Literacy Framework is the necessary next step towards the execution of the ELP. This framework will define the essential knowledge and skills that students need to know and be able to do in order to be environmentally literate.

## What is Environmental Literacy?

Environmental literacy is the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to make informed decisions concerning the relationships between natural and urban systems.

## An environmentally literate person:

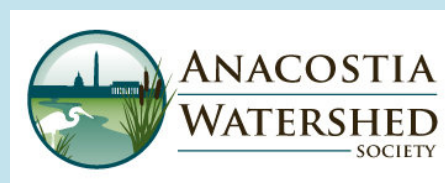
- can discuss and describe ecological and environmental systems and human impacts on these systems;
- engages in hands-on, outdoor learning experiences that involve discovery, inquiry, and problem solving;
- is able to question and analyze information pertaining to his or her surrounding environment;
- and has the capacity to take actions that respect, restore, protect, and sustain the health and well-being of human communities and environmental systems.

## The Environmental Literacy Framework as a Road Map

Eight schools (one in each ward) will be selected to become Sustainable DC Model Schools. These schools will participate in the development and piloting of the Environmental Literacy Framework. For the next two years, we will work collaboratively with teachers and administrators at these schools to ensure the framework can be effectively implemented in schools throughout the District.

## Timeline

- **Identify Sustainable DC Model Schools** *Summer 2013*
- **Convene ELF Working Group Monthly Meetings** *SY2013-2014*
- **Model School Environmental Education Program Assessment and Support** *SY2013-2014*
- **Ward-level Networking** *2013-2015*
- **Green Jobs Expos** *2013- 2015*
- **Completion of the Draft Environmental Literacy Framework** *June 2014*
- **Piloting and Publicizing the Environmental Literacy Framework** *SY2014-2015*



# Building a Strong School-based Foundation for a Sustainable DC By Developing an Environmental Literacy Framework

## As a Sustainable DC Model School you will:

- Identify an Environmental Education Coordinator\* who is passionate about integrating environmental and sustainable concepts across disciplines and who will have the support of the administrator and the cooperation of the teachers.
- The Environmental Education Coordinator will:
  - Fill out an environmental education program profile for the school
  - Attend monthly meetings to participate in the designing of the Environmental Literacy Framework
  - Liaise between your Sustainable DC Model School and the ELF Lead Team
  - Mentor neighboring schools in ward
  - Receive \$2,500 per year for his/her work

*\*science teacher, garden coordinator, environmental teacher, or sustainability coordinator*

## As the ELF Lead Team\*, we will:

- Lead ELF working groups
- Connect Sustainable DC Model Schools to a network of environmental education providers that work with District schools
- Design professional development for teachers based on individual school needs
- Support Sustainable DC Model Schools as they pilot the Environmental Literacy Framework

*\*Anacostia Watershed Society, DC Environmental Education Consortium, and DC Greens*

## Together the Sustainable DC Model Schools and the ELF Lead Team will:

Identify gaps & opportunities for integrating environmental & sustainability topics across disciplines and designing relevant, in-school professional development:

- Water use
- Watershed
- Land use
- Food systems
- Biodiversity
- Habitat restoration
- Air quality
- Energy use
- Climate change
- Recycling
- Resource conservation
- Environmental Justice

