

I. Project Description

The Outdoor Learning Lab at Pineville High School

Pineville High School, in collaboration with community partners, seeks funding through the PRIDE Environmental Education Grant Program to develop the Outdoor Learning Lab. The Outdoor Learning Lab will provide an easily accessible location for hands-on, multi-disciplinary environmental education activities for all students in grades 7-12. The primary goal of the Outdoor Learning Lab is to provide the students with a better understanding of nature and their responsibilities and relationship to the natural environment of Eastern Kentucky.

A committee including Pineville High School faculty, staff, students and alumni, Pineville City Council members, staff at Downtown Pineville, Inc. and the owner of a local environmental testing laboratory was established to formulate a plan to create an outdoor learning site in an abandoned courtyard area located between Pineville Elementary and Pineville High School. The site is 40ft. x 50 ft., has a built-in planter and four trees and will provide ample space for the creation of various study stations and learning areas that will meet the curricular needs of middle and high school aged students.

Planned methods of meeting our goal of providing students with a better understanding of nature and their responsibilities and relationship to the natural environment of Eastern Kentucky include the following:

1. Construction of a covered pavilion with four tables to accommodate classes
2. Creation of four study stations that will include a Weather Station, Bird Sanctuary, Butterfly Garden, and Mini-Greenhouse/Native Plant Garden.

The construction of a covered pavilion with four tables will provide a place where students can gather to share, discuss, reflect and learn. The pavilion will be used for observing, classifying, measuring, analyzing and interpreting results from the study stations.

The first study station will be the Weather Station. Students will document climatic conditions and weather's impact on nature through this study station. Students will monitor fluctuations in temperature, wind speed, rainfall, daylight hours and lunar phases.

The second study station will be the Bird Sanctuary. Students will construct a variety of feeders and will plant plants and shrubs designed to attract different species of birds throughout the outdoor learning lab. Besides developing and maintaining the Bird Sanctuary, students will document patterns of growth, migration, feeding, etc.

The third study station will be the Butterfly Garden. Students will use existing planters to create a Butterfly Garden that will include plants and flowers that attract butterflies. In addition to planting and maintaining the Butterfly Garden students will document their observations.

The fourth study station will be the Mini-Greenhouse/Native Plant Garden. Students will construct a mini-greenhouse kit for growing native plants to be used in the Native Plant Garden. In addition to constructing and maintaining the mini-greenhouse and garden students will document the stages of growth of native plants.

Progress of the Outdoor Learning Lab will be measured by completion of the timeline milestones and records of student/teacher use of the Outdoor Learning Lab and Study Stations.

II. Timeline of Activities

September/October 2004

- Conduct Outdoor Learning Lab Orientation with project partners, school staff, Student PRIDE group
- Develop schedule of classes/assign responsibilities for maintenance
- Plan for fall planting of native plants and shrubs
- Plan for butterfly garden
- Construct covered pavilion
- Set up weather station
- Create feeding areas for Bird Sanctuary
- Set up Mini-Greenhouse
- Stock Mini-Greenhouse
- Plant native plants and shrubs
- Plant butterfly garden

November 2004

- Host Outdoor Learning Lab Open House for school and community
- Maintenance and documentation of activities are ongoing

December 2004

- Order supplies for Spring

January 2005

- Progress report must be completed by January 14, 2005 for PRIDE

February 2005

- Finalize work plan for spring planting, events

March 2005

- Plant for spring (butterfly garden/native plant garden, etc.)

April – June 2005

- Conduct environmental education activities at Outdoor Learning Lab

III. Project Partners

Pineville Independent Board of Education

The Pineville Independent Board of Education will provide \$700 in funding for the project.

Pineville City Council:

The Pineville City Council has committed \$150 in funding for the Outdoor Learning Lab. Two city council members will also commit volunteer time to the project.

Downtown Pineville, Inc.:

Downtown Pineville, Inc., a local non-profit environmental and educational organization in Pineville will provide volunteer work for establishment and maintenance of the Outdoor Learning Lab and training for faculty, staff and students.

Quality Laboratories, Inc.:

Don Price, owner and operator of Quality Laboratories, a local environmental testing laboratory, will volunteer at the Outdoor Learning Lab. Mr. Price will provide

analytical testing training for students and staff and provide additional financial support as needed.

IV. Additional Information

In a recent U.S. Census Bureau report the Pineville Independent School District ranked first in the state for the percentage of children ages 5-17 who live at or below the Federal Poverty Threshold. In order to create the Outdoor Learning Lab at Pineville High School, outside funding is essential. Funding through the PRIDE initiative, coupled with volunteer support from the community will ensure that the outdoor learning site is developed and maintained so the students at Pineville will become the environmentally literate citizens of the future.