ORANGEBURG COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Orangeburg County School District receives a 2022-2023 Champions of the Environment Grant

ORANGEBURG, S.C. – Orangeburg County School District (OCSD) is one of 20 schools in South Carolina to receive a grant to support the education of the next generation of environmental stewards, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) recently announced.

"Champions of the Environment" awards are issued each school year to foster environmental education and action in South Carolina's classrooms, from kindergarten through 12th grade. For example, in OCSD, Brookdale Elementary School was awarded a $2000 grant for their Hydroponic Gardening Project. Students at Brookdale Elementary will learn about Deep Water Culture and Wick System hydroponic gardening. After planting, they will maintain the growing systems by checking the temperature and water daily while keeping logs of their observations. Students in grades 3-5 will be directly involved, but all students will benefit from the grant.

"We are so elated to have been chosen to receive a Champions of the Environment award," said Mrs. LaTonya Nelson, Brookdale Elementary School's Principal. "Our school is full of eager students ready to engage in hands-on experiences that take them beyond the traditional way of gardening." Mrs. Delorise Childs, Brookdale's Math Coach, will spearhead this initiative. "The idea of applying for this grant came from my observations of students' level of excitement and engagement as we developed a traditional garden at the school. Students learned very quickly what it takes to garden. Because of their level of excitement, we decided to introduce the students to something unique as this world is constantly changing," said Mrs. Childs.

Teachers apply for Champions of the Environment grant funding by outlining their educational project that focuses on pollution or waste reduction, water or energy efficiency, or preservation of natural areas.

"We always encourage our educators to be innovative and creative in the pedagogy of teaching," said Dr. Shawn Foster, OCSD Superintendent. "I am proud of Brookdale Elementary for receiving this grant. I look forward to visiting with our students and learning about their garden in the coming months," Foster said.

In addition to OCSD's project, the other projects include gardens, habitat restoration projects, litter prevention, citizen science, waste management, and alternate energy sources. The grant program is sponsored by DHEC, Dominion Energy, and Sylvamo, with assistance from the Environmental Education Association of South Carolina.

For more information, including descriptions of OCSD's project and each of the other winning projects, visit **www.scdhec.gov/champions**.

The mission of Orangeburg County School District, the catalyst of innovation and excellence, is to ensure all students discover and develop their person, purpose, and platform through high-quality educational experiences distinguished by a culture of collaboration, equity, and inclusion; a creative learning environment with inspiring opportunities; a commitment to nurture the academic, physical, social and emotional well-being of all. Visit us online at ocsdsc.org.

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