

Press Release:

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Riverview Teacher Suzanne Everett Awarded MAC Grant

High School Science Teacher Suzanne Everett was awarded her 3rd MAC Grant. Everett also received the grant in 2014 and 2016. MAC Grants are awarded by McDonald's to help Make Activities Count in Your Classroom.

Ms. Everett's MAC Grant will be used to purchase an aquaponics system. Aquaponics is the science of food production using hydroponics and aquaculture. Using an aquaponics system allows students to observe a self-sustaining ecosystem. Aquaponics reduces the environmental footprint of farming by using less water and soil compared to traditional farming methods. The system consists of an aquarium with fish and a grow light to aid in growing vegetables, like lettuce. The students feed the fish, the fish waste feeds the plants, and the plants return clean water to the fish. The plants that are grown with the system are edible. Aquaponics is used to produce large quantities of food, but that requires a large growing space. A smaller aquaponics system will allow my students to grow vegetables right in our classroom while reducing water and soil needs.

In terms of curriculum, the aquaponics system aligns with PA state standards for ecosystems, natural resources, and sustainability, and technology. Lesson plans include studying environmental factors affecting ecosystems and cycles of matter, natural resources, like water and soil, managing natural resources, and sustaining water and land resources. From an engineering and design standpoint, students will learn how an aquaponics system uses ecosystem principles and modern technology, to recycle matter through a self-sustaining ecosystem to aid in food production. We will also collect data to calculate the reduction in water and soil use by using aquaponics rather than traditional farming methods.

Now that is **SERIOUS SUCCESS!**