



Jackson County School System

All-Around excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts

1660 Winder Highway
Jefferson, GA 30549
706-367-5151
www.Jacksonschools.ga.org

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West Jackson Elementary School Awarded ‘Vibrant Communities’ Grant from Georgia Council for the Arts

HOSCHTON – West Jackson Elementary School (WJES) was awarded the Vibrant Community Grant from the Department of Education on Thursday, October 20, 2022. The grant will be used to increase educational opportunities for students to learn more about the Arts.

The ‘Vibrant Communities’ grant awarded WJES with an amount of \$4,666 to improve the school's art program and expand students' hands-on learning with projects, workshops, and to increase artistic learning opportunities for visual learners.

West Jackson Elementary will use the award to enhance the First Grade Learning Garden by partnering with Jeff Mather, an artist-in-residence to improve the garden and inspire students with various in person activities to increase their artistic abilities. As a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) school, the learning areas within and around WJES allow students to investigate, reflect, and communicate through the arts.

“We are excited for the opportunity to partner with Jeff Mather and enhance the 1st Grade Learning Garden with student created art,” West Jackson Elementary Principal Lori King said. “The Learning Garden is continually used to engage students in academic learning and performances, and is also used during community events, such as our spring and fall festivals. In this way, the Learning Garden is a place for families to explore and enjoy nature, as well as for students to share their learning.”

Future plans include displays of student made art sculptures throughout the learning garden, utilizing the stage area for performances, and hosting community events. Mr. Mather will provide guidance as he works with students to create an art installation that represents a variety of plants growing in the garden, as well as the parts of the plants. The new art installation will help teach students about the plants in the garden and further inspire students to express their ideas through arts.