



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Saving a National Treasure

CBF successfully provided professional learning for nine Prince William County Administrators and Supervisors through our Virginia Environmental Leadership for School Leaders summer courses. Having trained and invested School Leaders will enable Prince William County to develop MWEE curricula, support teachers in professional development, and realize the Virginia Profile of the Graduate. We engaged an additional two Prince William teachers in other Chesapeake Classrooms courses in Virginia for a total of 11 trained teachers. We are pleased to report that as a direct result of VA DCR supporting CBF's work with Prince William County Administrators and Supervisors during summer 2024, we were able to plan a dedicated 3-day course that is taking place for Prince William County teachers that will serve an additional 14 teachers the summer of 2025. This is one example of how CBF's approach to work systemically with school partners and train school leaders and teachers can lead to sustainably embedded MWEE's into the curriculum. We look forward to continuing our work with Prince William County in 2025 and beyond.

Trainings are organized so that participants will gain first-hand experience on the Chesapeake Bay while strengthening leadership capacity in environmental education. Through the Principals Environmental Leadership Program, CBF provides high-quality professional learning that meets the evolving needs of administrators and schools. School principals and administrators will engage in hands-on experiences, training, resources, and collegial discussion to design a school program that utilizes and benefits the local environment and promotes environmental stewardship opportunities for their entire school community. As a result of participation in the course, leaders will Introduce and demonstrate the concept of using Environment-Based Education as an integrating context for learning and how Environmental Education promotes success. They will Explore the practical aspects of using the environment to engage teachers, students, and the school community as well as learn about the Bay ecosystem and use it as a case study for teaching and learning about and in the environment. Participants network with colleagues and reflect on the potential for using the environment as a significant theme for their school and community and they learn about state and local initiatives that support environmental education. In addition, participants create a plan for their school or division

that defines the steps for successful implementation of an environmental education program.

CBF uses a qualitative evaluation post-Chesapeake Classrooms summer course, and we conduct pre & post-course surveys to determine whether teachers feel more knowledgeable and confident about developing and implementing a MWEE as a result of course participation. Below are quotes from Prince William County participants from our Virginia School Leaders courses:

“I thought the trip was one of the best teacher trainings/activities I have ever done. I have already recommended it to all the Science teachers in the building and several others. I will definitely include more outdoor education in my classroom.”

“The training was amazing! Not only do you get to spend time on an island with such rich history and obvious strong connections to the environment, you also get to network and brainstorm with other professionals. This is the most valuable part of the training. That synergy of thought is a powerful change maker, and I look forward to working with them as we enrich the meaningful watershed educational experiences for our students and staff.”

CBF provided well over (5) field-based watershed programs for up to 125 Virginia students during our Fall 2024/Spring 2025 field seasons. During just the Fall 2024 season we provided field program days for approximately 5,635 Virginia students, teachers, and other adult learners which included 43 participants from Prince William County Schools on our student field programs. Our student field programs provide Virginia students the opportunity to participate in Outdoor Field Investigations that includes a local context for students to conduct issue investigations and gather authentic data.