



Dear Community Member,

Engaging students in science, math, and technology are the most important factors in creating tomorrow's leaders.

***Courtyard Classrooms* is a program**, sponsored by the Hilton PSO & the Brecksville-Broadview Hts School District that **addresses this issue**. We all know you can only learn so much through the teachings of a book; **it's through hands-on activities that students will really learn & retain the knowledge of what they have been taught**. With your help, learning comes alive for our students. They will have the opportunity to watch a tadpole turn into a frog, forecast weather in a weather station, create an edible root garden & pretend to be Monet while painting in our outdoor studio.

***Courtyard Classrooms* will be offered to the 320+ students of Hilton Elementary grades K-3** as part of their daily learning activities. The Courtyards are located within the schools walls, offering convenience & safety for our young children.

We are pleased to announce that we completed our first Courtyard Classroom in August of 2010 and are excited to start our next two this coming summer. We have reached our fundraising goal of \$20,000 for our final two courtyards thanks to the generosity of Hilton Families, the communities of Brecksville and Broadview Heights & multiple grants. This will enable us to create & complete our final two Courtyards.

Our first Courtyard Classroom we created is a Science Lab. The Science Lab features:

- A Weather Station: Teaching the children about wind speed, direction, & creating energy from wind, Barometric Pressure, Humidity, Cloud Formations, Temperature
- Pond: Teaching children about ecosystems, amphibian metamorphosis, plant life; We have many tadpoles currently undergoing metamorphosis as well as 12 goldfish that the children enjoy helping with feeding.
- 100% Recycled Product Tables to accommodate 32 students including one ADA compliant table
- Ohio Garden with Bird Houses: Featuring mostly Native Ohio plants so that students can study and learn about our native species of plants and how they aid birds native to Ohio
- Four Cultural Gardens: These gardens include plants that are found in their native country like China, India, Africa and Ireland
- Flower & Herb Gardens: Gardens create dynamic, ever-changing, natural environments suitable for learning on every level
- Green Themes: Using & installing only planet friendly items, renewable forms of energy, and teaching children about composting and recycling

The 2nd Courtyard Classroom will have some similarities to the 1st Science Lab but will have some different features. It will include:

- A Butterfly Garden: The Kindergartener's and Third graders study the butterfly life cycle.
- A Weather Station: Teaching the children about wind speed, direction, & creating energy from wind, Barometric Pressure, Humidity, Cloud Formations, Temperature
- Pond: Teaching children about ecosystems, amphibian metamorphosis, plant life
- A Fairygarden – Focusing on stories which our Kindergarten and 1st graders study

The 3rd Courtyard Classroom will be a Cultural Arts Lab. This courtyard, located between the Library & Art Room, will feature:

- Amphitheater seating made of earth friendly materials where students will enjoy a story or lesson being taught by their teacher
- Easels to allow children to enjoy & create outside, during art class
- A stage for children to perform skits and plays, which will also be a reading nook during library time
- Mythical & Magical themes to open the world to the children, allowing their creative ideas and dreams to be expressed in their reading, writing, and artwork



To make this happen we are currently in need of volunteers to help with the following items:



- Planting bushes and flowers
- Installing Pebbles, Mulch and Soil where needed
- Digging & Installing a small pond
- Installation of tables, benches and other items
- Woodworking to create the Amphitheater seating, Small Stage & Art Easels

Could you envision having outdoor courtyard classrooms, like this, available to you when you were in elementary school? From reading and language arts, to science, math, and nutrition, to cross-cultural understanding and human rights exploration, everything is possible in the hands-on laboratories of the Courtyard Classrooms. **Textbook lessons literally come to life** as butterflies metamorphose, plants grow through their life cycle, and vegetation decomposes.

The Hilton Elementary Parent-Student Organization (PSO) is dedicated to providing our students, the best of the best, when it comes to their education and school life. You may be surprised to learn that students who participate in gardening & lab programs grow in other ways, too: they develop positive attitudes and behaviors that enhance the quality of their lives. And they learn important sociological skills such as cooperation, tolerance, appreciation for similarities and differences, and a global understanding of diverse cultures. **Our children are the future and with your help, we can enhance their growth and potential during these early formative years.**

In order to make this happen for our kids, we need to ask for your assistance in providing this opportunity to the students of Hilton Elementary School. **Your expertise and time volunteering to help, is much needed and would be greatly appreciated.** All donations will be listed in our monthly newsletter, on our website & the program at our grand opening. In addition to asking for support from our Hilton parents, we have been asking for assistance from local organizations.

Hilton Elementary Public School is 1 of 3 elementary schools in the district, housing over 320 students grades K-3. We have a very diverse group of kids with over 12% being considered Economically Disadvantaged and almost 10% considered to be with disabilities. The Brecksville-Broadview Heights City School District has once again - for the tenth consecutive year - earned the highest rating on the Ohio Department of Education's Local Report Card. Additionally, due to the district's scores and academic growth rate in student achievement on the Ohio Achievement Tests and the Ohio Graduation Tests, the district earned for the second time possible the newest and now highest rating of "Excellent with Distinction."

Each Courtyard Classroom will have a Grand Opening Party, to celebrate its opening. This party will be **open to the public** including Hilton's families, donors, volunteers, city leaders, the School Board and the local press and media. Pictures from the party will be featured on the School District's web page and in local newspapers such as the Brecksville Gazette, Broadview Hts Gazette, Sun Newspapers, MiMi's, The Plain Dealer and more. **This project should generate media stories** about the creation of the Courtyard Classrooms, since they are the first of this type for the BBHSCD and neighboring school systems, in which we will be sure to thank all of the companies and organizations that have helped to make this project a success.

We currently have a webpage, titled Courtyard Classrooms that is available through the BBHSCD.org Hilton Elementary website. Donors, volunteers and the public will be able to see the progress of our project and also read notes and updates about the project. **Our site includes a thank you page for all of our generous donors and volunteers.** If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Karen Bazan at 440-717-1833 or you can send email inquiries to karenbazan@sbcglobal.net.

Regards,



Courtyard Classrooms Committee

David Martin, Principal, Hilton Elementary School

Karen Bazan, Tina Urbanowicz, Pam Bowler, Hilton Elementary School PSO

Michelle Gagne, Teacher Consultant, Hilton Elementary School

Hilton Elementary School PSO

Non-Profit 501 (c) 3 Organization (EIN: 03-0467096)

_____(We/I) have expertise with _____
that you may find helpful with the installation/landscaping of the Classrooms. Please contact me at
_____ to discuss.

Our company _____ has items we would like to donate (such as bird baths, bird houses, Whimsical Garden Décor, Items used for a pond installation, Items for landscaping purposes mulch, plants, rocks & dirt, or a gift card to buy items you may need from our business.) Items for donation are: -

Please mail any donations to:

**Hilton Elementary School – Courtyards
6812 Mill Road
Brecksville, OH 44141**

You may also call or email Karen Bazan at 440/717-1833/ karenbazan@sbcglobal.net to arrange a time for us to pick up your donation.

Thank you for your time and help.



PS: Our kids will Thank you!!