

BUILDING THE OUTSIDE-IN CLASSROOM

McCullough, Michael

Project Sustainability, Michael@projectsustainability.org

Martin, Michael

Iowa State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, mdmartin@iastate.edu

Sajady, Mollika

University of Minnesota, Department of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics saja0007@umn.edu

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a primary school curriculum that engages students in a project-based learning module. The module promotes environmental education by allowing students to design, install and maintain a “green wall” system constructed within the classroom. This program requires active participation and thoughtful engagement of participants and can be adapted for use across learning environments for students of all ages. The program is grounded in pedagogical research that indicates educational benefits from utilizing outdoor elements in learning environments and project-based curricular strategies. Elements from the fields of science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) provide the basis for the interactive learning curriculum. Our premise is to utilize contemporary and cost-effective modular green wall technologies for the transformation of classrooms as learning environments, while affording instructors and students the opportunity to be directly and continuously involved in that transformation.

Keywords

Outside-in classroom, living wall, green wall, STEAM, STEM, environmental education, project-based learning, active learning, elementary school.