

2016 CSAC Challenge Awards

Executive Summary

TITLE: Disaster Preparedness Curriculum, *“Be Aware! Be Prepared!”*

OVERVIEW:

In partnership with the San Diego County Office of Education, the County’s Office of Emergency Services developed a disaster education curriculum for fourth grade students.

PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE:

San Diego County has the unfortunate distinction of having endured two federally declared disasters in just a decade. Youth make up about 25 percent of our county’s population. As such, the County has a vested interest in engaging and empowering youth to become active participants in individual, family, and community disaster preparedness.

SOLUTION:

In early 2014, the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services (OES) partnered with the San Diego County Office of Education to develop a fourth grade disaster preparedness curriculum called “Be Aware, Be Prepared.” OES developed the concept, selected various natural hazards (earthquake, volcanoes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and wildfires), and provided tips on how individuals can be better prepared to respond before, during, and after each of the different hazards. This curriculum not only teaches the youth about natural disasters, but also encourages them to work with their families to create a family disaster plan and assemble an emergency kit to enhance the family’s preparedness during an emergency.

ORIGINALITY:

By working closely with the San Diego County Office of Education, OES was able to design a curriculum that effectively aligns with the State’s Common Core standards. This cutting-edge project also integrated the use of technology throughout the curriculum through the development of a SymbalooEDU website that supports teacher and student learning. By creating

SymbalooEDU, teachers and students have the ability to access OES' curriculum and other disaster related information at any time.

BUDGET/COST/SAVINGS:

To date, the project has cost a total of \$134,788, all of which has been funded by Homeland Security Grant Program funds. The cost encompasses curriculum development, printing, delivery, and other associated costs.

RESULTS:

The "Be Aware, Be Prepared" curriculum was implemented in December 2014, when the largest school district in the County, San Diego Unified, adopted the program. Chula Vista Elementary School District, the second largest district in the County, adopted the curriculum at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year. Today, the curriculum is taught in thirteen districts throughout the county, to approximately 8,500 students in 300 classrooms. Several teachers have shared positive feedback about the program, stating that they feel the curriculum helps students feel empowered by their knowledge, rather than afraid of disasters, and also helps their school community be better prepared. Staff at OES continue to work to have the curriculum incorporated in all fourth grade classrooms in San Diego County and to host additional professional development sessions for teachers.

PROJECT CONTACT:

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OPTIONAL SUBMISSION:

- 1) Disaster Curriculum website- video on program and screenshot of Symbaloo platform
- 2) "Be Aware, Be Prepared" student manual