

Thousand Oaks Tile Installation: “Climate Change Solutions”

The tile project that is being proposed at Thousand Oaks will involve clay tiles designed and created by the fourth graders with a theme of climate change and solution. The visiting artist on the project is Kalen Meyer. She is the same person who did the Eastern Redbud tiles in the north courtyard with the first grade classes. (This project was approved by the School Board on June 13, 2018, and is now being enjoyed by the school community.) She has taught art to children for two decades in a variety of settings, including the Jefferson after-school program.

The students will be using clay and making their own tiles. They will be rolling the clay and transferring their previously sketched images about climate change and solutions onto the unfired tiles. They will then glaze them and carve image lines into the tiles to create a relief tile. The tiles will then be fired and placed on the concrete perimeter walls/seating in the courtyard, as illustrated in the photograph below. (The images visible in the photo are temporary mock-ups mounted with tape.) The images will relate to climate change and solutions to the climate crises: they will have weather and clean energy source images: wind, solar, conservation, biomass, etc. They will also have images of other ways to conserve energy such as: biking, walking, and recycling. Prior to doing the actual art tiles, the fourth graders engaged in curriculum and learning about climate change and solutions in their classes.

The tiles will be 6”x6”, and each student will make one, for a total of 70, from three classes. They will be installed individually and spread around the courtyard, rather than grouped in one area. They will be grouped in themes so that the entire art installation can inspire critical and thoughtful conversations about climate change and solutions, along with enhancing the community gathering space with beauty! After the installation, the students will teach the younger students in the school about climate change, using the tiles as the basis for their teaching.

This project is being funded by a \$700 grant from the Berkeley Schools fund, and a \$250 grant from the Thousand Oaks P.T.A.

At the bottom of this document, please find a description of how the project meets the criteria established in the School Board’s Public Art Policy (BP 7151).

Also below are four photos. The first three show some of the tiles to be installed. The first photo includes tiles illustrating the causes/problems associated with climate change. The second and third photos show tiles representing solutions/benefits. The fourth photo includes mock-up images (not actual tiles) to illustrate potential placement of the tiles in the courtyard.





Project Review Board:

- Jacqui Parker, Thousand Oaks Principal
- Pete Gidlund, BUSD Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) supervisor
- Suzanne McCulloch, former BUSD VAPA supervisor
- Gale Antokal, artist, Berkeley resident and professor at San Jose State University
- Jeni Wendel, Thousand Oaks teacher
- David Kerr, Thousand Oaks parent

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL – THOUSAND OAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Clay Tile Project

Public Art Criteria as outlined in BUSD Board Policy 7151 Public Art Policy

1. The art work will identify the building as a student-centered environment. The work will be developmentally appropriate to the students of the school.

The site for this project is in the gathering circle that is on the South side of the school, by the upper grade classrooms and office. This is a common gathering place for upper grade classes throughout the school. The tile art will reflect the learning that the 4th graders have done about climate change, and specifically about sustainable and renewable energy sources that humans can use both now and in the future.

2. Projects may be opportunities for students to have a hands-on learning experience. The permanence of a project will be used to bring significance to the contributions of the students.

The 4th grade students have been learning about climate change, and climate change solutions, through hands on research and inquiry. For many of them, this has been their first time learning more in depth about the topic. They are excited about the idea of creating art for the community for years to come. Their art will enhance the gathering space that children use at Thousand Oaks every day.

3. Where feasible, projects should provide staff development or support teacher-directed classroom projects.

The 4th grade teachers have collaborated to create curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and rich for their students. The culmination of this project will be the tiles, and the tiles themselves will also be used as teaching tools for the 4th grade students to teach lower grade students about this issue.

4. The public artwork at our schools should be considered in the overall context of the school and will have a sense of inclusiveness and be broadly meaningful to the larger community.

This art project will bring beauty and joy to the community gathering space. It will be meaningful to the larger community in that it will reflect the in-depth learning of the students and its connection to the wider world outside the classroom. It's focus is a timely one that will only be more pertinent in the years to come. It will have both an artistic and a teaching component.

5. The work will complement the architecture of the building and the physical environment, including form, scale, and materials.

The tiles fit well in the space and balance with the cement circular structure. As you know, we did something similar in the other circle last year, and the tiles truly add liveliness and beauty to the space. Last year's tile were three dimensional, these tiles will use a different technique.

6. The proposed materials will withstand weather, vandalism, and maintenance.

The processes used to create these tiles are being managed by an experienced artist, Kalen Meyer. She has thought through issues of weather, vandalism, and maintenance.

7. Project will have artistic merit.

Yes! These tiles are joyful and expressive!

8. Applicants will demonstrate appropriate experience and the organizational capacity to carry out the proposed activity and achieve the intended outcome.

We have obtained funding from the Schools Fund and from the Thousand Oaks PTA. We are consulting with professional tilers, and we will work closely with BUSD Facilities to insure that the installation will meet the highest standard that they expect.
