

7/16/02

Nate Walrod  
Creative Language Arts  
E.C. Reems Academy  
8411 Macarthur  
Oakland, CA 94603

Dear Vida Verde,

After talking with the teachers and chaperones they unanimously expressed that the program was excellent, well run, and it applied to the lives of the children, the program addressed discipline and created outlets for student voice and fun while working through a curriculum appropriate for a farmer, a veterinarian, and a naturalist. This curriculum does not fulfill the low-income African-American job aspiration stereotypes of basketball star, hair stylist, and hip-hop star. A large amount of the children I teach dearly want to be veterinarians yet have never seen an animal other than a cat and dog, they want to be healthy yet have never eaten food from the plant from which it grew, and all the children I teach want to feel comfortable on this earth yet have never been in a place more alive than a grass field.

In my two years working with these children, this trip was the most powerful learning experience I have witnessed. The children will never forget milking the goat, seeing a snake slither through the grass, and seeing where greens come from. You have an incredible program because you have a beautiful and practical piece of land, experience as classroom teachers, and the passion and leadership to insist that Vida Verde be a nurturing environment for all children.

Thank you for your hard work please know that E.C. Reems supports you and wants to be on your schedule for next year. We would like to build a long lasting relationship with you.

Sincerely,

Nate Walrod, teacher