



“Every Classroom a Green Classroom”
Green Classroom Profile: *Moshe Vilozy*
Grades TK-5 Music, Gault Elementary
Gault Green Team

Teacher Leadership Institute for Sustainability 2024-2025

TEACHER LEADER BIO: *Moshe Vilozy*


Moshe Vilozy was raised in Santa Cruz and studied music at Cabrillo College and UCSC. He worked as a professional musician for many years before getting his teaching credential and moving from music performance to music education.

Voice and guitar are his primary instruments, but as an elementary music teacher, Moshe has learned to play a little bit of everything. You can learn more about Moshe and listen to some of his original compositions at [Teacher Moshe's Website](#).



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Classroom Demographics	Grade level(s): TK-5 # of students: 336 Content Area :Music	
Project Participation Data	Content area(s) focus for this project: Music, Science # of student who implemented this project: 336 Estimated # of people impacted (e.g. other classes, families, etc):336 Student quote: “Songs make learning fun”	
School Site	Gault Elementary School	School Logo
School Demographics	Find ed-data here and fill in the following: Grades served: K-5 # students: 336 % English learners:40% % qualifying for free and reduced price meals: 60%	

District	Enter district name here - Santa Cruz City Schools	District Logo
District Demographics	Find ed-data here and fill in the following: Grades served: # students: % English learners: % qualifying for free and reduced price meals:	
General Vision/Mission of School and/or district	Santa Cruz City Schools' mission is to create and support a learning environment that challenges and enables each student to achieve their highest potential, focusing on equity, high expectations, and safe, positive school environments.	

1) TEACHER GOALS AND INTENTIONS

What originally drew you to this program? (50-100 words)?

I was drawn to the TLIS program because I want to have a positive environmental impact in my community, and I heard wonderful things from TLIS alumni that teach with me at Gault school. I was excited to get an opportunity to collaborate with other teachers at my site, and to meet and work with other environmentally conscious teachers in Santa Cruz County.

Share your vision for your Green Classroom. How has this program affected this vision? (50-100 words)?

My vision for my green classroom is to implement an effective recycling program where waste is reduced and recyclables are recycled. This program helped motivate me to work as a team with 5 other TLIS teachers at Gault to streamline waste reduction and recycling in our classrooms, and throughout our campus. We met regularly to share our individual classroom goals, and to also collaborate in forming a "Green Team" at Gault in collaboration with students..

3) ACTION - ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROJECT OVERVIEW

Provide a brief summary of the purpose of your project and overall goals (100-300 words).

<p>Summary of Project Purpose and Goals:</p> <p>I worked together with other TLIS teachers at Gault to streamline waste reduction and recycling in our classrooms, and our campus. I also used “eco-lyrics” to write songs together with students to explore environmental awareness. We performed our own songs and other songs about taking care of the environment at our school earth-day celebration.</p>	<p>WE’VE GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN OUR HANDS Recycle plastic, glass, & cans Composting is good for the land Reuse things when you can Against pollution, let’s take a stand Life is precious, life is grand WE’VE GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN OUR HANDS</p>
<p>What specific learning intention(s) did you share with your students?</p> <p>We have been learning how our actions impact our environment. We discussed actions that we can take to reduce waste and live more sustainably including reducing, recycling, reusing, and composting. We updated our recycling system and discussed the benefits of composting.</p>	
<p>How did this project serve your content area instructional goals?</p> <p>We enjoyed learning about science through music through this project. Through the Gault Green Team we discussed and explored environmental sustainability. We learned about the processes and benefits of reducing waste, recycling, and composting, and the environmental impacts of our actions. We used songs to explore many of these themes. For example, we learned the song “Dirt Made My Lunch” and discussed the process of how the food that we eat is connected to soil. We then had a planting activity for earth day where we used rich soil that had benefited from our school garden compost pile, to plant and grow vegetable seeds.</p>	
<p>How did this project serve your environmental literacy goals and connect to your Green Classroom vision and the broader mission and vision of the school/district?</p> <p>This project connects to my Green Classroom vision by implementing a more thorough recycling and composting system in my classroom. The Gault Green Team aligns with the broader mission of Gault’s commitment to sustainability. Our school as a whole is motivated to reduce waste and recycle more effectively. By teaching students how to be environmental stewards, we are ensuring that students will have the knowledge, tools, and interest, in taking care of the environment.</p>	
<p>Where do you see your project on the Environmental Literacy Integration Continuum? (e.g. Supplemental/Mild, Focused Unit/Medium, Ongoing Routine/Medium-Spicy, Transformative Project Based Learning/Spicy)</p> <p>I see the Gault Green Team project as an ongoing routine because it is a school-wide endeavor. By streamlining recycling and waste in each classroom, and throughout our campus, we are having a positive environmental impact. Each student that learns how to live more sustainably brings that knowledge home to their families to increase environmental literacy throughout our community</p>	

4) ACTION - IMPLEMENTATION STORY

Describe how implementation of your environmental action project went. *If your project has not finished yet, describe how the start has gone, and how you anticipate it completing (300 - 500 words).*

General story of implementation:

Challenges and obstacles and how you overcame them: One challenge that I found with this project was making this project work as a specials teacher that sees over 300 students at Gault. Since I only see each class once a week for less than an hour, I have a different teaching situation than most of the other homeroom teachers. I overcame this challenge by incorporating music and songwriting into my project, and by collaborating with the other TLIS teachers at Gault.

Successes and what contributed to success: Having a team of educators participating in TLIS that I could network and check in with was a big help. I was able to implement activities in my classroom, and also work as a team on schoolwide projects like our earth day celebration, and our Gault Green Team.

List the outdoor learning spaces your students spent time in as part of this project: We spent time in the outdoor patio behind the music room, as well as in the school garden. We also did a walking field trip to the Civic Auditorium to hear the Santa Cruz Symphony. We decided to walk instead of drive to reduce our carbon footprint and save money by not hiring a bus.

Next Steps for this project: We plan to continue the Gault Green Team next year. I also plan to continue using April and our Earth Day celebration and music performance as an opportunity to learn songs with eco-lyricism and also write our own songs to perform.

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5) ACTION - METRICS AND OUTCOMES

For the sections below, include how you tried to measure impacts and what evidence of outcomes you found.

Educational Benefit - Share any evidence of student learning from this project, and reflect on how this project engaged students in building knowledge and skills in your focus content area(s): After studying best practices for recycling I quizzed students on what to do with items after lunch. At the beginning of the year, some students were not aware of what can be recycled and how to recycle. Most students had little or no concept of what compost is, and the benefits to composting. At this point in the school year, most students are now able to identify what items are recyclable, and how to compost. We are seeing an increase in recycling and a reduction in waste schoolwide.

Ecological Benefit - If possible, how were you able to measure the ecological benefit such as reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced waste, increased biodiversity, etc. and what were the outcomes?: By walking to the civic auditorium for our symphony field trip, we were able to reduce greenhouse emissions. By educating students and implementing a more robust recycling and composting program at Gault we are reducing waste.

Community & Culture Benefit - How were you able to measure impacts on classroom culture and community (for example, students' sense of connection to nature, stewardship) and what were the outcomes?: By walking to our symphony field trip we saved over \$1000 by not hiring two buses and we reduced carbon emissions by not using gasoline. During the walk we walked over the San Lorenzo river and observed the wildlife, ducks, and birds. It was high tide, and we were also able to watch sea otters that were swimming upstream. We discussed the positive impact of our choice to walk rather than drive, and the physical and environmental benefits. In regards to our Green Team and our push to reduce waste and increase recycling and composting on campus, we improved signage and bins throughout campus.

Impact on Students' Sense of Connection to the Environment (results of Children's Environmental Attitude Survey and/or any other evidence of impact) - Reflect on how this project shifted students environmental identity and environmental literacy:

Overall assessment - How would you characterize the success of your project?: I found this project to be successful because I found many different ways to incorporate environmental literacy into music lessons. It was both fun, and challenging. I see ways that I can continue to build on environmental literacy through music in the future, and I look forward to doing so. This was also a great opportunity to work together with other teachers at Gault towards a common goal of having positive impact on the environment and reducing our carbon footprint.

6) REFLECTION AND COMMITMENTS

Where are you experiencing the most growth in your knowledge and skills related to being a teacher leader for sustainability? A critical part of this program is building knowledge and skills related to Sustainable Schools. (Examples include: Environmental Literacy & Sustainability Frameworks; Environmental Identity; Building student engagement through Campus, Curriculum, Community and Culture efforts; Application on a Continuum of Environmental Literacy Integration. *(100 - 150- words)*)

I am experiencing significant growth in my knowledge and skills related to being a teacher leader for sustainability by educating my students on the environmental impacts that our actions have on the environment, and empowering them to take action. By showing students how to recycle, reduce, and re-use and by showing them that ways big and small that each one of us can make a difference, students are able to create a ripple effect throughout the community. The TLIS project has given me tools and ideas for teaching sustainability. Being a teacher leader for sustainability has reminded me that I can integrate and incorporate environmental literacy into my lessons, and encouraged me to do so. In addition, forming the Gault Green Team together with other TLIS teachers has helped motivate our campus to improve our recycling system to reduce waste. It is wonderful to be able to work towards sustainability in my classroom, while also connecting and networking with other teachers to compare strategies, successes, and challenges.

Commitments: What is your enduring understanding about teaching for a sustainable future? And what are your commitments for next year and beyond for this important work?

Reflection on Enduring Understanding:

My enduring understanding about teaching for a sustainable future is that it is important to educate and empower students to work towards a more sustainable way of living. It is our job as educators to give students the knowledge and the tools to be able to take individual and collective action.

Commitments:

I am committed to integrating environmental literacy in my teaching. I am also committed to continue walking to local field trips whenever possible to reduce carbon emissions and working with the bike and walk to school program to encourage students to bike and walk to school when possible. I will continue working with our school to improve and expand the Gault Green Team to educate and empower students to get involved in waste reduction on campus. I will continue working to reduce waste in my classroom and throughout our campus. I will continue using eco-lyricism as a way to teach sustainability and involve students in the songwriting process.