

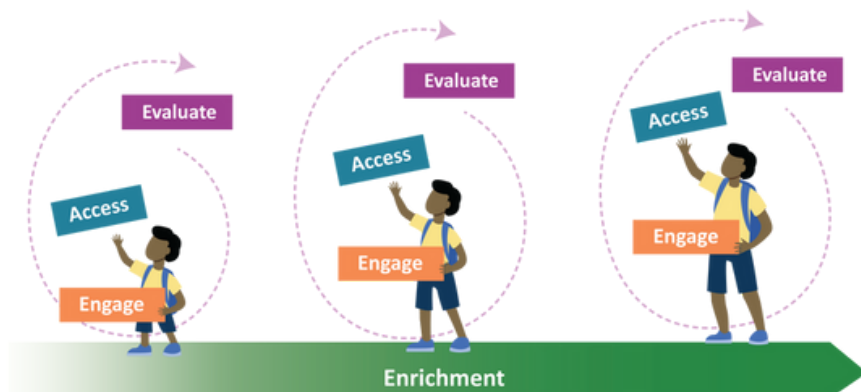


Early Childhood Educator Amanda with Peake Child Care Center.



Last year, the focus of the Education Team was growth — expanding access, introducing new Educational Enrichment Programs (EEPs), reaching students across multiple grade levels, and developing new evaluation tools. Along with continued growth, this year was all about aiming for excellence. This means consistently offering high-quality EEPs through iterative improvements in program delivery and honing our ability to help students form lasting connections and foster a sense of belonging. Key to achieving excellence is the unique talents of and collaboration among the members of our Education Team. In this issue of our annual report, you'll get to hear directly from several team members as they describe some of the highlights from this school year.

Harriet Smith
Director of Education



MARINERS' EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT MODEL

True impact results from engaging students multiple times over their school careers.

EARLY CHILDHOOD ENGAGEMENTS:

269
2023-24

878
2024-25

This year, we took a major leap forward in our ability to serve our youngest mariners. Over the past year, we introduced and refined EEPs tailored for PreK students, each designed to spark curiosity and foster hands-on learning.

As a result, we more than tripled our student engagements in just one year. A key factor in this success has been our growing relationships with partners like Peake Childhood Center and Newport News Public Library, which have helped The Mariners' reach more families in our community.

Just as importantly, we've invested in our team by providing staff training in early childhood education, ensuring a consistent, high-quality experience for our early learners. It has truly been a banner year for early childhood at The Mariners', and I'm excited to see where this momentum takes us!

Amanda Abrill

Early Childhood Educator

ACCESS

LOWERING BOTH FINANCIAL
AND LOGISTICAL BARRIERS

The Mariners' Team works to lower both financial and logistical barriers to access, ensuring that high-quality programming is available to every student.

We are collecting more and more feedback that participating in programs at The Mariners' Museum and Park – providing **access** to our campus – increases the positive impact of our EEPs on the students we serve. We are thrilled that we welcomed **31% MORE students to The Mariners' this school year!**

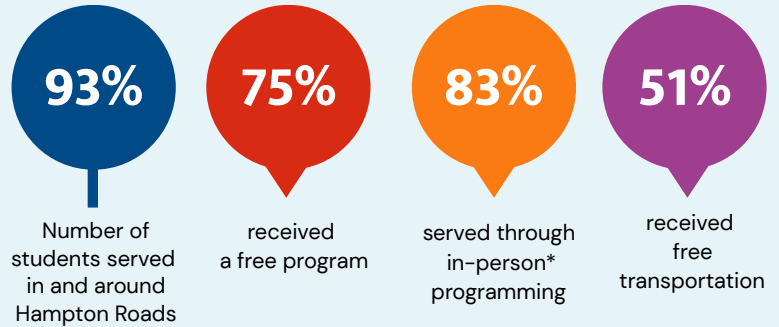


High school students planting eelgrass during the Lake Stewards program.



29,377

STUDENT ENGAGEMENTS



*On campus or the classroom

14,075

Lower Peninsula students
Newport News & Hampton

6,686

Southside students
Norfolk, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, & Portsmouth

6,504

Other VA school districts
Yorktown, Williamsburg, Poquoson, & more

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS	22,347	26,437	29,377
% of students - free program	86%	80%	75%
Virtual	6,617	5,788	4,782
In the classroom	6,787	8,462	8,640
At The Mariners'	8,943	12,187	15,955
% of students - free transportation*	68%	51%	51%

*This percentage is based on the total number of students who participated in a program at the Museum or in the Park.

MARINERS' EDUCATORS SUPPORT FAMILIES TOO!

Enrichment goes beyond the Museum. We strive to foster lasting relationships with the community. This means increasing our presence at STEM and Family Night events hosted by local elementary schools. This year, we attended 18 events and engaged with hundreds of families.

ENGAGE

EXPERIENCES THAT ENHANCE CURRICULUM



Our EEPs are designed to provide engaging experiences that enhance the standard classroom curriculum, encourage active student participation, and emphasize important life skills.



Students use VR headsets to study the wreck site of USS Monitor.

MARINERS' ANIMATED SHORTS

These short videos are produced by our talented Multimedia Production Team and distributed through our **Mariners' YouTube Channel** to schools around the country. These videos are useful engagement tools and provide additional context for our EEPs.

VIEWS:
212,600

↑ **23%**
YOY

SUBSCRIBERS:
+ 1,100

↑ **28%**
YOY



ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHT

The Shipwrecks of the Atlantic EEP has two engagements: a classroom visit and a field trip to the Museum. As I was cleaning up after one of the classroom visits, a student who had been really interactive the whole time came up to me, practically buzzing with excitement. He asked,

"HOW CAN I GET INTO ROBOTICS AT MY AGE?"

We had just spent an hour discussing climate change and how underwater robots play a huge role in scientific and historical fields. He told me all about his interest in robotics and drones and his newfound desire to build a submersible. By the time the bell rang, he was stoked for his visit to the Museum, where he would get the chance to pilot an underwater robot.

EEPs are more impactful when students see themselves and their interests reflected in the content we share. Interactions like these reaffirm our team's commitment to helping students discover and cultivate this connection.

CLAUDIA MONCADA

Senior Science Educator

67%
FIRST-TIME
PADDLERS THIS SPRING

Students kayak during their field trip.

BUILDING RESILIENCE

Mindfulness is an excellent way for students to build a connection with the world around them.¹ However, the term “mindful” can sometimes have a negative connotation. Students are often told to be more mindful after behaving poorly.

Our goal is to change the narrative around MINDFULNESS using this practice to help students find joy and wonder in the outdoors.

Sixth-grade students participating in the Mariners’ Lake® Effect EEP are given the opportunity to practice mindfulness in Mariners’ Park. There is no “one size fits all” rule when it comes to mindfulness. From sitting quietly and writing a poem to reenacting their favorite natural object with their bodies, mindfulness is about being present. By opening the door to having fun with mindfulness, our team has seen an overwhelmingly positive response from the sixth-grade students, something we look forward to replicating in other EEPs.

SHANTELE LANDRY
Senior Science Educator

ENRICH

DEVELOPING LASTING CONNECTIONS

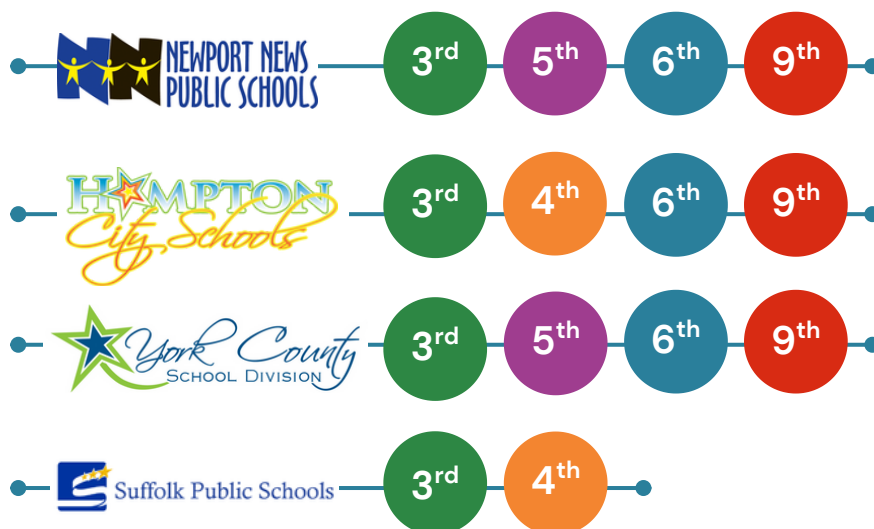
Enrichment is centered on developing lasting connections. Students are more likely to succeed and thrive when they feel connected to their community. Enrichment helps achieve that by fostering a positive sense of belonging among students.²

True impact comes from engaging students multiple times over their school careers. For the first time, we saw four grade levels from three local school systems, and we’re still expanding!

ENRICHMENT PROGRESS:

ENGAGEMENTS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND GRADE LEVEL

2024–25 Academic Year



1. Samuel, Kim. “How Mindfulness Builds Belonging.” Psychology Today, October 5, 2023. www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-power-of-belonging/202309/how-mindfulness-builds-belonging.

2. Lardier, D. T., Opara, I., Bergeson, C., Herrera, A., Garcia-Reid, P., & Reid, R. J. “A study of psychological sense of community as a mediator between supportive social systems, school belongingness, and outcome behaviors among urban high school students of color.” Journal of Community Psychology, (2019) 47(5), 1131–1150. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22182>. PG: 1133.



Student inspects eelgrass prior to planting in Mariners' Lake.



Students test water salinity.

EVALUATE

ASSESSING IMPACT

We use both informal and formal evaluation tools to assess the impact on students and continually improve our EEPs. Our participation in the Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program and partnership with Old Dominion University's Center for Educational Partnerships (TCEP) have been key in helping us build a sustainable model for assessment.

This year, staff from TCEP and The Mariners' published a scholarly article discussing the impact of B-WET on students.³ Major outcomes include an increased sense of belonging, an increased feeling of empowerment, and a better understanding of local pollution and watershed issues.



Student participates in our Shipwrecks of the Atlantic program.

REPLICATING SUCCESS

B-WET marked a transformative shift in how we measure impact with students. B-WET, now renamed Lake Stewards, broke the mold, showing the potential for multiple engagements across the school year.

The Shipwrecks of the Atlantic program follows this multi-touch engagement model. It begins with a classroom outreach, Can't Handle the Heat, where students investigate climate change in the Atlantic Ocean and learn about the USS *Monitor* shipwreck. The second engagement is an immersive experience on-site at the Museum where students participate in hands-on activities tied to environmental literacy and career exploration in underwater archaeology and marine science.

This dual-engagement approach enables us to reinforce learning while supporting social-emotional growth and career readiness.

As we expand this model, our goal remains clear: to build lasting connections and ensure positive outcomes.

EMMA FULTON

Senior Science Educator

SUSTAINING IMPACT

RESOURCING EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

Much of what we achieved during the 2024–25 school year is built on the foundation set in previous years. It demonstrates our continued commitment to, and investment in, the school-aged child. Ultimately, we must sustain this impact. This school year gave several examples of how we are seen as a valued resource.



1

The Mariners' received the **Governor's Environmental Excellence Award for Lake Stewards**, demonstrating excellence in environmental education.

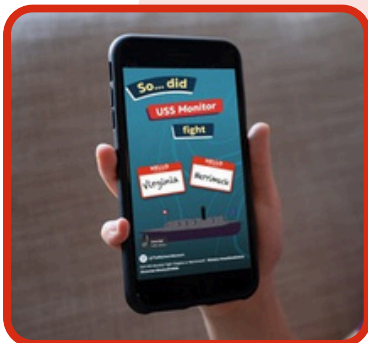
2

The Mariners' presented alongside York County School District for the national DoDEA conference where **The Mariners' was grateful to be recognized as a model partner.**



3

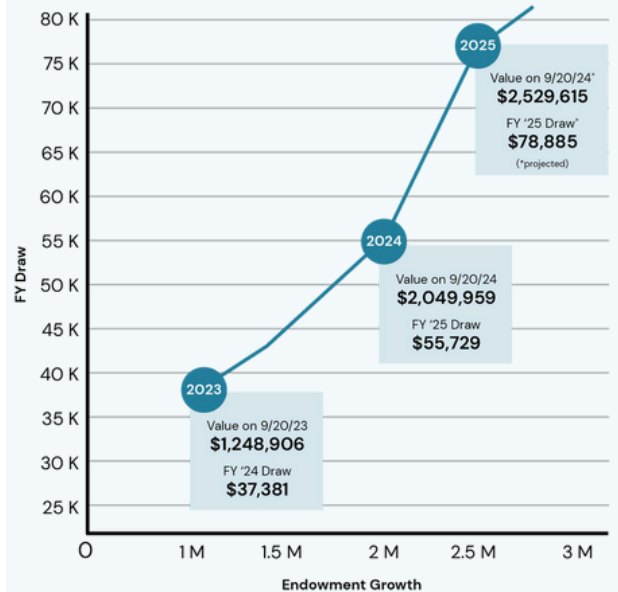
The Department of Conservation and Recreation distributed **Mariners' Animated Shorts** to constituents across the state as a useful and engaging tool for students.



BY THE NUMBERS

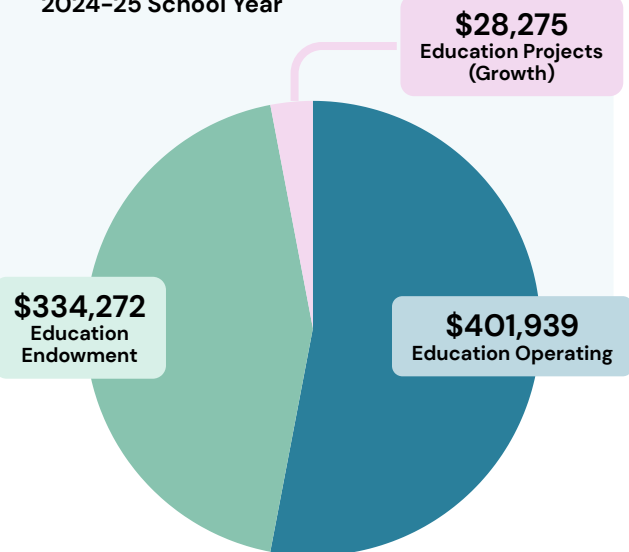
To sustain impact, we anticipate needing to raise \$20M into the educational endowment, producing \$800,000 in revenue annually. This amount would fund our entire Education Team, keep barriers to entry low, and ensure high-quality engagements. Contributed revenue would then fund growth. Until that plan is fully realized, we will rely on contributed revenue to fund the activities of the team.

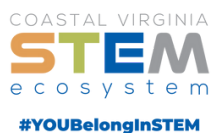
ENDOWMENT FUNDS



FUNDING RAISED

2024–25 School Year





SCHOOL PARTNERS

Newport News, Hampton, York County, and Suffolk

MarinersMuseum.org

100 Museum Drive • Newport News, VA