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BAYARD TAYLOR ELEMENTARY DEDICATES VIBRANT STUDENT MOSAICS REFLECTING SCHOOL'S CORE VALUES

Project made possible by support from PCCY's Picasso Project

PHILADELPHIA (June 4, 2021)— Students, parents, teachers, and community members today dedicated five vibrant murals at Bayard Taylor Elementary School in Hunting Park. The project—created by students, parents, and teachers—illustrates Taylor's core values of community, compassion, high expectations, integrity, and joy, and was made possible by support from PCCY's Picasso Project and teaching artist Jessica Liddell from Bella Mosaic.

David Laver, principal of Taylor Elementary, shared his pride of the project. "This mosaic art project is a true representation of the power of community, which is one of our core values at Taylor. Students, staff, family, and community partners came together to bring this project to fruition despite the very challenging times we have all faced over this past year. The power of art to unite and uplift is truly inspirational."

"This mural symbolizes the resilience of Taylor's school community, and Philadelphia's ability to adapt and overcome challenges such as those we've faced throughout the COVID crisis," said Mayor Jim Kenney. "And this artwork will serve as a lasting illustration of the students' creativity and teamwork, and as a poignant metaphor for the school community's ability to stay connected and generate beauty even in the most trying of times."

Amidst the COVID challenges, art endured as a teaching tool and creative outlet for the Taylor Elementary School community, with the mosaics being a timely analogy of broken pieces brought together to create something whole and beautiful.

"Art provides an opportunity to express feelings and emotions and this mural has allowed our students and families to share their feelings and hopes for brighter days ahead," said William R. Hite, Jr., Ed.D. "It's through art education that we can help our students use their imagination to find their voice and I'm so happy to see that, through a collaboration with PCCY, our students are finding ways to let their creativity lead to conversations and actions that can result in positive and lasting change."

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“This has been a tough year for all of us but most especially for children,” said Donna Cooper, PCCY Executive Director. “Through the arts, kids can express their emotions while building their brains and developing skills that will lead to their personal and professional success. We’re proud to have been a part of this extraordinary project that connects Taylor School students and staff with the broader community.”

Students who receive an arts-rich education are five times more likely to graduate from high school and are 30% more likely to aspire to go to college. An arts integrated curriculum benefits all students, especially English language learners, and fragile learners.

PCCY established the Picasso Project in 2002 to boost high-quality, innovative arts projects in Philadelphia public elementary, middle, and high schools through grants and community support. Since 2002, the Picasso Project has supported 186 projects at 105 different schools, engaging 50,000 students at all levels.

PCCY is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that works to improve the lives of children in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties by developing initiatives and advocating for quality health care, child care, public education, and family stability. Learn more on our website (www.pccy.org), Twitter (@pccyteam), and Facebook page (PCCYPage).

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