Proposal Content –

Chesnut Charter Elementary Simulated Farmers Market

If awarded this grant, Chesnut Elementary will simulate a farmers market with chef demo at its Field Day in May 2012. Local organic farmer Dave Bentoski from D and A Farms, and local traveling pizza baker S&J’s Woodfired Pizza will demonstrate that eating nutritious, locally grown food can be easy and delicious, and in accordance with Dekalb County’s

Wellness Policy, offer a healthy snack to student body and staff at the event. Using toppings provided by the local farmer as well as herbs and toppings freshly harvested from Chesnut’s organic school garden, S&J’s Woodfired Pizza will bake pizzas onsite. Once students have sampled the different pizzas, they will “shop” at the farmer’s stand, where the grant will allow each student to take home (free of charge) one serving of the featured produce in a reusable shopping bag, along with a pizza recipe, the Dekalb County Wellness Policy, and information about local farmers markets and pick-your-own farms. Chesnut Ecology Club students from all grade levels, who have been promoting Dekalb County’s Farm to School food of the month in the cafeteria this year, will help the farmer run the stand when their class visits, sharing with their classmates what they have learned about how the seasonal produce was grown, why it’s nutritious, and why eating locally matters.

**1. What are the specific goals and objectives of this project?**

A. Uphold the Dekalb County Wellness Policy by encouraging students to eat healthy whole foods at a school activity,and to feel empowered to encourage their families to eat healthy at home.

B. Raise awareness of and spark dialogue about the Dekalb County Wellness Policy, among parents, students and school staff, toward the goal of increasing healthy food/drink choices at school events and in our classrooms.

C. Involve entire student body in a farm-to-school event, educating all about where their food comes from and why eating locally matters.

D. Let students taste for themselves that food can be both healthy and delicious.

E. Turn the student into the teacher by inviting “Chesnut Changers” (members of our Ecology Club) to harvest pizza toppings from our garden and share with their peers what they’ve learned about eating locally as they assist at the farmer’s stand.

F. By simulating an outdoor farmers market, familiarize students and staff with the experience to demystify it.

2. **How will accomplishments be evaluated and measured? Please be very specific, and be sure to include how**

**you will execute these evaluations.**

A. Chesnut Changer students will poll their peers to see how they liked the pizza tastings with vegetable and herb toppings. Chesnut Changer parents will photograph and video the event. Student reports and photographs will be shared on the Chesnut Changers’ blog: http://chesnutforchange.wordpress.com.

B. The takeaway reusable shopping bag will include an invitation to become a Chesnut Changer Family by subscribing to our blog, and we will measure the increase in subscriptions.

C. Local media will be invited to report on the event, and media coverage will be reported on our blog.

D. We will promote the program to Chesnut parents through flyers sent home in weekly couriers, on our blog, and in the April PTA meeting. Within 12 months of the event, we hope to report to the PTA that Chesnut’s school events and classrooms now offer healthy food and drink choices.

**3. How will you work cooperatively with school food service? Use this response to explain how the school food**

**service will benefit from you receiving this grant versus your personal gain.**

Each month, Chesnut parent volunteers and Chesnut Changers students promote Dekalb County’s Farm to School produce of the month, cooperating with Chesnut’s food service team to encourage students to sample this item. Our food service team supports this effort, welcoming signage in the cafeteria and other communications to students and parents. If

awarded this grant, we will work with the food service team to include them in the event.

**4. Please provide a brief timeline of activities. (Activities must be completed by June 30, 2012)**

February/March 2012 - Chesnut classes visiting the school garden will plant herbs and vegetables to be harvested for

pizza toppings

April 2012 - Chesnut Changer parents will promote the event, to Chesnut families and staff, and to local media

May 2012 - Farmer and pizza baker coordinate pre-event delivery of pizza toppings to be prepped; Chesnut classes that

visit the garden will harvest produce for pizza toppings

May 8, 2012 - At our after-school meeting, Chesnut Changers will review the importance of eating locally, and learn about

the produce to be featured on Field Day, to prepare to work the farmers stand. We will pack the reusable bags for

distribution (see “E” below).

May 11, 2012 - Field Day, every class (two at a time) will visit the simulated farmers market:

A. Local organic farmer presents in-season vegetables to students, explaining how he grew them. This will include pictures and videos depicting seed to harvest, as well as an explanation as to when the items were harvested. He will also take questions from the students about farming practices.

B. Chesnut students visit the school’s organic garden, where they can see, touch and smell freshly harvested herbs and vegetables from the school garden.

C. Students sample freshly baked pizzas with toppings and herbs provided by local farmer/school garden.

D. Students "shop" for their favorite topping at a simulated farmer’s market. This market will include stands with $2 portions of in-season produce to give the students an idea of how much they could purchase with a small amount of money. Chesnut Changers will help run the stand, sharing fun facts about produce and educating their peers about eating locally. Each student will choose a $2 portion of the vegetable of their choice to bring home free of charge.

E. Each student will take home a reusable shopping bag which includes Chesnut Changer ecology club flyer, copy of Dekalb County Wellness Policy, pizza recipe, information about local farmer’s markets and pick-your-own farms, as well as the child’s in-season veggie choice.

**5. How do you plan to involve the youth? Please be specific on how youth will be involved in the project.**

Since the year’s start, Chesnut Changer parents have hosted plantings, harvests and tastings in the school garden throughout the school day. The classes who come out to the garden the week of Field Day will harvest toppings (planted by Chesnut students in March) for the pizzas. On Field Day, all Chesnut students will hear directly from the farmer about how their food was grown, and have the opportunity to ask questions. All Chesnut students will sample pizzas with locally grown toppings, and choose their favorite topping to take home along with a pizza recipe they can make with their families at home. Chesnut Changer ecology club students (30 members from all grades) will host their peers at the simulated farmer’s market, sharing what they have learned about the value of eating locally and getting nutrients from whole foods.

They will become experts in the seasonal produce being offered to help their peers choose one to take home.

**6. How will your project impact youth understanding of the food system?**

Students will learn how eating locally minimizes pollution, conserves energy, keeps local farmers in business and provides consumers with highly nutritious produce. Also, they will get a taste of the shopping environment of an outdoor farmers market, to normalize this experience.

**7. What evidence did you see in your school or community that indicated there was a specific need for the project proposed?**

Traditionally, Chesnut’s Field Day and other school event fare is highly processed and highly sweetened. in future We would like children to associate a day of athleticism and outdoor play, or a night of family fun and dancing with healthy eating such as, rather than sugary drinks, cotton candy and artificially buttered popcorn. Dekalb County’s new monthly Farm to School lunch item is a hit! When Chesnut students are offered fresh produce (versus processed/canned vegetables often served in the cafeteria), they like their veggies! Last month on Georgia-grown

Broccoli Day, Chesnut’s cafeteria couldn’t serve that broccoli fast enough. “They don’t normally eat broccoli this much,” one of our food service staff members commented. Our program will demonstrate that vegetables are delicious when picked fresh and served simply.