

### **Why make a tile mural?**

- A mural with a theme can create excitement over a specific school program and will be a daily, fun reminder for days to come.
- Murals are timeless and very durable
- Murals are colorful and fun to look at
- They are a perfect group art project
- Murals are public art, which enhances the community, bringing together children, teachers, and parents.

### **The Idea...**

- A good mural will have a well defined theme such as this one you may recognize, “Fruits and Vegetables- Eat 5 a Day and be Active for Better Health.”-
- Can the theme be represented by pictures? Yes , fruits and vegetables and exercise
- How old are the children painting the tiles? Elementary school age- the younger the kids the more abstract the design, but the paintings are usually very recognizable. The higher elementary grade kids are very good painters.
- A clear title or logo should be placed in a visually key area.
- Having the school name on the mural is a nice way to carry on the school spirit.

### **Size**

- How many people will be taking part in this project.
- Depending on the size and type of tiles used there will be a specific # of tiles needed.
- If you don't figure out the dimensions ahead of time you will either have to make more tiles, or just not have room for some in the installation.
- It is also smart to have a few extra as some may break or have glaze problems.

### **Location**

- Murals can be set anywhere, but the typical location at a school is a wall.
- You want the mural in an area that will show it off. A theme mural is not just artwork, but a message, so put it in a place that will be viewed the most.
- An area protected within the school gates is preferred to prevent vandalism.
- A flat wall is the preferred surface for this type of installation. Stucco, or cinder block walls are easy to work with.

### **Education**

- Ceramic glazes are unlike paints most people have used before. Glazes are basically liquid glass. The glazes must be applied in a certain way in order to achieve desired results- usually 3 coats for an opaque color. What is strange to some people is that raw glaze does not look anything like how it will look after firing. One has to imagine that this pink liquid, for example, will actually be a bright red color after the firing.
- It is a good idea to have a short In-Service training day for all the instructors involved in the project and have them actually paint a tile or two. They will be better trained to instruct their students when the painting begins.
- For a large school project it is best to have 2 activity carts stocked with a variety of glazes and tiles which can be stored in a communal area. When the instructors pick a time to glaze, they can send someone to pick up the cart. This has been shown to be the most convenient process - dividing the glaze between 20 or more classrooms would be a disaster. Once the tiles are dry they are boxed up, put back on the cart and wheeled to the kiln, or to a storage area for pick up or delivery. (Using this process a school of at least 750 children can each paint a tile in under 1 week – if the teachers are on the ball!)

## **Glaze Options**

### **The Standard – Mayco Stroke & Coat**

- Good color selection
- Easy application
- Non- Toxic

## **Kiln Firing**

- Glazes must be fired on to make them permanent and to reveal the true glaze color.
- Most glazes for this type of process are fired to 1850 F or cone 06.
- Each kiln firing takes 6-8 hours.
- Because glaze is actually a glass coating, it is very easy to clean. If someone happens to paint, or draw on the finished tile it can easily be taken off with a cleaner without affecting the tile.