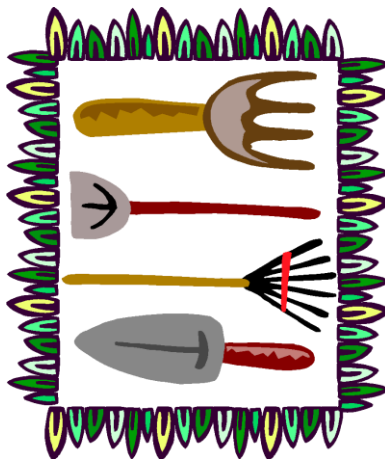


# Garden Docent Orientation Manual

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## **Thank you for volunteering to be a NSE Garden Docent!**

### **How the Program Works:**

- As a Garden Docent, you will bring small groups of students into the garden for enriching activities, growth and learning. Groups should be approximately 5-6 students at a time.
- You have the freedom to create your own garden lesson, work with your classroom teacher to collaborate on a lesson or email Mrs. Cameron at [kcameron@fcusd.org](mailto:kcameron@fcusd.org) and ask her to provide a lesson for you to teach. If you need a lesson provided, please contact Mrs. Cameron at least one week in advance.
- Docents will assemble their materials, prep the activity, do the activity with the class and then clean up. You may pick up the necessary materials from inside the parent coordinator office and/or the shed in the garden.
- Our Garden Coordinator will send monthly emails with garden news and updates. The Community Garden Crew is comprised of volunteers who work in the garden to keep it green and ready for students to enjoy.



## **How to get started:**

1. Read through the information in this packet.
2. Complete the process to become a cleared Category 2 Volunteer with the school. Please see Maryann Hewitt, our parent coordinator, for the paperwork if you have not already done so.
3. Talk with your child's teacher about dividing the class into groups of approximately 5-6 students. The teacher should give you a roster with these groups broken down so that you will be able to keep track of which groups have visited the garden and ensure that all groups get equal time in the garden. The garden groups can be named in order to help the children remember which group they are in, for example, insect names (butterflies, ladybugs, etc.) or flower names (lily, daffodil, etc.). This is optional.
4. Discuss with your partner Docent (if you have one) and with the teacher how often you plan to visit the garden and how you will rotate the groups. We recommend that garden docents come once a month and rotate the class through each time you come. Plan on each group spending about 10 minutes in the garden. Remember that it takes time to prep the activity, clean up and to walk the kids back and forth between the garden and the classroom. If you want to come twice per month and rotate the class through the garden in two sessions, you are welcome to do so. There are limitless things you can do; make it work for you and the class you are helping.
5. Plan for your monthly activity, confirm your date and time with the classroom teacher and ask them to put it on the docent calendar, do any necessary prep and go!

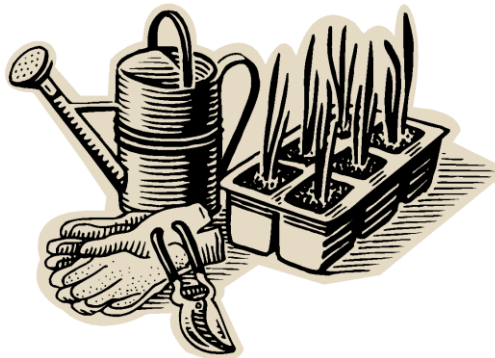


**Tips to help the kids get the most out of the program and to help it run smoothly for you:**

1. Each classroom should have the garden to themselves. Please ask your classroom teacher to enter the date and time you have agreed on into the docent calendar to ensure there is no overlap.
2. Become familiar with all areas where garden supplies and information are stored:
  - a. The **garden box** in the parent coordinator office has codes for making copies and combo locks are stored here. Please use this box for any messages to us. Messages for all docents will also be found in the box.
  - b. The tools and supplies are stored in the **patio area and the sheds in the garden.**
  - c. The **lock box** on the fence in the garden is where we store the key that turns on the hose faucets. The combo to this is **3765**.
  - d. **Parent Coordinator Office** (first room on the left when you walk in the office) has the materials and supplies you will need for the activities that require pencils, crayons, etc.
3. The program is greatly enhanced when docents make a brief opening and closing presentation to the class before and after garden time.
4. Review the garden rules (on page 6) with students before entering the garden and as needed while there.

5. Check in with the teacher the day before to confirm the time, day and activity you will be doing.
6. Communicate with your partner docent (if you have one) so you are on the same page with each other. It works well to have a lead docent who confirms with the teacher and the other docent(s).
7. Plan extra time to prep your activity, assemble materials and clean up.
8. **Important:** When working with tools, harvesting, or hosting an activity in the garden, we highly suggest no more than 6 students per adult. Unattended students could be injured or damage our plants.

**\*\*Good communication is key! If you have questions, ask the Garden Coordinator, Docent Advisor, or an experienced Docent. Mrs. Cameron can easily be reached by email at [kcameron@fcusd.org](mailto:kcameron@fcusd.org)\*\***



## **Garden Rules:**

### **Garden Conduct:**

- Be respectful to the garden, adults and classmates.
- Always walk in the garden.
- Use quiet voices and listen to instructions.
- Open edges of the raised beds are for sitting on only. Feet must stay on the ground.
- Do not pick anything without asking first.
- We share the garden with nature so please watch your surroundings (spiders, etc.)

**\*\* If students are not observing these rules please ask them to return to their classroom. \*\***

### **Tasting Guidelines:**

- Not everything in the garden is edible.
- Ask permission every time you taste something.
- Harvest or taste only items that are abundant and ready to eat.
- Garden emails or signs will tell you what is okay to taste.
- Be gentle with the plants.
- Ask for instructions or ask an adult to carefully harvest.
- Leave plenty to share with others.
- Take only a taste.

### **Tool Instructions:**

- Pay careful attention when using tools.
- Carry all tools straight up and down.
- Wash tools before returning them.
- Put tools back where you found them.
- Keep gloves in pairs.
- Coil the hose when you are finished.

## **NSE School Garden Support Roles:**

### **Our garden will:**

Provide opportunities for learning and exploring. Be clean, safe and well maintained.

### **Garden Coordinator:**

Garden Coordinator will manage the planting and maintenance of the garden. He or she will communicate regularly with all garden support roles, discussing garden progress and tasks.

### **Docent Advisor(s):**

Docent Advisor(s) will develop and maintain a calendar for classroom visits and support docents with lessons.

### **Green Team Advisors:**

The Green Team Advisors will maintain a roster and coordinate monthly after school meetings.

### **Docents:**

Garden Docents share the garden with the classroom. They will make arrangements with the teacher and Docent Advisor to schedule a regular time to take the students out to the garden in small groups. This may be accomplished 1 to 4 times per month. In order to accommodate large classes, they may need to recruit additional parents or repeat activities on consecutive weeks so each student gets an equal and regular visit to the garden.

**Important:** When working with tools, harvesting, or hosting an activity in the garden we highly suggest no more than 5-6 students per adult. Unattended students could be injured or damage our plants.

### **Green Team:**

The Green Team will consist of advisors and the students who seek additional “green” learning opportunities. They will play a role in the regular planting and maintenance of the garden. Green Team will look for curriculum opportunities and share their work with others. The teacher advisor will coordinate classroom/docent pairings with green team members if needed.

**Teachers:**

Teachers will work with their garden docents to schedule a regular time (1 to 4 times per month). They will help divide the class into well balanced groups of approximately 5-6 students each. The 6 to 1 student to adult ratio is recommended by both the garden curriculum we purchased and the experiences of garden docents. The opportunities to learn are lost on large groups and we occasionally will have tools or materials that must be monitored closely. Teachers are welcome to present Garden Coordinators with curriculum ideas or special projects that support a classroom activity.

**Community Garden Crew:**

The Community Garden Crew, led by the Garden Coordinator, will make sure our garden is green and growing. They will consist of parents, grandparents, and community members willing to care for and learn about our school garden.



## **Contact Information**

I will give you a roster of Garden Docents once I have permission from the docents who want to be included. For now, here are some important contacts:

### **NSE Garden Coordinator/ Green Team Advisor, Faculty**

Kristina Cameron

Email: KCameron@fcusd.org

### **Green Team Advisor, Faculty**

Dori Alpert

Email: DAlpert@fcusd.org

### **Garden Faculty Advisor, Faculty**

Aisha Prince

Email: APrince@fcusd.org

### **NSE Garden Coordinator Intern**

Michelle Angus

Email: mlangus@gmail.com

Cell: 602-793-2413

### **NSE Docent Advisor**

\*Still needed\*