



Building an outdoor classroom/garden application

Lawrence Public Schools aims to support robust and sustainable school gardens. The goal of Farm to School is to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables through hands on experience. While engaging with the community and establishing life skills such as leadership and team work, school gardens also provide a holistic approach to wellness. As we create these verdant spaces to gather, grow, play and learn, we must have a common vision, clearly defined curriculum standards and community support. Lawrence Public Schools is offering support by helping build elementary student gardens through raised bed initiatives with curriculum support. The F2S team will be equitable in the distribution of grant money to get projects started. Garden locations will be preapproved by a district team BEFORE a design should be finalized. Considerations for full sun, water access, safety and visibility will all dictate the most ideal space for the outdoor classroom. A farm to school team member will make a site visit to mark off and reserve garden space. For a new garden team, the first step in this process is to complete this application and submit it for review. The deadline for applications is January 2nd, 2016. Please submit to your building principal for initial review. Applications will be shared and reviewed by the Farm to School Committee for approval.

Things to remember as you are getting started:

- ✓ Get the word out at your school as you may not be the only one interested in building a garden. Announce a meeting of all interested parties in a school garden. It is beneficial to join forces and work together to build a stronger and more sustainable project. Build your team.
- ✓ Is this location ready for a garden? If so, complete the application.
- ✓ Develop a clear plan of what it is you want to do. Define a mission and vision for the garden as this will help shape the direction of the garden in the early stages.
- ✓ Facilities and Operations provide safe and secure spaces across the district, and they work hard keeping everything looking good. Although they are one of the most integral district partners in the garden process, and offer continual support, they WILL NOT be responsible for the building, maintaining or repair of school gardens. Nonetheless, all permissions for grounds alterations or additional structures must be approved both by building administration AND an F&O staff person.
 - a. What is the guiding principal, mission or vision?
 - b. Who are your school garden team members?
 - c. Time frame and Schedule- Be as specific as possible
 - d. Funding- in-kind donations being requested such as tools, seeds and other supplies are a great way to get started, but other funding such as grants and major fundraiser events must be approved by administration in accordance to district policy and use of facilities.



e. A detailed map or blueprint along with a list of building materials must be included with the application. Please DO NOT purchase building supplies until site plan is approved.

1. Name the school that wants to start a garden? _____
2. Why is the garden team interested in creating or expanding a garden? _____

3. Has the school or garden team received funding for the garden? If so, make note of the donors and amounts received. Copies of all grant summaries will need to be attached to application for approval. _____

4. If no funding is secured as of yet, please describe the sustainability plan for the project. How do you see this project thriving 5 years from now?

5. Do you have a plan for secure storage of tools and other garden equipment? YES NO
Will this be accessible to ALL garden participants, at all times?

Garden Plan- Complete a written proposal along with a drawing or map for the garden. Consider the questions below while writing your garden proposal.

- Do you have a timeline for the building process?
- School gardens must be a shared space for both classroom lessons and afterschool programming. The space must accommodate curriculum including but not limited to science, language arts, math and wellness. How will the team collaborate with others?
- Describe how the garden team will operate.
- What kind of experience or grower background does everyone have?
- Are team members willing to attend training courses on school gardens?
- How will garden leaders divide up responsibilities and tasks?
- List building materials that will be used in the garden. Ex. Cedar timber for raised beds, compost bin, mulch for pathways. Materials that are NOT allowed for the building of raised



beds include but are not limited to treated lumber, tires and railroad ties. Materials must be food safe and approved before installing.

- Be specific about how the garden will be used through the seasons
 - a. Are you planting a garden for spring, summer or fall, if you are planting a summer garden, what is your maintenance plan?
 - b. What will you be planting? It is helpful to map out your crops for each season, including dates for seeding, transplanting, harvest and crop rotations.
 - c. What do you plan to do with the harvest? CSA, give to cafeteria, use for cooking classes, sell at a market?
 - d. Does anyone on your team have food safety experience specific to handling and processing of fresh produce?
 - e. Do you have an approved place to safely store produce prior to sales?

Administrators and a dedicated garden team are vital to the success of a school garden. Please make sure that key personnel sign below to denote that they have read and approve the garden plan. The primary contact is the main point of contact for the garden.

_____	_____
Principal	print name
_____	_____
Primary contact/Garden leader	print name
_____	_____
Secondary contact/Garden leader	print name
_____	_____
Business or Community Partner	print name

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Before submitting your application make sure that you have included:

➡ A COMPLETED application

➡ A written proposal

➡ A drawing or map