



Gecko Garden Update

Sept. 2007

Summer in the Garden

We had a very productive summer in the garden. Thank you to all the families that lent a hand in keeping our worms fed and planting beds with pumpkins, gourds, squash, tomatoes, sunflowers, watermelon and more. This is a great time to bring the classes back to observe pumpkins that are for Halloween and Thanksgiving. These crops will be removed between October and November to prepare for the Farmers' Market crops. A few unplanted beds are available now for classes wanting to move quickly and plant a short season crop. Please contact Shirley Demer for details (contact information follows).

Garden Curriculum 2007-2008

This year we will try a 'divide and conquer' approach to our work in the Gecko Garden. The majority of the curriculum and student-run Farmers' Market will be run through the Science Labs. This change will give homeroom teachers the option to participate as their schedules and interests allow. Last spring Mr. McGirr, Mr. Olsson and Mrs. Tyson approved this change, so over the summer the Garden Team worked toward this goal by designing project based studies aligned with science standards.

Mrs. Tyson will begin bringing Kindergarten through 2nd grade classes to the garden this week (9/14). She will continue to do so every other Friday (weather permitting). This means each of the K-2nd classes will visit the garden one time per month. She asks that teachers walk students directly to the Gecko Garden on that day.

Mr. Olsson's 3rd through 5th grade classes will have a more project-based garden curriculum with intermittent visits to the garden that will begin soon.

Homeroom teachers are encouraged to make garden visits as well. Though the students will plant the Farmers' Market crops during Science Lab, homeroom classes can coordinate extra visits in the off weeks to observe, monitor and help maintain the crops. To make the coordination between lab and homeroom easier I will be posting crops, bed assignments, and curriculum schedules at: http://www.grantk8.com/community_support/gecko_garden.shtml

Volunteer Opportunities

Weekdays: Please assist Mrs. Tyson, Mr. Olsson or your child's homeroom teacher in the Gecko Garden once or twice per month. Contact Shirley Demer or your child's teacher for suggestions.

Weekend Work Parties: The school year's first Gecko Garden work party is scheduled for Sunday, October 7th from 10 to 1. This is a great way to get to know other families, learn about the garden program, and give back to the school.

Student-Run Farmers' Market:

The first Farmers' Market of this year is tentatively scheduled for April 11th. This means crops will be planted earlier this year - November through January. Most of the crops will be the same as last year with a few exceptions. Comments and suggestions welcome.

K	Radishes	4	Peas
1	Carrots	5	Flowers
2	Potatoes	PACE	Lettuce
3	Spinach	6-7	Run Market

Welcome to our new Middle School Teachers.

Please let me know if you would like to utilize the Gecko Garden facilities (a.k.a. Outdoor Science Lab) and/or participate in the student-run Farmers' Market.

Calling All Landscape Architects!

The garden team is looking for a Landscape Architect willing to assist us in developing a Master Plan for long term development of our garden facility. Please contact Carrie Spillane with information.

Thank you!

Shirley Demer

Contact Information

Team Leader/Financial Coordinator: Carrie Banks Spillane (cbspillane@cox.net)

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Site Coordinator: Paul Bowers (pmb@pmbowers.com)