

## HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN A SCHOOL GARDEN

**To start a garden, gather a planning group. The ideal group has representation from teachers (multiple grade levels), administration, and parents. Anyone who is passionate about gardening and outdoor teaching is a plus.**

- Develop a mission for the garden and what key features would be on a garden wishlist.
- Create lists of "must haves", "nice to have", and "not desired" features and attributes
  - ex. a safe space to explore
- Create a list of challenges (funding, water access, etc).
- Create a draft timeline and budget.
- Seek help where you need it - garden design, grant writing, advocates on PTA, local businesses for in-kind donations or volunteers, etc.
- Remember: the more the garden can tie into the mission of the school (education), the more likely it is to be used and sustained.

**Have a regular meeting schedule for your garden committee; meetings should focus on:**

- revisiting goals
- challenges for progress
- discussing any new ideas

**There is not one perfect model for maintaining a school garden. Try different models that connect with your school's strengths (e.g., large volunteer base, strong enrichment programs, etc.) and your goals for the garden (e.g., encouraging all classes to have experiences in the garden). Here are some examples of maintenance plans:**

- Class adoption (weekly, for example)
- Family adoption (weekly, for example - especially during school holidays)
- Weekly volunteer workdays