

“Teaching the Next Generation: The Garden as your Classroom”

An After School Garden Club Model

- * IDENTIFY THE GUIDING PASSION FOR THE GARDEN
- * GARDEN TEAM: Garden advocate on the PTO, Principal, Science advocate teacher, another enthusiastic teacher, a Para Educator to assist, parents of participating students who will participate in garden days, a dedicated Garden Advisor. (+-8)
- * COMMUNICATION by email, school newsletter, face book page, teachers. Keep the school community informed what you are doing/planning/dreaming.
- * Think about WATER, A SHED, SHADE, TOOLS, PICNICK TABLE/BENCH/LOGS, summer use, crop harvest time,
- * PERMISSION SLIPS are required for afterschool activities; include permission to photograph students; request information about any food allergies.
- * Keep a list of club members with their contact information handy
Keep a list of school staff with their contact information.
Know the afterschool staff, some club members will come from their programs
Advise the school secretary of any schedule changes, as she/he will be fielding queries from parents.
- * Non-growing events: Maple Syrup-ing, Mushrooming, Composting, Weather, Obstacle course, Tree planting, making birdhouses, School service project, Fun with food demonstrations, Having fun, Cooking classes, Solitary bee houses, Mentoring younger students
- * Grow as many PERENNIALS as possible; direct seed when you can, grow plants from seed; plant seeds sprouted for classroom curriculum
- * MULCH to prevent evaporation; COMPOST to improve your soil; COVER CROP as a green fertilizer; collect fall leaves to compost.
- * Take PHOTOS and post to face book or your schools web page
- * Have the students lead the club; choose a name; use their talents to teach a class. Anticipate and make suggestions, rather than organizing.

- * HARVEST what you grow, EAT what you harvest, SHARE the abundance
- * Make friends in the community for resources required:
Ace Hardware, Lowes, Menards, I.C. Landscaping, Earl Maye, Backyard Abundance, New Pioneer, Hy Vee, Lucky's, Ecopolus, Iowa City Landfill, Local Food Bank, school neighbors, public library, DNR, local trucker for deliveries of compost, local Arborist for wood chips, Kirkwood Community College, Master Gardeners, encourage mentoring from other schools.
- * Consider everyone as possible sponsors: allowing people to feel good by helping you succeed
- * Connect community events to club activities:
TAKO – Take a Kid Outdoors... takeakidoutdoors.org
Indian Creek Nature Center... indiancreeknaturecenter.org
Johnson County Fair... johnsoncountyfair.com
Iowa City Bird Club... icbirds.org
Kent Park Educational Center... johnson-county.com/dept_conservation
Backyard Abundance... backyardabundance.org
East Central Iowa Beekeepers Association... Dave Campbell, Secretary
Prairie States Mushroom Club... iowamushroom.smugmug.com
Trees Forever... treesforever.org
- * Research how you can facilitate the teachers using the garden for standard curriculum, then offer to assist/facilitate teaching in the garden.
-Use the Science Advocate teacher as a strong connector to the teachers needs.
-The librarian can be a great resource for finding new and interesting books
- * Make a 'wish list': one for grant funding, one for local sponsors, one for parents to donate, and one for students to make or design. Gardens do not have to be expensive to establish.
- * Consider the whole schoolyard your garden.
- * I saved till last the most important thing to remember...
START SMALL
GAIN EXPERIENCE,
BUILD YOUR GARDEN TEAM WITH ENTHUSIASTIC PEOPLE

Joyce Miller
Kirkwood Elementary
Garden Advisory