



Office of the  
State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

A photograph of two young children sitting at a table outdoors. The child in the foreground is a Black boy with short hair, wearing a dark blue polo shirt, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. He is holding a red apple with a bite taken out of it. Behind him, a white girl with blonde hair is also holding a red apple. A clear plastic water bottle is on the table in front of the boy. The background is a bright blue wall.

## Cultivating a Successful School Garden Network: Notes from Washington D.C

National Children & Youth Garden Symposium  
Denver, Colorado July 12, 2013



Office of the State Superintendent of Education

## Presenters

*Sam Ullery*

School Garden Specialist

Office of the State Superintendent of Education

[sam.ullery@dc.gov](mailto:sam.ullery@dc.gov)

*Sarah Bernardi*

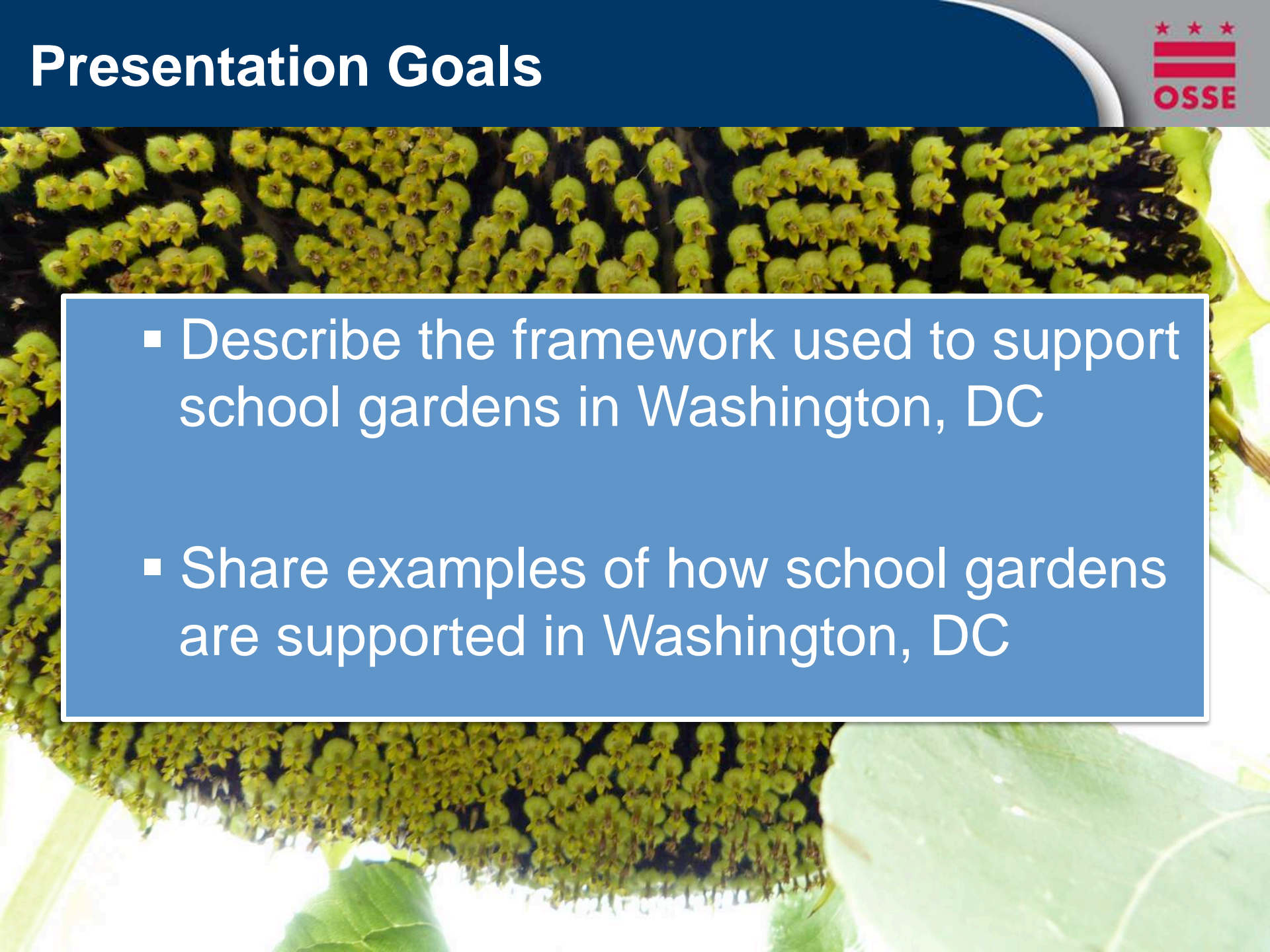
Program Director

DC Greens

[sarah@dcgreens.org](mailto:sarah@dcgreens.org)



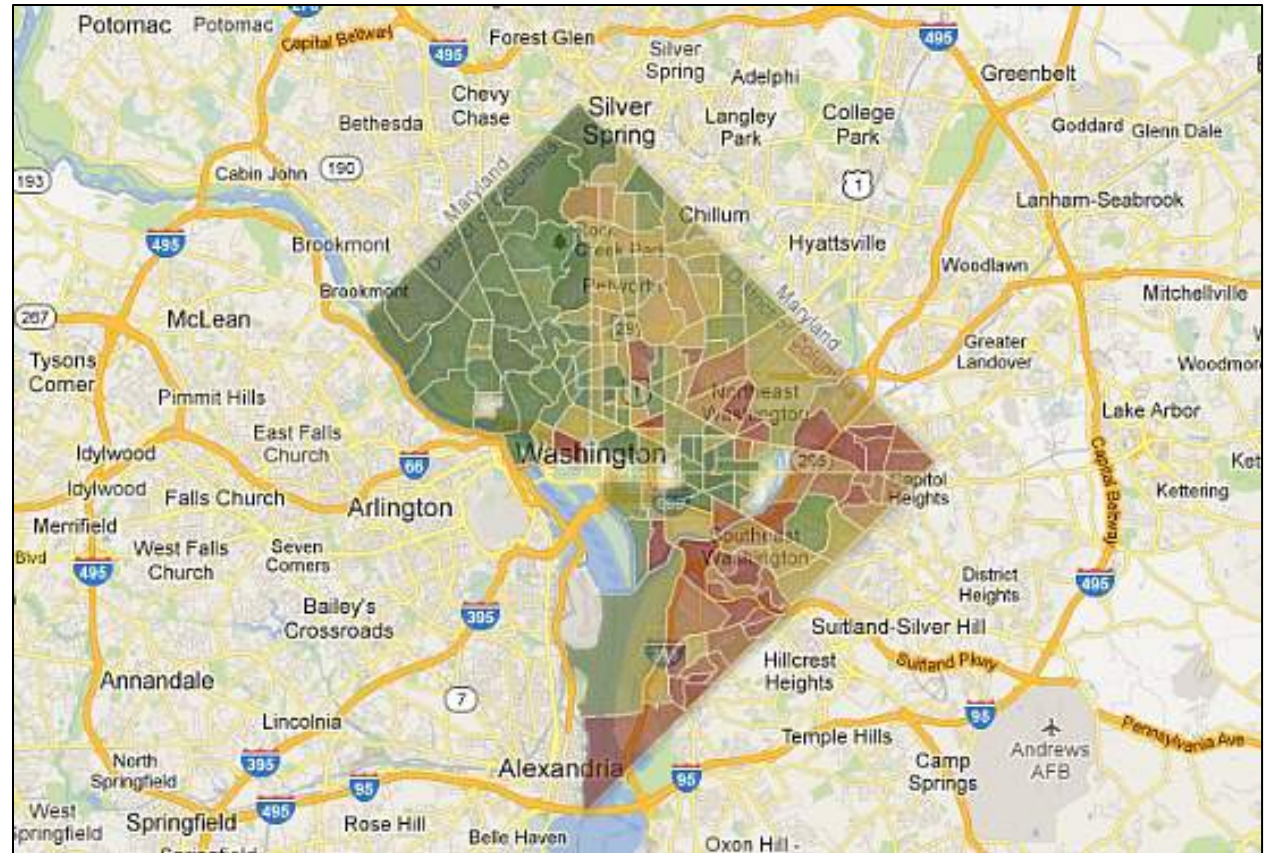
# Presentation Goals

- 
- Describe the framework used to support school gardens in Washington, DC
  - Share examples of how school gardens are supported in Washington, DC



# Washington, DC

- 61 square miles
- 632,000 Residents
- 50-plus LEAs
- 217 public schools
- 80,000 public school students



# What is the School Garden Program (SGP)?

- Established under the Healthy Schools Act
- Housed at the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) within the Division of Wellness and Nutrition
- Mission:  
*“Establish gardens as integral components of public and public charter schools.”*



# Services Provided

School Garden Grants

Professional  
Development

DC School Garden  
Program Services

School Garden Tracking

Technical Support

# School Garden Tracking Overview



# of School Gardens

93 (42% of all DC schools)

# of acres under cultivation

3.4 acres

# of local garden-based organizations

16

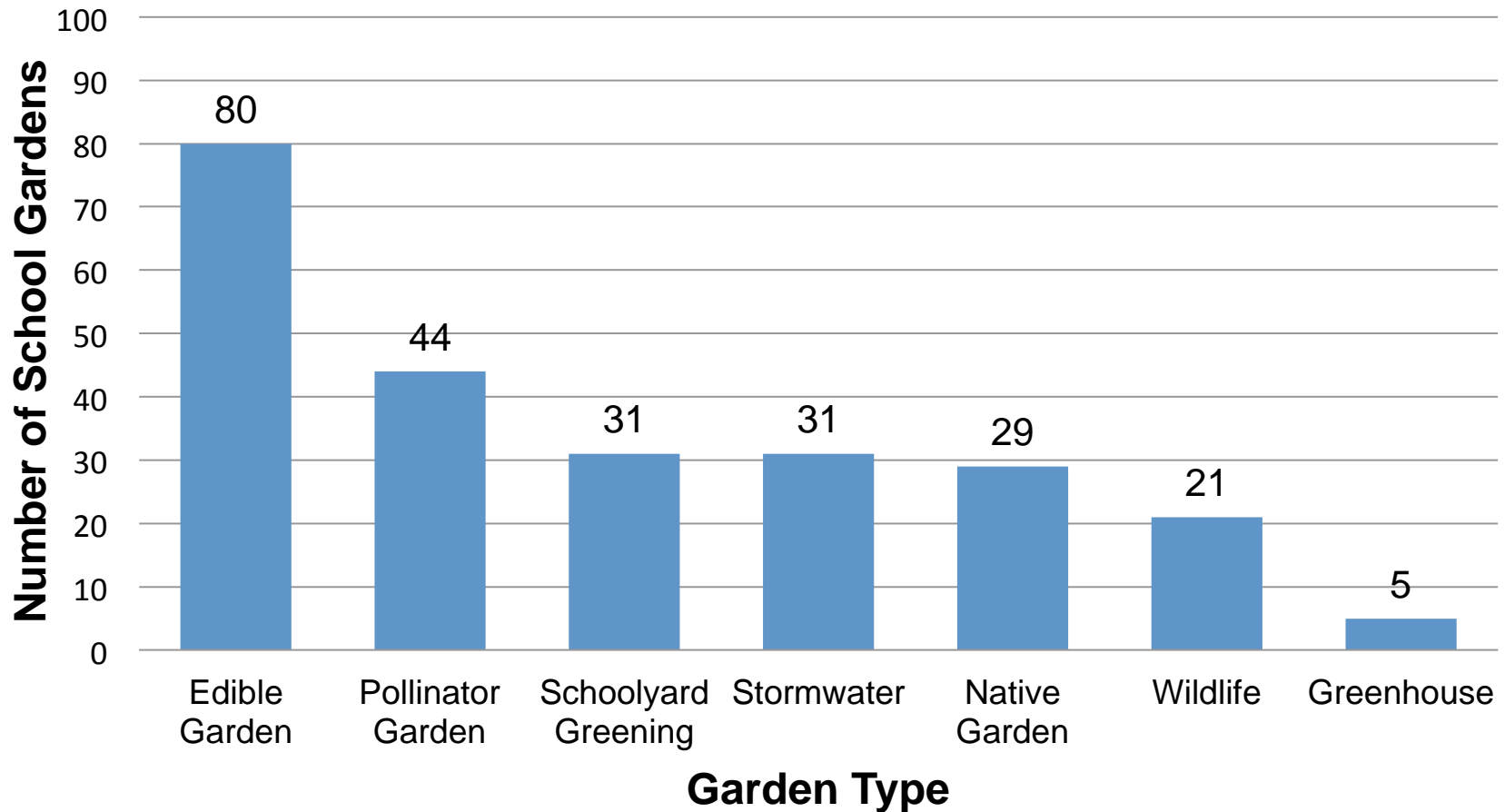
# of students Impacted

11,000 (14% of all students)

# of School Garden Coordinators

42

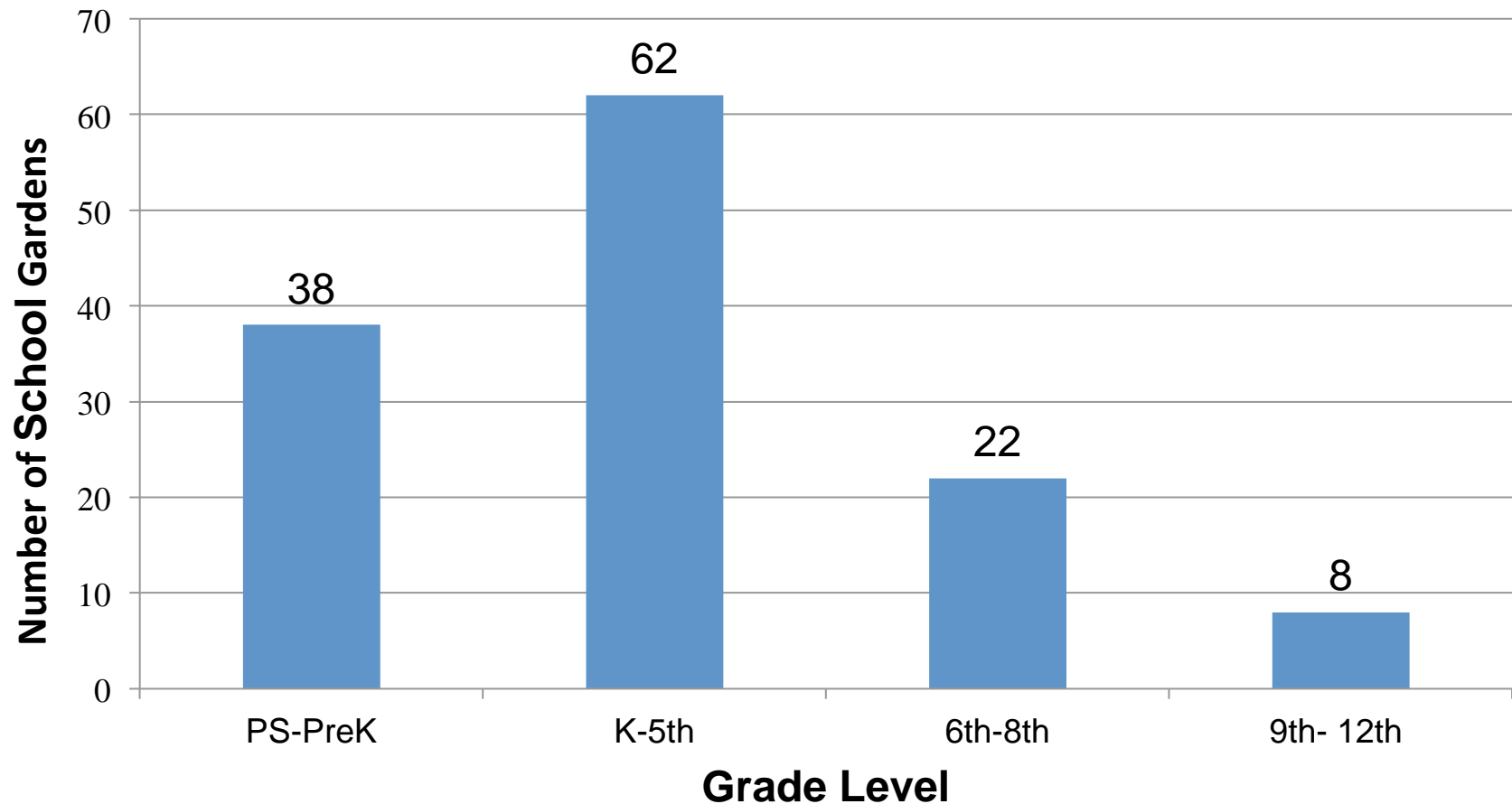
# School Garden Tracking Type



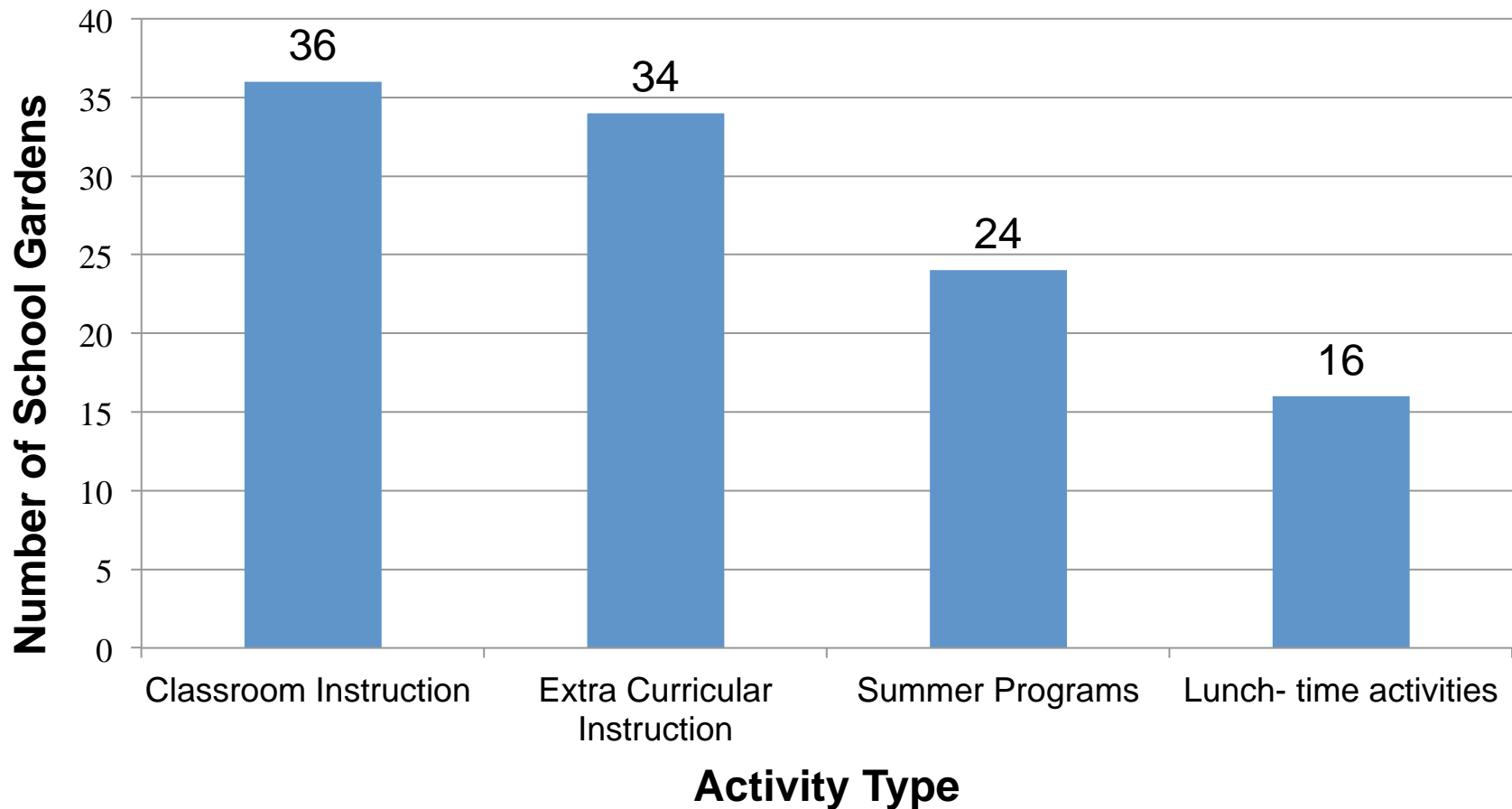


# School Garden Tracking

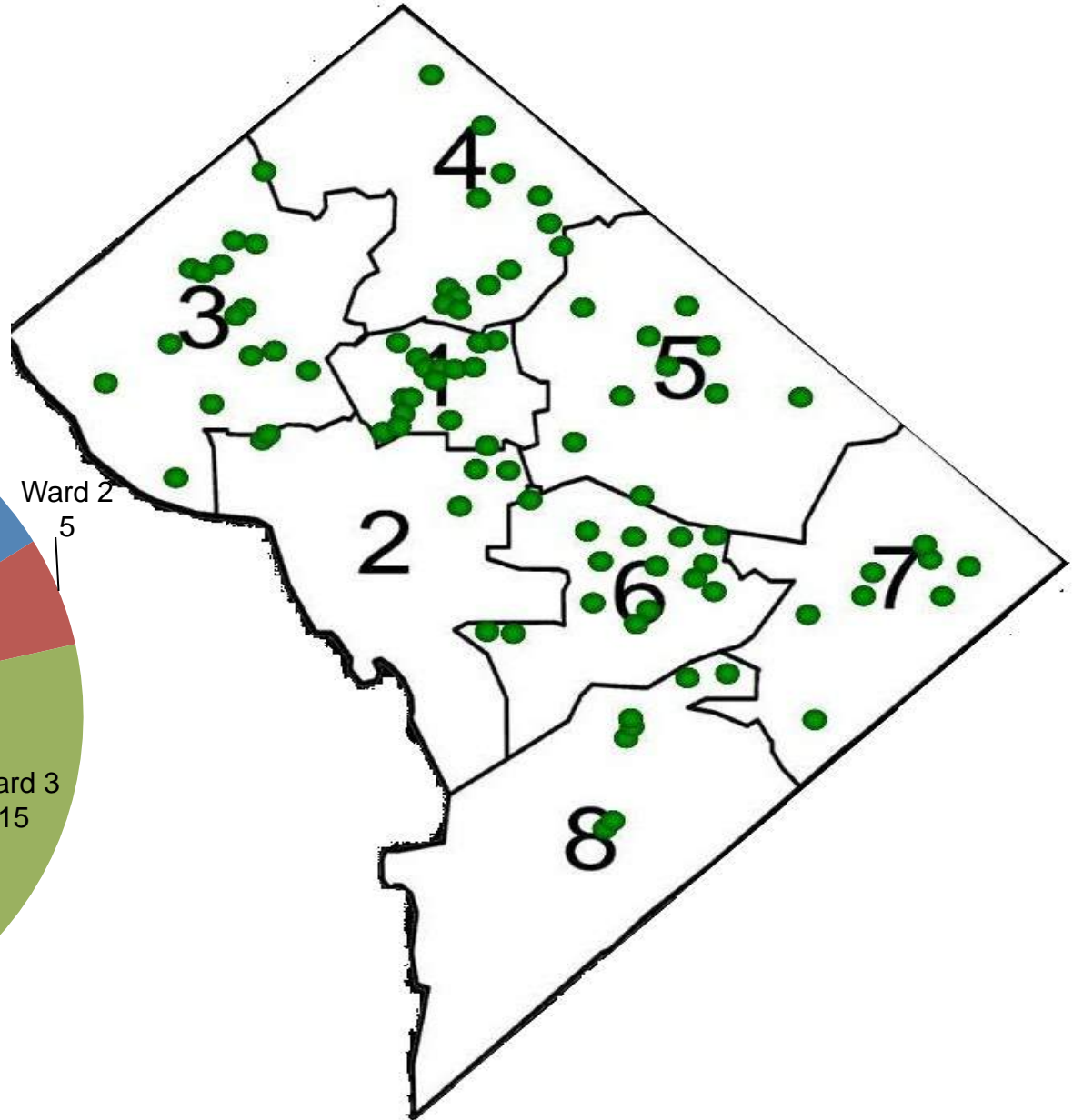
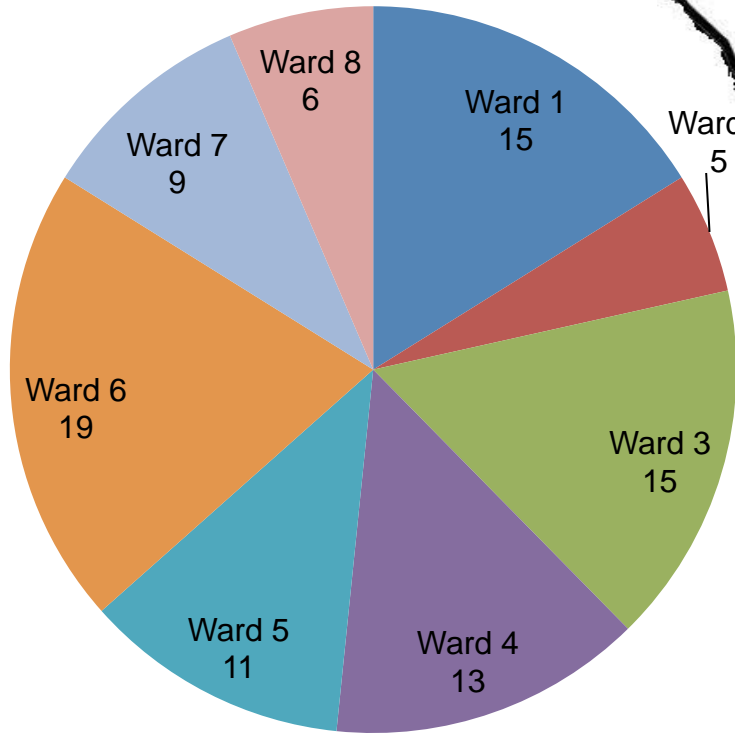
## Grade Level



# School Garden Tracking Activity Type

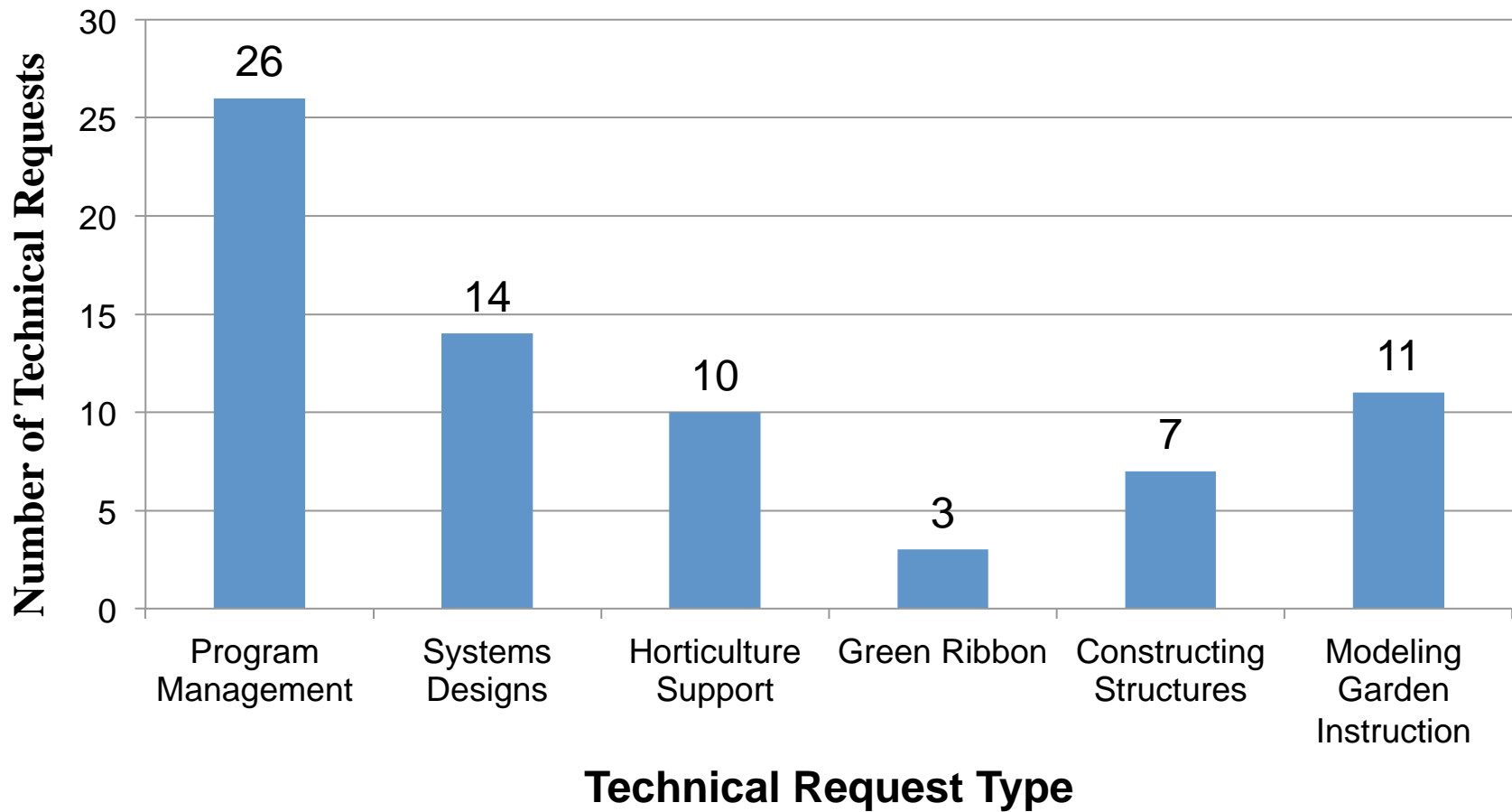


# School Garden Tracking: Geographic Distribution





# Technical Support Requests



# Technical Support: Assessment

## DESIGN (18%)

Circulation

Seating

Signage

Meeting Area

Tool Storage

Security  
Features

Accessibility

## SYSTEMS (26%)

Soil

Biologic

Pest  
Management

Wildlife

Water

Compost

Community  
Participation

## PROGRAM ORGANIZATION (30%)

Vision  
Statement

Funding

Institutional  
Support

Garden  
Coordinator

Garden  
Committee

Student  
Involvement

Maintenance  
Plan

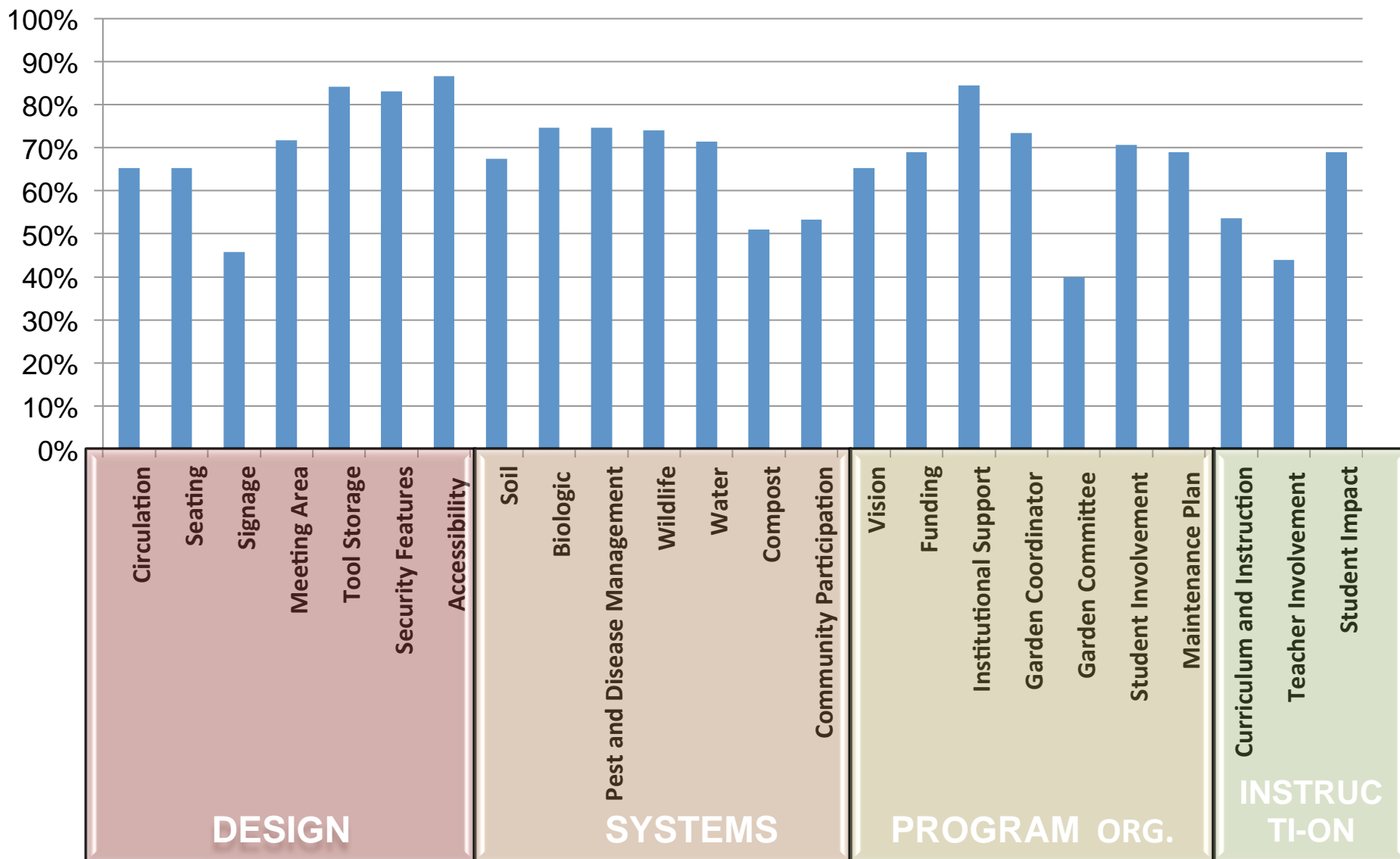
## CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION (26%)

Standards-  
based  
curriculum

Teacher  
Involvement

Student  
Impact

# Technical Support Assessment Scores





# School Garden Grants Overview



- Schools receive up to \$10,000 to support their school garden program (\$200,000 annually)
- Programs requirements include:
  - Partnership with an organization
  - Establish a School Garden Coordinator
  - Establish a School Garden Committee
  - Attend Trainings

# School Garden Grants

## Impact of 2012-2013 School Garden Grant:

- 22 schools awarded
- 4700 students impacted (\$42/ student)
- 143 teachers impacted
- 810 lessons taught
- 16 partner organizations provided support
- 5 new gardens built

# Professional Development Framework



## Program Management

- Securing Funding
- Managing Volunteers
- Managing Committees
- Engaging the Community (Outreach and Promotion)
- Supporting Teachers
- Using Produce

## Technical Skills

- Facilitating Planning and Design
- Building Structures
- Managing Garden Systems ("Eco", Soil, Compost, Water, Plants, Pests)
- Maximizing Harvests

## Garden Instruction

- Managing Student Groups
- Lesson Planning and Curriculum Integration
- Structuring School Staff Garden Trainings
- Assessing the Program
- Cooking in the Garden



# Professional Development: School Garden Coordinator



- Manages the day-to-day operations
- Coordinates with teachers, school staff, and the community
- Facilitates garden-based lessons
- Maintains garden health



## **School Garden 101, 201, and seasonal trainings**

- OSSE conducts these trainings, and partners with multiple local garden-based NGOs for support.
- Over 200 teachers, administrators, and community members have attended.
- Seasonal trainings include school garden tours, and seasonal specific planting.



## **Growing Garden Teachers Program**

- DC Greens runs the program, OSSE provides support.
- 11 monthly trainings for 30 School Garden Coordinators.
- One two-day training, four one-day trainings, six two-hour trainings and two city-wide school garden tours.







GROWING  
**GARDEN**  
TEACHERS



*Join the District's professional network of  
School Garden Coordinators*





## **Growing Garden Teachers:**

- Trains school garden coordinators in program management, technical skills, and instruction.
- Creates a unique professional network of garden educators that provides peer support and a forum for the sharing of best practices.
- Includes 12 workshops over 1 year

## **Support Programs:**

- Seedling program
- Internship program





# GROWING GARDEN TEACHERS

March	Role of a School Garden Coordinator: Best Practices
April	Garden Science Environmental Literacy
May	Carpentry Skills
June	Composting
August	Support Programs: internship program, seedling program, engaging school staff
September	Fall Planting with Kids
October	Engaging the School Community: art in the garden
November	Season Extension: prepping the garden for winter
December	Grant Writing
January	Indoor Activities
February	Engaging with the Broader Community





## Seedling program:

- Supplies school garden programs across the district with seedlings.
- Trains students and teachers to manage their greenhouse.







# GROWING GARDEN TEACHERS



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GROWING  
**GARDEN**  
TEACHERS

## Our School Garden Army:

- Supports school garden coordinators in program development and implementation.
- DC Greens provides training for school garden soldiers on creating sustainable school garden programs.
- Has placed 50 soldiers in DC school gardens to date.



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## **Some quotes from participants:**

“They are creating the model to duplicate for professional learning in this career field. It validates our position in the schools and spells out our responsibilities and potential!”

– *Jennifer Finnegan*

“Its a great opportunity to share ideas and learn from others in the field. My creativity is always sparked after collaborating with others during the GGT trainings. I always walk away with new ideas to try with my students. It makes me feel not so alone!”

-*Kealy Rudersdorf*

“Having a platform and time built in for collaboration with other garden teachers is huge. I makes you feel less alone out there!”

-*Sarah McLaughlin*



# DC School Garden Profiles

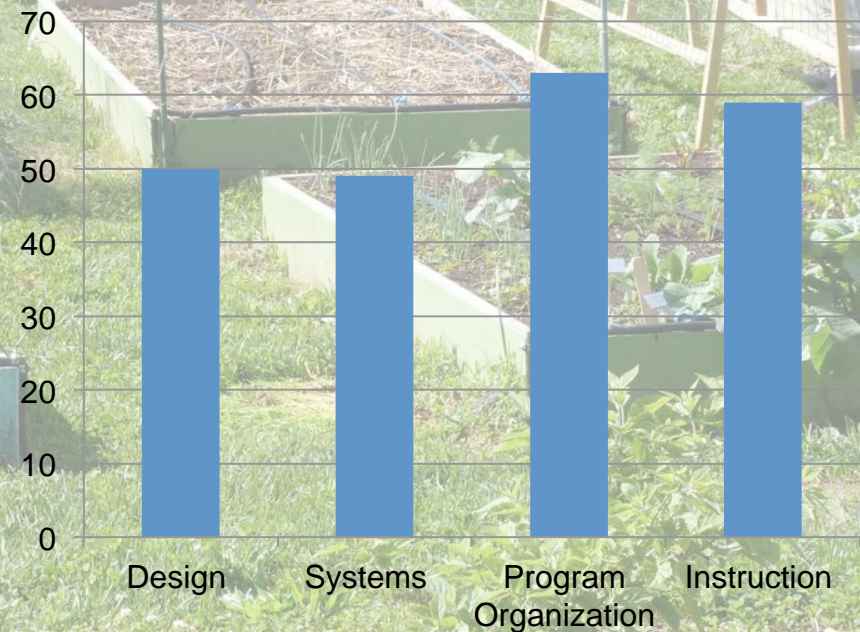
## Thurgood Marshall Academy



### Major Accomplishments

- First and only shared school garden between a D.C. charter and a public school (A. Kiger Savoy ES).
- Maintained and used by students and faculty year-round.
- Contains a variety of elements including storm water management, edible gardens, and native wildlife habitat.

<b>Creation Date</b>	2009
<b>Garden Size</b>	6,500 sq. feet
<b>Annual Cost</b>	\$12,000+
<b>Grade Levels</b>	9-12
<b>Students Impacted</b>	150
<b>Assessment Score</b>	78%







# GROWING GARDEN TEACHERS

## Kate Lee

Thurgood Marshall Academy,  
Hardy Middle School Wilson  
High School, Peabody Early  
Childhood Elementary School

- 600 students, preK – 12
- 25 hours/week



### **Favorite Garden Activity:**

Most students scream when they see a bug. Demonstrate how harmless the bug is, and their fear turns to curiosity.

**Experience:** Horticulture degree from the University of Georgia; founder of an edible landscape consulting company



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*"I'm part of giving students an opportunity to learn and explore that I'm not sure they always get. It allows them to be physical, interact with their surroundings, and learn in a manner that doesn't outright seem like learning, at least not in the structured way they are used to. It's one of the most rewarding jobs anyone could every have."*



# DC School Garden Profiles

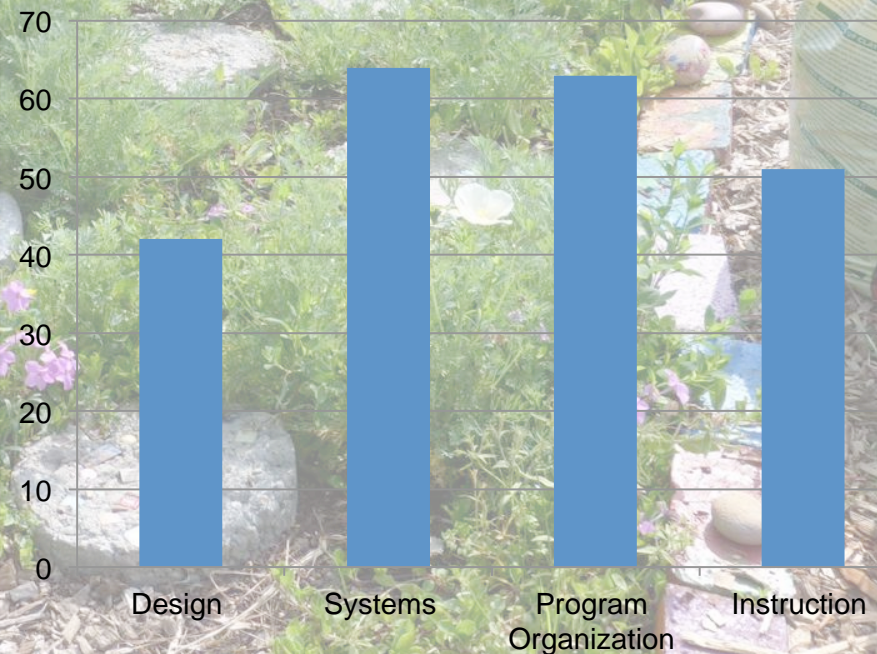
## Capital City Public Charter School



### Major Accomplishments

- Edible, pollinator, and storm water components provide many opportunities for students to become engaged.
- Expeditionary Learning model allows students the opportunity to conduct in-depth project based fieldwork using the garden.
- Hosts community volunteer hours after school each Friday.

<b>Creation Date</b>	2011
<b>Garden Size</b>	2,500 sq. feet
<b>Annual Cost</b>	\$10,000-\$12,000
<b>Grade Levels</b>	K-8
<b>Students Impacted</b>	50
<b>Assessment Score</b>	77%





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**GARDEN**  
TEACHERS



## Ryoko Yamamoto

Capital City Public Charter School

- 960 students, preK - 12
- 10-30 hours/week, \$30/hour

**Favorite Garden Activity:**  
Exploring garden “desserts”  
like nectar or Stevia.

**Experience:**  
Long-time gardener

*“The students’ questions of the natural world is most inspirational and ... drives me into better teaching.”*



*“Understanding how things are inter-connected is possible only through exposure and own experience. The garden contains all foundation of support which remain for life... [I hope] they will take the lessons from the garden and ... cultivate a better place for every living creature.”*



# DC School Garden Profiles

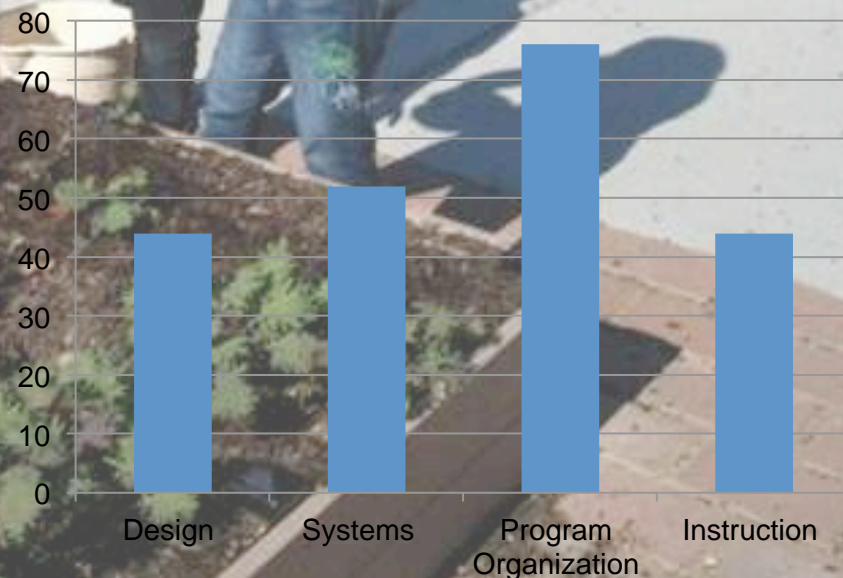
## Bancroft Elementary School



### Major Accomplishments

- Students heavily involved in the initial planting of the White House Garden and maintain a strong relationship with this initiative.
- Students are involved in every aspect from trellising to maintenance.
- The garden was part of the modernization of the school facility.

<b>Creation Date</b>	2005
<b>Garden Size</b>	300 sq. feet
<b>Annual Cost</b>	\$4,000-\$7,000
<b>Grade Levels</b>	K-5
<b>Students Impacted</b>	370
<b>Assessment Score</b>	76%







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## Devon Bartlett

Bancroft Elementary School  
465 students, preK – 5  
30hours/week, \$25,000/year

### Experience:

Peace Corp volunteer in natural resource management, home gardener, high school and middle school teacher

### Favorite Garden Activity:

Worm composting – especially when they get to find the worms

*"I love to watch the kids explore, get dirty and have fun in the garden or out in nature."*

# DC School Garden Profiles

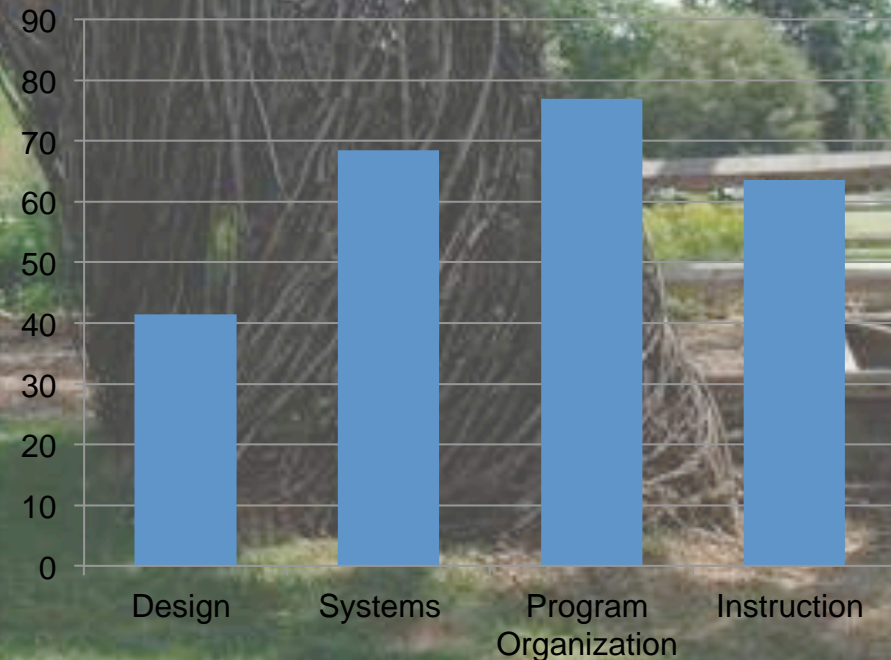
## Stoddert Elementary



### Major Accomplishments

- Contains many essential elements including edible, pollinator, bug gardens and a greenhouse
- Engages every student in the school in hands- on garden based learning
- Strong support from the school's parent teacher organization and partner organization has allowed the garden to provide meaningful instruction throughout the year.

<b>Creation Date</b>	2011
<b>Garden Size</b>	5,000 sq. feet
<b>Annual Cost</b>	\$1,000-\$4,000
<b>Grade Levels</b>	PS-5
<b>Students Impacted</b>	350
<b>Assessment Score</b>	88%





GROWING  
**GARDEN**  
TEACHERS

## Kealy Rudersdorf

Stoddert and Murch Elementary Schools

- 900 students, preK – 5
- 40 hours/week, \$30,000/year

### **Experience:**

Volunteer on farms abroad, certified in permaculture, masters in teaching, 2 years of teaching

### **Favorite Garden Activity:**

Make a few salad dressings with different herbs and flavors, and let students perform a taste test.



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*“There are so many lessons that can be taught in the garden: patience, team work, biology, compassion, math, protecting the earth, social studies, etc. Why wouldn't I want to teach in the garden?? I love what I do!! “*





Office of the State Superintendent of Education

**Thank You!**

*Sam Ullery*

School Garden Specialist

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[sam.ullery@dc.gov](mailto:sam.ullery@dc.gov)

*Sarah Bernardi*

Program Director

DC Greens

[sarah@dcgreens.org](mailto:sarah@dcgreens.org)

