

SPROUT IT OUT!

D.C.'s SCHOOL GARDEN PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Winter 2012

OSSE School Garden Program RFA Released

The School Gardens Program Request for Applications was released on December 12, 2011. This RFA will infuse \$200,000 into DC school garden programs. This grant will be administered by the Wellness and Nutrition Services Division within OSSE. Public and Public Charter schools and garden-based organizations are eligible to apply, however schools must partner with at least one DC-based school garden organization.

The RFA will award a maximum of \$10,000 to at least 20 schools/ organizations to fund schools garden coordinator positions, materials, and other necessary expenses to fund a sustainable school garden program. For more information please see the full RFA [here](#).

School Garden Spotlight:

Bancroft Elementary

By: Devon Bartlett, Gardening & Nutrition Instructor

Bancroft students have been busy in our school garden this fall. We have harvested and eaten the potatoes, carrots, beets, peppers, radishes and tomatoes that had been growing all summer long. We have a rule in the garden when we harvest food – “you don’t have to like it, but you should try it.” Everyone is encouraged to taste what we grow. It is amazing how excited kids are to eat what they have grown themselves. We have planted a variety of cold hardy crops such as lettuce, spinach, beets, broccoli and radishes. We hope to be able to harvest these through the fall, winter and early spring. Students have also spent a lot of time thinking of ways to improve our garden. Students have discovered that our soil lacks nutrients that our plants need to grow so we have begun worm composting and students have become experts on what we can feed our worms to make nutritious soil.

Need help growing your garden?

OSSE's Division of Wellness and Nutrition Services would like to help you with your school garden program. Tell us a little about your program by clicking [here](#). We will follow-up with a site visit and provide needed technical assistance to help your garden grow.

Green Ribbon Schools Application Released

DC Schools are encouraged to apply for the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools award. This award will recognize schools that save energy, reduce costs, feature environmentally sustainable learning spaces, protect health, foster wellness, and offer environmental education to boost academic achievement and community engagement. It is also a great tool for school that are looking for ways to involve their students in “going green”. The OSSE is responsible for supporting DC schools in applying for this award, as well as nominating up to four DC schools to the US Department of Ed. You can find the application [here](#).



Students hard at work in the DCPS Bancroft Elementary School garden



Exploring the compost, together

Happenings: Fall

The section highlights seasonal activities in the garden.

"The third-graders started their final Garden Science lesson outside, harvesting radishes to take home and kale, spinach, and peas for their plant-parts stir-fry. After two months of weekly lessons, Washington Youth Garden classes in five local schools are now poised and ready for their in-class seeding projects this winter." – Center City Trinidad PCS

"We put garden blankets on some of our garden beds, so we are staying outside as long as possible! We recently dug up our fall/winter crop of potatoes, and the kids were excited to find lots of purple and golden buried treasure...we are making healthy French fries with them today." – DC Prep PCS - Benning Road Campus

"The Green Thumbs Garden Club has been using their summer produce, frozen for winter use (of course following food safety practices), to make various dishes during the cold months. In this picture, Ms. Crom serves up spaghetti "Bolognese", made with frozen tomatoes from our school garden, whole wheat spaghetti, and lean ground chicken to lighten up a usually heavy dish." – DC Prep PCS -Edgewood Campus

"We are still pulling up the last of the tomato plants, pulling out the last of the weeds, and believe it or not, still picking the last of an unbelievably hardy late crop of lettuce, also saving seeds from favorite plants for next year." – DCPS Garrison Elementary

"Because of the reflective qualities and heat retention of the south facing black top, the growing season of the raised beds atop the pavement warm up and stay warm longer than open parcels in the neighborhood. This has allowed temperature sensitive plants like basil, tomatoes and eggplants from freezing, as they would have in other nearby gardens." – Paul PCS

This November we partnered with Brainfood, a local non-profit that teaches high school kids life skills and leadership skills through food and cooking. Their "MVP's" (students who have graduated from their year-long program) planned and delivered a healthy cooking workshop to our second and third graders. They harvested greens and cabbages on the farm and then taught the students how to make healthy versions of classics like vegetable fried rice. We can't wait to have them back. – DCPS Walker Jones

In the next "Happening". Send a brief description and picture describing what's happening in the garden over winter by April 10th and it will be included in the Spring newsletter.

OSSE on Twitter!

OSSE's School Garden Program has found a home on twitter!
Follow us; our username is @OSSESGP for important updates, opportunities, and inspiration.



Center City Trinidad students love kale!



DC Preppies show-off their potato harvest



DC Prep Students scramble for spaghetti



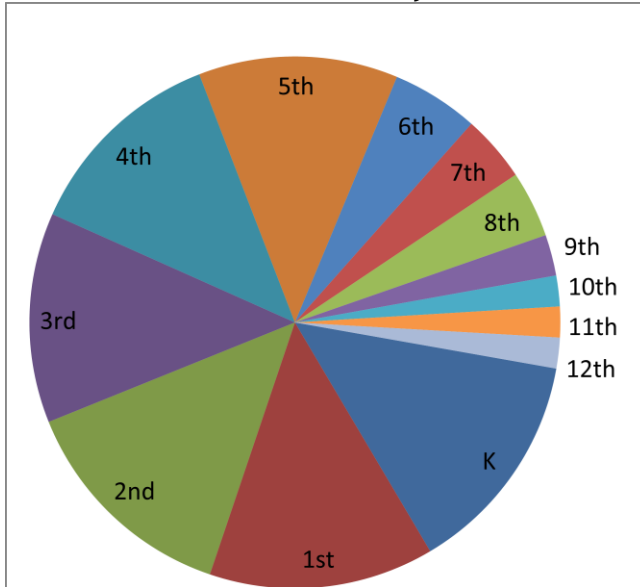
Paul's garden on black-top extends the season



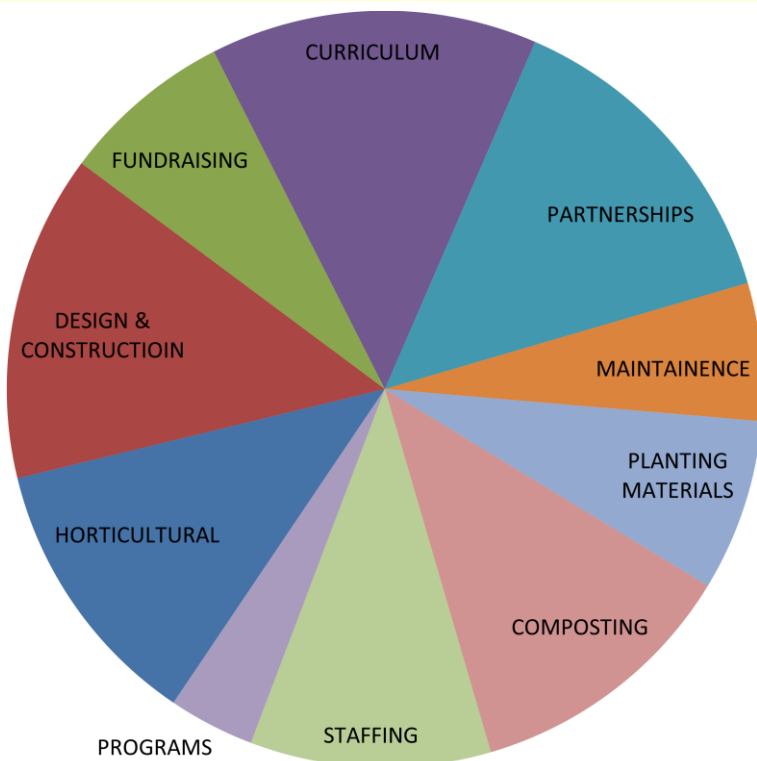
Trophy cabbage displayed

School Garden Data

Access to School Gardens by Grade Level



Technical Assistance Requests from DC schools by Category*



*Based on snapshot responses from 57 schools

Technical Resources

OSSE's Nutrition Program

Check-out our recently re-designed website, scroll down to view the School Garden Program section. Links will be added as the program grows! [Click here](#) to view.

USDA School Gardens and Garden Curriculum Resources

View a list of curriculum, webcasts, programs and toolkits affiliated with the USDA. [Click here](#) for more information.

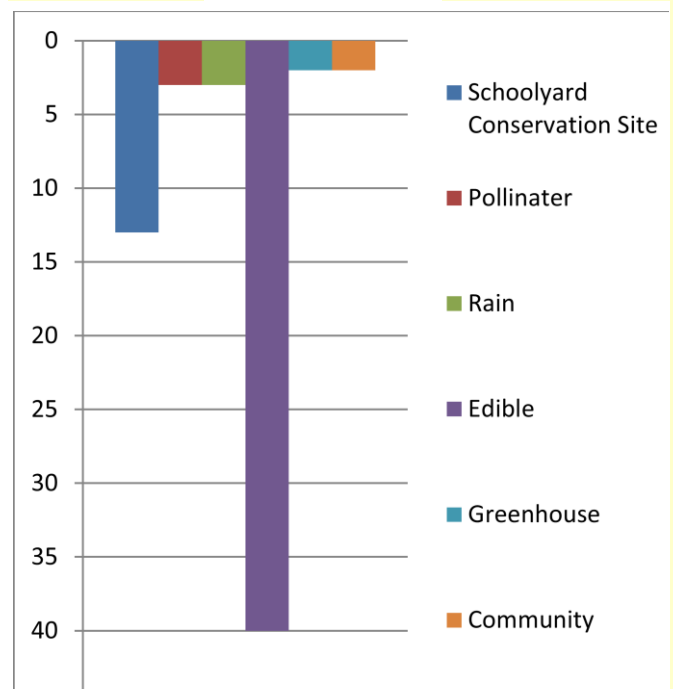
Chipotle's Veggie-U: a 4th Grade Curriculum Program

OSSE has partnered with Chipotle to offer their "Veggie-U" curriculum to 4th grade DC teachers. For more information on this exciting opportunity, [click here](#).

A Toolkit: How to Start a School Garden

Interested in starting a new school garden? This is a great resource to ensure that your garden program will be successful. [Click here](#) to view the tool kit.

Garden Type*



Interested in contributing to this newsletter?

Comments? Questions? Suggestions?

Please contact: Dr. Holly, Nutrition Program Manager at Dawanna.james-holly@dc.gov or Mr. Sam Ullery, School Garden Specialist at Sam.ullery@dc.gov.