



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DISTRICT TO CELEBRATE 2ND ANNUAL GROWING HEALTHY SCHOOLS WEEK

OSSE Continues Efforts to Encourage Healthy Lifestyles for DC Kids

WASHINGTON, DC – More than 40 percent of District of Columbia school-aged children are obese or overweight. The [D.C. Healthy Schools Act](#) was enacted in 2010 to combat this epidemic through improved school nutrition, and enhanced physical activity, physical education and health education during the school day. The Act also encourages the use of school gardens and farm-to-school programs as educational tools. To this end, schools across the District will celebrate Growing Healthy Schools Week from October 20-26, 2013. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) will co-host the annual celebration aimed at engaging students in activities around the benefits of growing and eating locally grown and seasonal foods.

“Greener school environments and more opportunities to eat local, fresh produce are essential for every student in the District,” said Deputy State Superintendent Sandy Schlicker. “This effort supports our ongoing strategy of providing teaching and learning experiences for students around healthy living, and we look forward to entire families participating in the week’s planned activities.”

Growing Healthy Schools Week is hosted by OSSE in partnership with the DC Farm to School Network, [DC Greens](#), [DC Schoolyard Greening](#), and [Whole Foods Market](#). The week begins with a kickoff event featuring a competition between local chefs utilizing produce grown in a local school garden. Throughout the week, local farmers, chefs, dietitians, and community-based organizations will visit schools and engage students in the process of growing, preparing and eating healthy, local food, while teaching them about the connections between food, their health, and the environment.

Parents and the community are invited to participate in three main events which are free of charge and open to all District residents:

- **School Garden Bike Tour**, October 20, 11:30am – 2:30pm
Starting at BICYCLESpace, 1019 7th Street, NW
- **Kick-Off Chef Competition**, October 21, 10:00am – 12:00pm
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCHS, 2427 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
- **Growing Healthy Schools Week Panel Discussion**, October 21, 6:00pm – 8:00pm
US Green Building Council, 2101 L Street, NW, Suite #500

For more information and to register for Growing Healthy Schools Week events, visit <http://growinghealthyschoolsweek.org>.

About Growing Healthy Schools Week

Growing Healthy Schools Week is the fusion of DC School Garden Week and DC Farm to School Week. DC School Garden Week was launched in 2007 to celebrate school gardens throughout the District of Columbia. Three years later, DC Farm to School Week was born, providing an opportunity for DC schools to celebrate local, seasonal food in school meals, and engage students in the farm-to-table process. These two celebrations were extremely



successful in stimulating more citywide support for and involvement in farm to school and school garden programs. Growing Healthy Schools Week highlights the interrelated goals of these two former weeks and reflects the components of the D.C. Healthy Schools Act, which encourages linkages between farm to school and school garden programs.

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