

THE SEEDLING

The Children's Garden Newsletter

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Welcome back to all! We are looking forward to an exciting year in the Cove School Children's Garden. The goals of our garden project are to enrich the academic experience of the students, to foster positive multigenerational learning through hands on experience, and to promote sound environmental stewardship.

The Garden Advisory Council met over the summer. Its mission is to assure the sustainability of the Cove School Children's Garden as an Outdoor Classroom. We are fortunate to have Beth Zschau; Horticulture Educator from the Trustees of Reservations/Long Hill joining us. A few preliminary goals and visions for the upcoming year were discussed.

Our first goal this year is to clean up and prep the gardens for the Fall and Winter. Classrooms will have the opportunity to participate in weeding, composting and planting additional plants. The garden stewards will complete whatever the classes do not get to finish.

The Garden Stewards Program is a core group of students, most in partnership with a parent/guardian, who commit to working in the garden year round - including the summer. This will ensure the garden's sustainability throughout the year. This program requires occasional after school garden activities such as bed preparation, weeding, and watering, which will be more frequent during growing seasons.

Our second goal is to establish the Children's Garden as a working Outdoor Classroom, available for teachers to take their classes outside for hands on learning in all academic topics. In an effort to allow teachers to visit the garden more readily, we are working on creating a "Garden Room Parent Program" for each classroom. Like the Library volunteer program, Parents will attend a training and learn the "in's and out's" of the garden. Our new shed will also house supplies that teachers/garden parents may need for outdoor

lessons. For example: rulers, scavenger hunts and garden tools are all in there for teacher use.

Our third goal is to learn what teachers and students want in their garden. Our hope is for Victoria Hackett to attend both a teachers meeting and a Community meeting to brainstorm not only with teachers, but with the students as well.

This year our Fall Kickoff will be a Second Annual Bulb Planting Extravaganza. This was a huge success last year. This year, we hope to get every child out there planting at least one bulb. Our Advisory Council is already working on getting bulbs donated. Because so many bulbs were planted last year in and around the Children's Garden, we thought it may be nice to have class's plant bulbs under trees near their classroom windows. The swirl of color would allow everyone to have a beautiful view in the Spring. To make this happen we need Garden Room Parents.

Here are just a few additional mini lesson ideas for the Fall before the garden goes to bed for the winter.

Sunflower Garden:

- Make an estimate of the height of a sunflower. Come visit the sunflowers and measure them. Make a bar graph with the measurements
- Talk about different leaves on plants. Enjoy a leaf scavenger hunt.
- Remove the seeds from a sunflower and save them for planting next spring.

Teepee Garden:

- Talk about plants that grow on vines. Come visit the 3 teepees.
- Talk about food that can grow on the vines.
- Discuss the shape of a teepee.

Butterfly Garden

- Have student's research plants that attract butterflies. How many of these plants are in our butterfly garden?
- Discuss the butterfly lifecycle and locate the places of this lifecycle in the garden.
- Read and discuss *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

For more information about the Advisory Council, Garden Stewards and/or Garden Parent, Please contact Victoria Hackett Victoria@ProgramsForEducators.com. Don't forget to visit our website: www.tinyurl.com/covegarden