

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

School Garden Partners



HI THERE!

City Blossoms is an organization dedicated to fostering healthy communities by developing creative, kid-driven green spaces. We accomplish our mission through five programs: Early Growers, School Garden Partners, Youth Entrepreneurship Cooperative, Community Green Spaces, and Training & Resource Development. Our work incorporates free or affordable in-school and afterschool programming, parent and community engagement, access to free resources, and teacher coaching opportunities. These activities are tailored to meet the needs of each community.

THE SCHOOL GARDEN PARTNERS PROGRAM

Through the School Garden Partners program, we work with area schools and teachers to help young gardeners connect to their environment. Together we build diverse, nourishing, and sustainable youth-driven spaces to maximize engagement. This multi-year partnership includes:

- Design and support in the creation of an affordable, culturally-connected, and manageable school garden with at least a 5-year life span
- Support for teachers through coaching sessions and resource sharing to build programming that takes considers the school's current resources and growth aspirations
- Lesson and activity themes, such as cooking and art-making, as tools for connecting participants to the garden and their community

- Support for participants to explore and create personal relationships with nature and food-systems through both structured and independent activities and play.

To learn more about the School Garden Partners program, partnering, costs and commitment, please contact willa@cityblossoms.org.

ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

Program Support: City Blossoms staff co-lead with teachers to model ways to add garden-based lessons that incorporate artwork, hands-on activities, and outdoor spaces into their programming. We'll share resources, recipes and additional lessons to help build upon these units. These 12 co-led garden lessons can be broken down differently depending on what works for the school:

- Two six-week, in-depth workshops with two classrooms
- Three two-week intro-to-the- garden series, offered to help build familiarity with the garden





Additionally, City Blossoms staff will help each school and its teachers evaluate whether outside-of-school-time programming can be included and how to begin establishing it, such as garden or cooking clubs, lunch/recess activities, after-school open times, and summer family engagement.

Garden Designs & Builds: Through this partnership, City Blossoms will work with a school, its educators, and students to create a design or redesign of a green space that fits the school's physical site, culture, objectives, goals, access to resources and maintenance, and short-term and long-term budget. Each space will include:

- An outdoor classroom or meeting space
- Beds to grow edible plants
- Pollinator-friendly area
- Signage and art
- Tools to include nature-play, art-making and simple food preparation

City Blossoms can then help build the garden with school, family, and volunteer support, facilitate annual maintenance workdays as needed, and conduct annual site visits to help with problem solving.

Coaching for School Garden Coordinators and other Educators: City Blossoms leads six small-group coaching sessions over two years that are required for teachers or staff who act as their school's School Garden Coordinator and open to other interested educators. This series is created to help foster the sustainability of the projects by building



garden expertise and independence in school staff. The sessions introduce educators to hands-on, project-based, garden and nature-themes including:

- Budgeting and fundraising for your project
- Creating maps and planting plans
- Building in-school and after-school programs
- Cooking in the garden
- Incorporating art and nature play projects for all ages
- Planning community events and garden workdays
- Technical garden support

Resources: Over five years, partner schools receive resources to help educators incorporate garden and nature-based learning into their work.

Resources may include:

- *Garden Gastronomy/Gastronomia del Jardín*, our bilingual cookbook
- *What's in our Library*, a 200+ multilingual list of books with diverse protagonists, authors, and themes
- Cooking Box - Specially chosen supplies for classroom recipe-making
- Seeds, seedlings, and bulbs
- Quarterly newsletter with tips and information on other resources
- Support in planning around maintenance and work days, garden calendars, and sustainability.

