



Garden Education Professional Learning Community

Integrating Garden-Based Education into the Classroom

Growing Gardens is forming a regional Professional Learning Community (PLC) for classroom teachers to support each other in using school gardens to enhance curriculum and increase student engagement.

We are recruiting up to twelve public school K-8 classroom teachers to find new ways of working together to use school gardens to meet classroom learning goals and the needs of their students. We anticipate the PLC helping teachers: 1) identify ways to use school gardens to enhance students' knowledge, 2) create and adapt existing hands-on lessons and curriculum materials, 3) work collaboratively to align garden-based curriculum and instructional practices with new educational standards, 4) share resources and support each other in implementing new practices and, 5) find new ways of involving parents and community volunteers in students' learning experiences.

Participants will have the opportunity to earn two graduate credits through Portland State University Graduate School of Education Continuing Education (CEED) program for their professional development work as part of this PLC.

Our long-term goal of this project is to embed learning gardens into future curriculum development and school programming.

This project has been funded by the Gray Family Foundation.

While the PLC will draw on the knowledge, experience, and creativity of participating teachers, Growing Gardens will:

- Facilitate group discussion
- Share examples of garden-based learning curriculum and provide coaching for teachers on garden integration as requested by group members
- Arrange logistics and provide snacks
- Provide a small stipend for garden supplies and curriculum materials for your school

Participant qualifications:

In order to participate, you must be:

- A classroom teacher at an elementary or K-8 school
- Located within the city of Portland or Gresham

If selected to participate, PLC participants are expected to:

- Fully engage, participate and co-create the experience of the PLC
- Participate in four group meetings for a total of twelve hours
- Collaboratively identify goals and set meeting agendas for the PLC
- Implement at least three lessons in the garden during the 2017 school year
- Provide feedback and reflection on experiences
- Share successes and challenges with colleagues within the PLC and within the broader school community

Timeline:

November/December: cohort forms

January – March: cohort meetings once each month on weekday evenings 5-8pm (specific dates TBD)

February - May: teachers implement garden education lessons with their classes

May: final meeting/celebration, reflection & evaluation (Date TBD)

How to Apply:

Complete the PLC application which can be found by visiting the following page:

<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/gardeneducationPLC>

The application deadline is December 15, 2017. If you have any questions please contact Anna Garwood (anna@growing-gardens.org)

Background:

Growing Gardens promotes organic home and school food gardening for improved nutrition, health, and self-reliance while enhancing the quality of life for individuals. Our Youth Grow program develops sustainable garden education programs that connect kids to nature, inspire a love of eating fresh-grown food, and provide interdisciplinary learning opportunities. We build three year partnerships with schools to support the development of after school garden clubs and garden education programs. We also collaborate with teachers to help integrate garden-based learning experiences for students linked to grade-level standards. Our programs improve nutrition and decrease the risk of food insecurity by teaching low income children lessons about where food comes from, the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, and how to grow food through fun hands-on activities. For more information, visit www.growing-gardens.org.