

School Gardens:

by

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Safety First

- Place a secured fence around the garden
- Store tools and supplies in a locked shed – do not allow children in the shed
- Use organic practices
- Wash hands before and after gardening (hand sanitizer)
- Wear gardening gloves to work in the garden
- No running in the garden
- Use child-sized tools – teach correct use
- Only use potable water to water fruits and vegetables
- Do not use animal manure in the vegetable garden
- Compost correctly at the correct temperature
- Harvest using disposable plastic food service gloves
- Place harvested fruits & veggies in sanitized containers/buckets or food storage bags
- Do not eat in the garden
- Wash all produce under running water before eating
- Refrigerate produce

Requirements for Funding through WCPSS

-Grants - Intent to Apply Form to the Grant Department

-Donations - Donor Form to send to the School Board

-Purchases - Purchase Order Forms from your secretary

All are necessary for any money being used through the school system

Websites – Information and Inspiration:

Willow Spring Elementary “Grow Zone” Website - www.wsesgarden.webs.com

Douglas Elementary Garden Website - <http://dragongardenzone.webs.com>

KidsGardening.org - www.kidsgardening.org

Office of Environmental Education -

<http://web.eenorthcarolina.org/core/item/topic.aspx?s=0.0.108.37430&tid=85010>

Recycling Bin Information - <http://ncscrapmetal.com/>

Service Raleigh Volunteer Website - <http://www.serviceraleigh.org/>

Lifelab School Garden Website - www.lifelab.org

Edible Schoolyard - <http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/welcome>

Swift Creek Elementary Strawberry Patch project http://www.ncstrawberry.org/docs/newsletter09_06.pdf

Keep America Beautiful – ‘Free Seeds’ program (some shipping & handling costs)

http://www.freeseeds.us/free_seeds/index.php

Gardening Tips

Where to Plant:

- In an area that gets a minimum of 6 hours of sunlight.
- Some place that has a water source nearby.

What to Plant:

- Veggies that produce plentifully and can be eaten raw with little preparation: e.g. sugar snap peas, cucumbers, carrots, peppers, cherry tomatoes, turnips, radishes, etc.
- Plants that can be harvested several times: e.g. collard leaves, spinach, lettuce leaves, kale, Swiss Chard (pick individual leaves and leave some on each plant to grow back)
- Fun foods: Long beans, small pumpkins (sugar pumpkins are best for eating) and red Swiss chard.
- In cooler weather, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, etc. are fantastic. It is amazing to see what kids will eat when they have a part in growing it.
- Sweet potatoes take a lot of space for a long time, but grow well in less than perfect conditions and are fun to dig (and eat). Consider them if you have a sunny dry(ish) place you can spare for the summer.
- Don't be afraid to try something different – you never know what will do well for you and what will catch the kids' attention. (We have planted popcorn, tomatillos, cotton, eggplant, okra, and more!)

When to Plant:

- Wyatt Quarles publishes a free schedule of planting dates for this area, available many places that sell seeds and there is a link to it on the Grow Zone website.
- Plant when the soil warms up around the middle of April
- Don't forget cool season gardens! You can start planting in February (or even late fall if you have a sheltered place and luck with winter weather) and harvest before school lets out in June. It's fun to have something to harvest while you start summer planting and the weather is much more pleasant.

How to Grow:

- Mulch, mulch, mulch! Mulch keeps the weeds down, soil softer & moister, and the garden looking neater. Lay down a layer of newspaper (several sheets) and cover with organic mulch.
- Compost! It is great, but be sure it is from a reputable source or is composted at the correct temperature.
- Have a rain gauge and use it. Vegetable gardens need about 1 inch of water per week.