

Please Support HB 2038 Oregon Farm to School and School Gardens



For the first time ever, the next generation of Oregonians is expected to have shorter life spans than their parents due in part to nutrition. Healthy eating habits and preferences established early in life, usually by sixth grade, are likely to persist into adulthood. Studies show that when children have a hand in growing their own food, they are more likely to make healthy eating choices. In response to community need, Growing Gardens has focused on **educational equity** and **food security** for children and families.

Our Program for Education, Nutrition and Community has been funded through Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden program. Growing Gardens is a recipient of a grant this year from the Farm to School and School Garden program (managed by the Oregon Department of Education). The purpose of the grant is to enhance students' nutrition and academic achievement through active, real-life engagement with school gardens while demonstrating a model for fully-integrated garden education that can be replicated by other schools. Garden Coordinators are supporting teachers in providing interdisciplinary experiential learning opportunities for **1500 students** at three schools (Lent, Kelly and Vernon). We are well on our way to exceed these goals. This innovative program includes:

- Educating children using garden-based lessons integrated into core subjects during the school day, especially Next Generation Science Standards, while building the capacity of teachers. Each child experiences 10 hours of education.
- Creating opportunities for students to cook and taste produce to increase vegetable knowledge and preference for eating healthy food.
- Engaging students in in-depth garden education after-school.
- Connecting students to Oregon agriculture through hands-on field trips to local farms and "Harvest of the Month" activities.
- Facilitating multi-generational and multi-ethnic community building through events, cooking demonstrations at food pantries and garden committee development.

Serving Children with the Greatest Need. These schools were selected because they serve a diverse student population and families living in poverty (100% Free and Reduced Lunch at some schools). Our **bilingual** and culturally-responsive staff engages families to become more involved in the school community.

Please support Farm to School and School Garden funding to help this generation of kids eat healthy, fresh food and engage in hands-on science education.



Students exploring collard greens

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