



BIG GREEN SERVICES

Learning Garden Manual: Big Green Services

Overview of Big Green Services -

Big Green provides a comprehensive array of services and resources to every school with a Learning Garden. Our goal is to build capacity within the Garden Team so that they can effectively integrate the garden into the school culture. Services and resources are delivered to schools by a Big Green Garden Educator or accessed on our website (biggreen.org).

Each school is assigned one Garden Educator who works with multiple schools throughout the school year and summer to ensure –

- Every school is successful in growing and serving fresh produce from the garden to the local school community
- Schools continue to increase capacity to manage their own garden
- Every school engages students through garden-based educational resources to the greatest extent possible
- Every school invites and encourages community engagement in the Learning Garden

How Garden Educators and schools communicate and plan together –

- Garden Educators are available by email, phone, and for in-person meetings
- Garden Educators pursue full school engagement through year-round communication with Garden Teams and school administrators
- Each school provides, maintains, and engages a Garden Team of 4+ participants
- Garden Teams have a Garden Team Lead who serves as the primary point of contact for the Garden Educator
- Schools build out additional garden-related activities and responsibilities as they see fit

GARDEN EDUCATORS OFFER SCHOOLS THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ON AN 'AS NEEDED BASIS'

- Administrative planning meeting
- Garden Team planning meeting
- Introduction to the Learning Garden and Big Green services for school staff
- Big Green staff facilitates a planting day
- Big Green staff facilitates a harvest day
- Garden skills focused trainings in your garden for Garden Teams and participating adults
- Four annual school gardening and networking workshops throughout the growing season focused on garden skills and 'in the garden' classroom management skill building. Workshops are offered seasonally in support of your annual garden plan.
- Teacher trainings for Big Green's two nutrition and health and food literacy-focused curriculum offerings: Garden Bites (K-8) and Real Food Lab (High School)



SCHOOL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Learning Garden Manual: School Roles & Responsibilities

School Responsibilities their Learning Garden -

Once a school has a Learning Garden, the responsibilities fall into two categories:

(1) garden care & upkeep, and (2) student & community engagement

Garden care and upkeep includes growing an edible garden, as well as keeping the space clean, safe, accessible, and ready for classroom visits.

- a. Garden care: During the first growing season, schools take on the almost daily responsibility of watering, and they also coordinate and facilitate the distribution and/or consumption of garden produce. Big Green staff work with schools over time to be take ownership over planting and harvesting as well.
- b. Upkeep of the space: Keep the space clean and welcoming for guided or unguided classroom and community interactions. Label vegetable crops, remove weeds, trash, and vandalism, and put your hoses away if not in use.

Student and community engagement: Seasonal opportunities for classrooms and parents to engage with the garden are: planting (1 time), watering (ongoing), harvesting and eating (1 time). Additional opportunities to engage classrooms (ongoing) can be found on our website and discussed with your Garden Educator.

- c. Engaging students: We provide an array of resources for teachers to bring their classrooms to the garden from garden rule-setting and introductory activities, to seasonally organized activities and lessons, and quick back pocket activities.
- d. Curriculum offerings: All lessons are organized by grade bands (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, & HS). Be sure to ask your Garden Educator about our two curriculum tracks.
- e. Community Engagement: Families often help with garden care, and garden events. We have an array of outreach materials in both English and Spanish.
- f. Harvesting and Eating: Big Green offers simple, delicious no-cook recipes and tasting activities that make eating from the garden easy and delicious.

EVERY YEAR SCHOOLS RECEIVE AND/OR HAVE ACCESS TO

- All digital school garden resources available online at www.biggreen.org
 - School-wide organization and student engagement guides, garden skill guides and videos, school communication examples and templates, classroom garden activities, lessons, and classroom and [curriculum tools](#)
- Best practices and experiences gained from national network of Learning Gardens
- An Annual Garden Plan (AGP) with specific instructions for planting, care, and harvests:
 - All seeds and seedlings you need to support the AGP (distributed seasonally)
 - Periodic delivery of soil amendments (not an annual resource)
- Regionally specific events and resources posted on our regional website pages