OVERVIEW

In September of 2021 as teachers and students were getting ready to head back to school for the 2021/2022 school year, Big Green announced Jumpstart — an all-new program that would rapidly deploy $2,000 mini grants to schools across America in an effort accelerate outdoor learning. The program was created to help schools stay open so that teachers and students could continue in-person learning amid the resurgence of COVID-19 and the Delta variant.

Educators were encouraged to apply through an easy application process and then participate in a series of webinars and online modules to provide resources and inspiration to bring their classrooms outside, into the open air.

PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

In order to participate schools had to meet the following criteria:

• At or above a 65% free and reduced lunch status
• Have an existing outdoor garden space
• Have a plan to expand outdoor learning that could be immediately implemented with the granted funds.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

To become eligible to receive Big Green funding teachers/schools had to:

• Provide a summary of how funds would be used to enhance outdoor education
• Attend at least one in-person Jumpstart Grantseeker webinar
• Complete two of Big Green’s Jumpstart training modules/courses
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

ROUND 1 GRANT CYCLE
- 9.9.21 - Grantseeker webinar
- 9.15.21 - Applications due
- 9.17.21 - Begin deployment of funds

ROUND 2 GRANT CYCLE
- 9.15.21 - Grantseeker Webinar
- 9.21.21 - Applications due
- 9.24.21 - Begin deployment of funds

ROUND 3 GRANT CYCLE
- 9.22.21 - Grantseeker webinar
- 9.28.21 - Applications due
- 10.1.21 - Begin deployment of funds

OUR COMMUNITY HAS BEEN DEVASTATED BY WILDFIRES AND COVID. THIS CREATED A HUGE NEED FOR CONNECTION AND TOGETHERNESS OUTSIDE. OUR GARDEN SERVES AS A SPACE FOR KIDS TO GATHER OUTSIDE, AND USE THE SPACE FOR POETRY, SINGING, SCIENCE, MEDITATION, NUTRITION, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

-Jumpstart Grantee, Chicago

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

Big Green program experts and partner organizations like Green Schoolyards America and the School Garden Support Organization contributed a variety of outdoor education resources and tools that were made available to all grantees through its Learning Management System. Grantees were required to complete one orientation course and at least one other grant module to set educators up for successful planning and implementation of outdoor learning. Each course included downloadable tools, videos, and links to additional partner resources such as National COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Initiative, Grant Planning & Budgeting Tool, or Safety & Sanitation.

I AM SO GRATEFUL FOR THE RESOURCES PROVIDED. THANK YOU!

-Jumpstart Grantee, Memphis
PARTNERS

Thanks to the support of incredible organizations like the Children and Nature Network, Green Schoolyards America, Life Lab, and the School Garden Support Organization Network, Big Green was able to get the word out and cultivate the best professional development and outdoor education materials in the field.

“Grant funds will be used for staff time to coordinate outdoor learning lessons, and for purchasing curriculum, a popup tent, paint for our tree stump seating, a portable microphone/speaker, and plastic tubs and shelves for educational supplies.”
-Jumpstart Grantee, San Diego

“OUR ART CLASSES PLAN TO CREATE A MURAL FOR EACH GRADE LEVEL – ALLOWING ALL STUDENTS TO GO OUTSIDE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE MURAL. WE WILL ALSO USE THE SPACE FOR OUR JUNIOR SEMINAR, PE, AND ENGINEERING COURSES.”
-Jumpstart Grantee, Denver

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

92% of applications were approved

Big Green received 504 applications. 465 were approved and received funds to enhance outdoor education.

$926,000 were deployed to schools via Jumpstart

Each approved application received a $2,000 grant from Big Green to get kids outdoors.

903 Educators attended a live Big Green webinar

Educators were required to attend a live webinar that included an introduction to the Jumpstart program and a chance to meet and learn from others in the Jumpstart community.

66,067 vs. 152,166 kids outside before vs. with grant

+86,099 or 130% more kids outside with grant funding
The Jumpstart program allowed Big Green to expand into an audience beyond its current network of schools to provide funding and resources to those that needed it most all while creating an even broader educator community.

STATES WITH THE MOST APPLICANTS:

- **CALIFORNIA**: 98 Applications
- **ILLINOIS**: 84 Applications
- **TENNESSEE**: 53 Applications
- **TEXAS**: 35 Applications
- **MICHIGAN**: 33 Applications

**APPLICATION BY SCHOOL TYPE:**

- Elementary Schools - 64%
- High Schools - 12%
- K - 8 - 10%
- Middle Schools - 5%
- K - 12 - 4%
- Early Childhood - 3%
- Other - 2%

**TOTAL APPLICATIONS**: 504

**THE FUNDS FROM THIS GRANT WILL BE USED TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL OUTDOOR SEATING EQUIPMENT TO ALLOW US TO RECONFIGURE OUR OUTDOOR SEATING MODEL, ALLOWING US TO PROVIDE OUTDOOR GARDEN PROGRAMMING AT DOUBLE THE RATE THAT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO OTHERWISE.**

- Jumpstart Grantee, Brooklyn, NY
SANTA FE INDIAN SCHOOL, Santa Fe, New Mexico

All of the students at the Santa Fe Indian School have been deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Many have lost loved ones and many of their tribal communities have been closed since early 2020. SFIS has been working to provide outside learning spaces, and the grant would be used to help us provide an improved outside learning experience with storage for garden and science class materials. Currently we have tables, chairs and tents but no dedicated outdoor learning supplies, equipment or storage.

The funds will be used to purchase supplies needed such as: rolling carts, buckets and towards purchasing an outdoor shed or the purchase of materials needed to build a shed to store our tools and equipment. The dedicated outdoor learning supplies and storage will mean the students will be able to transport, store and access the garden tools and other supplies to assist in their learning.

This means when students are planting, learning and harvesting everyone will be able to quickly get their supplies and settle in the outdoor space and if we have to transport materials from the classroom they will be able to use carts so they can bring and return those materials themselves. This will also make their time with the Gardens special and we will be able to emphasize how important the outdoor science and garden time will be.

We currently have seventh and eighth grade science students in our program that are utilizing the outdoor garden spaces, and other instructors and staff access the space when available. We hope to add more garden spaces for the high school students this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># OF OUTDOOR STUDENTS: 250</th>
<th>ANTICIPATED # OF OUTDOOR STUDENTS WITH GRANT: 350</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># OF HOURS PER WEEK OUTSIDE: 2</td>
<td>ANTICIPATED # OF HOURS OUTSIDE WITH GRANT: 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIG GREEN LEARNING GARDEN SCHOOL: NO</td>
<td>FREE &amp; REDUCED LUNCH PERCENTAGE: 100%</td>
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Photo Submission:
SHERMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, San Diego, California

The pandemic has elevated the profile of outdoor education as an approach that not only reduces virus transmission, but also has a positive effect on cognition and learning. **For students from marginalized urban communities, the impact could be profound.** The students of Sherman Elementary School have a poverty rate of 86%, and around 10% are classified as homeless/transient. Many students are exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) including emotional abuse, domestic violence, hunger and homelessness; these stressors that can negatively affect brain development and the immune system. Because family members often work frontline jobs, rates of COVID-19 infection, hospitalization and death are significantly higher in our community. (For our zip code, the COVID mortality rate is nearly 40% higher than the county average.) In addition, our neighborhood is considered “park poor,” meaning that students do not have access to green spaces that provide mental, physical, social-emotional, and learning benefits.

For our Jumpstart Outdoor Learning initiative, our school garden will be the initial focal point for outdoor education. The space comprises 14 raised beds, 300 square feet of in-ground planting, vermiculture and a compost tumbler, benches for seating and a locking tool shed. We grow edible fruits and vegetables, succulents and butterfly bushes. The garden is maintained by garden staff, students and community volunteers year round and in the past hosted an afterschool Garden Club. For socioeconomically disadvantaged children living in a blighted neighborhood, our school garden serves as an urban oasis, an inspiring fresh-air setting teeming with ladybugs, butterflies and roly polies. **For our overburdened teachers, it can serve as a powerful tool that supports teaching of nutrition, NGSS and Common Core standards.**

This fall we will teach monthly garden classes and work with faculty to develop hands-on learning and mastery experiences that cover a range of academic subjects including science, language arts, math, social studies and nutrition. To provide garden-based instruction, we have partnered with Barrio Botany, which deploys garden instructors to schools in high-poverty, low opportunity San Diego neighborhoods. Garden educators will co-instruct with school staff, enabling our teachers to familiarize themselves with our garden as a learning space and learn practical outdoor classroom management skills as well as inspiring them to create and deliver their own outdoor learning experiences.

To plan, promote and implement additional outdoor learning at Sherman Elementary, we will convene a variety of stakeholders including teachers, garden educators, members of our Wellness Committee and afterschool enrichment staff. We will examine other successful models of outdoor education and identify and address obstacles to implementing on-campus open-air learning. To extend garden-based learning, staff will share garden-based academic lessons with our teachers through email, the staff newsletter and meetings.

Grant funds will be used for staff time to coordinate outdoor learning lessons, and for purchasing curriculum, a popup tent, paint for our tree stump seating, a portable microphone/speaker, and plastic tubs and shelves for storing educational supplies.

### # OF OUTDOOR STUDENTS:
- Current: 0
- Anticipated with grant: 600

### # OF HOURS PER WEEK OUTSIDE:
- Current: 5
- Anticipated with grant: 6

### BIG GREEN LEARNING GARDEN SCHOOL:
- Current: No
- Anticipated with grant: 6

### FREE & REDUCED LUNCH PERCENTAGE:
- Current: 86%

*Photo Submission:*