

GrowNYC

A Year In The Life Of A School Garden



GROW NYC



Introduction

GROWNYC SCHOOL GARDENS

GrowNYC School Gardens (formerly Grow to Learn) was established in 2011 with a mission to inspire, promote, and facilitate the creation of sustainable learning gardens at all NYC Department of Education K-12 public and charter schools. Since inception, we have provided materials, mini grant funding, and technical assistance to make our mission a reality.

Gardens range from pots on a windowsill to outdoor raised beds, indoor grow towers, greenhouses, and more. Our goal is to empower school communities; to support them in accessing the resources and dedication needed to launch and sustain learning gardens.

Visit [GrowNYC.org](https://www.grownyc.org) for more information, to get in touch, and to register.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Every September, about 1.1 million New York City students return to school and school gardeners return to tending to their gardens that have flourished over the summer. Some school gardeners are experts at knowing what to do from year to year but need reminders of garden tasks and some are novices that need full guidance. This guide serves to give an overview of what it entails to keep the school garden thriving throughout a whole year. Every month details what is expected to be done for the school garden, from the behind-the-scenes budget planning of a garden committee to garden tasks that students and adults can participate in. It also gives some great gardening tips that can be done with students.

A Year In The Life Of A School Garden is meant to be a starting point or check-list of best practices throughout the year. Whether one is a school garden pro or a first timer at planting anything, this guide of resources can benefit the whole school garden community. Please use this resource to begin your planning and as ongoing reference as your school community continues its school garden journey!

If you have questions or notice information in this guide that should be updated, please email us at schoolgardens@grownyc.org.

This guide was written and compiled by our colleagues at the GrowNYC Teaching Garden and our School Gardens team in 2022 and will be updated periodically.

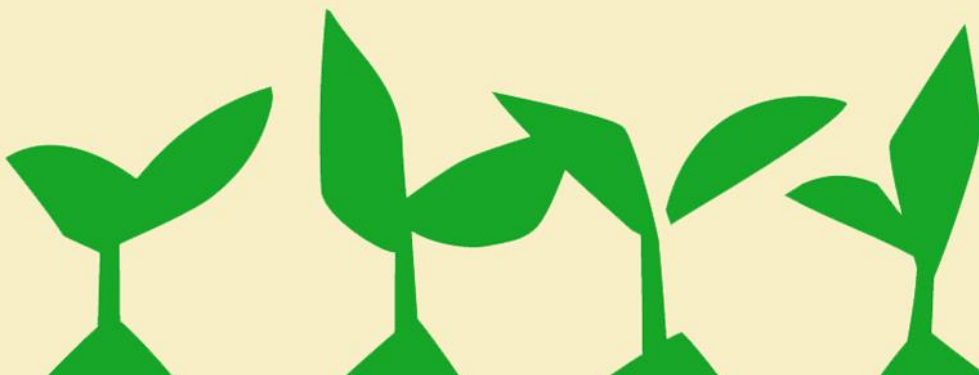


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September

GARDEN TASKS

- Harvesting herbs, greens, tomatoes, peppers, and zucchini.
- As temperatures fall, you may need to water less frequently. Make sure you adjust any automatic irrigation to the needs of your garden.
- Planting of Fall Crops including radishes, lettuces, peas, spinach, broccoli, cabbage, kale, collards.
- Begin planting cover crops at the end of the month.
- Update summer Crop Plan before end of season so you can plan for proper crop rotation next planting season.



MEETINGS

- Hold first of the school year Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Meet with School Administration contact for garden advocacy & year planning. This is important if a member of the school administration cannot participate in monthly Garden Committee meetings.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations. Highlight any fundraising needs and create a fundraising subcommittee if applicable.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to review the budget with the Parent Association (PA) Treasurer, if the committee is housed within the PA. Confirm the dollar amount earmarked for the Garden Committee, especially if funds have been 'rolled over' from the prior school year.

FUNDRAISING

- Research upcoming garden grants. Many grant cycles open in September and are due in the Fall!
- Assemble volunteers to assist in writing and editing of the grant application.
- Engage community boards/council members for additional support.
- Brainstorm other fundraising opportunities, if applicable.

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Coordinate with the garden education team on any garden infrastructure needs, curriculum supplies needed, and/or maintenance and harvesting assistance.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Plan for big projects in the garden that will be completed in late September or later fall (e.g., new bed construction, new garden planting, compost bin building, upgrades to the outdoor classroom).
- Create a planning sub-committee for the project if the scope warrants multiple hands to work on the details.

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- Create the budget, order materials, and recruit garden committee volunteers for the day of the event. If the project installation will be a school-wide event, create flyers and share outward with the school community.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Create a Fall Events Schedule for events to occur September through December. Recruit volunteers to help plan, budget and execute the events.
- Plan weekend workdays for basic garden maintenance. Coordinate garden committee members to volunteer through a sign-up sheet.
- Plan weekend open garden days where school and community members are welcome to explore and garden. Create flyers & share outward to school and community. Have garden committee members volunteer to be a garden host for these events.
- Begin the planning process for October events. Choose theme, dates, budget, assemble a volunteer planning team, create and distribute flyers (Ex: Harvest Celebrations or Pumpkin Patch).
- Order bulbs for a late fall Family Bulb Planting event if interested. (Check out the [New Yorkers for Parks Daffodil Project](#) for free bulbs.)

***Student Gardener Tip:
Flowers are an all-
season educational
tool. Try a flower
dissection exercise or
pressing flowers as an
art project.***

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to introduce the garden, recruit new members and invite families to events throughout the Fall.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any weekly emails school sends out on events, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters)
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task)
- Secure donations of pumpkins if the school will host a pumpkin patch. Check with local supermarkets as they sometimes have programs for donations to schools.

October

GARDEN TASKS

- Continue harvesting greens, roots, beans, and peppers. Harvest sweet potatoes before the first frost.
- Continue adjusting watering needs to colder temperatures and shorter days.
- Dip all reusable trellises and stakes in diluted bleach before storing.
- Clean up debris and plant cover crops.
- Plant garlic at the end of the month.
- Plant spinach, mustards, and tat soi to overwinter. Cover with hoops and ream or plant in cold frames.
- Keep weeding!
- Add straw or wood chip mulch on perennial beds to help hold in heat and moisture over the winter.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.

FUNDRAISING

- Submit any grant applications due in October.
- Engage community boards/council members for additional support.
- Continue to research funding opportunities and work on grants.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Continue the planning for big projects in the garden that will be completed in later fall or Spring.
- Hold a Build Day, if planned.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Continue weekend workdays for basic garden maintenance and open garden hours for the wider community. Garden committee members sign up to host.
- Promote and hold October special events.
- Plan a family bulb planting event for late month or early November. Create flyers and share outward with the school community. Recruit garden committee members for help the day of the event. Order bulbs for fall planting if you have not done so already. Pick up daffodil bulb order from New Yorkers for Parks if you are participating in this program.
- Begin the planning process for November events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers. (Ex: School Pumpkin Smash for decaying Halloween pumpkins and gourds).

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Plan seasonal decorations for end of the month (Halloween) celebrations and install in a timely fashion. (optional).

***Student Gardener Tip:
Planting garlic is an
opportunity to learn
about bulbs. Cut a
clove in half to observe
the parts of the bulb
and discuss plant
adaptations.***

November

GARDEN TASKS

- Final harvests before first frost (mid-month), except for plants you want to overwinter under remay or inside cold frames or greenhouses.
- Plant flower bulbs and seeds for spring – tulips, daffodils, poppies, milkweed.
- Dismantle irrigation system.
- Weed entire garden, leaving it weed and seed free for the Spring.
- Mulch any areas that are prone to weeds with wood chips. Finish mulching all perennial beds and overwintering plants with a few inches of straw. Mulch empty garden beds with compost, chopped leaves.
- Brush excess soil and rust off tools before storing.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association, if they are a registered non-profit.
- Log any reporting required for any grants received including pictures and other documentation.

FUNDRAISING

- Continue researching, writing, and finalizing applications for garden project grants.
- Submit grant applications due in November.
- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Coordinate with the garden education team.

GARDEN PROJECTS

If applicable, host a big Garden Project Build Day (or finish planning for a big project in the garden and finalize details for Spring).

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Continue weekend workdays for end of season basic garden maintenance.
- Hold November events, such as a family bulb planting event in early November before the first frost, if interested.
- Begin the planning process for December events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers (Ex: Winter Solstice lantern making in the garden).

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. compost work zone) cleanup.

***Student Gardener Tip:
Your last harvest
means taking
everything from a
plant, and that means
a big harvest! Teach
students about
preserving foods
through pickling or
making skincare
products with excess
herbs and oils.***

December

GARDEN TASKS

- December may be your final harvest of greens and herbs before a deep freeze. If you plan to leave any plants in the ground over the winter, be sure to cover them with a cold frame or thick remay.
- Once perennial fruit bushes and trees have lost all of their leaves, it is safe to prune them anytime between now and Spring. Be sure to complete pruning while the plants are dormant before they begin to have new growth in the Spring.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association, if they are a registered non-profit.
- Log any reporting required for any grants received including pictures and other documentation

FUNDRAISING

- Continue researching, writing, and finalizing applications for garden project grants.
- Submit grant applications due in November.
- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Coordinate with the garden education team.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- If applicable, host a big Garden Project Build Day (or finish planning for a big project in the garden and finalize details for Spring).

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Continue weekend workdays for end of season basic garden maintenance.
- Hold November events, such as a family bulb planting event in early November before the first frost, if interested.
- Begin the planning process for December events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers (Ex: Winter Solstice lantern making in the garden).

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. Compost work zone) cleanup.

***Student Gardener Tip:
Students can add
mulch to garden beds
and tree pits.
Experiment in the
classroom to discover
properties of different
types of mulch. Which
works best for your
garden space?***

January

GARDEN TASKS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. compost work zone) cleanup.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association, if they are a registered non-profit.
- If any grants have been awarded to the school directly, make a plan to spend grant dollars well in advance of June. Consult with the purchasing agent for your school on when all purchase orders must be submitted in advance of the school year ending. Grant dollars awarded to the school must go through DOE purchasing rules and are not typically allowed to 'roll over' to the next school year.
- Log any reporting required for any grants received including pictures and other documentation
- Purchase seeds for the spring if you cannot source free seed giveaways.

FUNDRAISING

- Research and apply for additional garden grants for upcoming spring projects, if necessary.
- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team. If the garden education team requests, help plan the spring planting plan.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Continue the planning for big projects in the garden that will be completed in later spring.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Create a Winter/Spring Events Schedule for events to occur January through June
- Hold January events.
- Begin the planning process for February events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers (Ex. Lunar New Year Celebration).

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's social media page, hang flyers & posters).

February

GARDEN TASKS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. Compost work zone) cleanup.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself, or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association if they are a registered non-profit.
- Log any reporting required for any grants received including pictures and other documentation.
- Continue to track purchase order timeline if using grant funds awarded to the school directly.
- Research and apply for additional garden grants for upcoming spring projects, if necessary.
- Planning spring orders and selecting vendors in advance of the spring rush is beneficial to get the best deals.
- Check non-profits for any spring giveaway events.
- Purchase seeds for the spring if you cannot source free seed giveaways.

FUNDRAISING

- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders.

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Continue the planning for big projects in the garden that will be completed in later spring.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Hold February events.
- Begin the planning process for March events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers (Ex. Winter Clean-up & Spring bed prep (weather permitting)).

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

March

GARDEN TASKS

- Prepare garden beds by removing old plant material, adding compost, and raking flat. You can test the soil to know what other amendments to add before planting.
- If you planted a cover crop in the fall, now is the time to cut it down.
- Last chance to prune your perennials *before* they begin to grow in Spring.
- In early March, we are 6 weeks from our last frost date in New York City. This means it is time to start some seeds indoors, including cold hardy herbs, warm season crops, and some flowers. Consult your seed packets for details on when to start each variety.
- Planting early spring crops outdoors. By mid-March, if the ground is thawed, you can direct seed peas, beets, and carrots outdoors.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association, if they are a registered non-profit.
- Continue to track purchase order timeline if using grant funds awarded to the school directly.
- Check non-profits for any spring giveaway events.
- Purchase seeds for the spring if you cannot source free seed giveaways
- Planning spring orders and selecting vendors in advance of the spring rush is beneficial to get the best deals.

FUNDRAISING

- Continue researching, writing and finalizing applications for garden project grants.
 - Submit grant applications due in March.
- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Engage community boards/council members for additional support
 - Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team on any garden infrastructure needs, curriculum supplies needed, and/or maintenance and spring planting assistance.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Continue the planning for big projects in the garden that will be completed in later spring. Continue to finetune the budget, supply list, and target a date for project build day. If the build day is to occur in later March or early April, the time may be right for purchasing and scheduling future deliveries.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Hold March events.
- Begin the planning process for April events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers (Ex: Earth Day activities).
- Begin the planning process for a plant fundraising sale in May, if the Garden Committee is committed to holding one. The committee would find free or wholesale plant starts and sell at a higher price (or donation-based) to community members. Many schools do this as a Mother's Day event. Assemble a planning sub-committee for this event, select the date(s) for the plant sale, begin flier design and create a plant list for the sale.
- Begin winter cleanup of the garden in advance of spring garden classes.

***Student Gardener Tip:
Help students plant
evenly by draping a
string over the
garden bed to mark
the 'row' where you
want to plant.***

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. Compost work zone) cleanup.

April

GARDEN TASKS

- Continue preparing garden beds.
- If planting any Spring cover crops, you may plant now. Mustards, peas, spring oats, vetch, and rye are common spring cover crops. These will grow until June, when you can cut them down and mix them into your garden beds as fertilizer.
- Harden off any seedlings by bringing them outside for a few hours per day.
- Prepare any perennial beds with 1-2 inches of compost lightly raked into the top of the soil.
- Set up Irrigation System if using.
- Plant cold season transplants in late April (lettuce, kale, collards, onions, broccoli, potatoes). You may need to protect them from frost at night by using low tunnels or other season extension techniques, depending on the weather forecast.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association, if they are a registered non-profit.
- Log any reporting required for any grants received including pictures and other documentation.
- Continue to track purchase order timeline if using grant funds awarded to the school directly.
- Check non-profits for any spring giveaway events.

FUNDRAISING

- Continue researching, writing and finalizing applications for garden project grants. Grant applications submitted this late in the school year might be written for summer and fall projects. Be mindful of the timeline for grant award and if the monies can be 'rolled over' into the summer or the fall. If the funds can't be rolled over past June (the school's fiscal year), consider allocating funds to the Parents Association, which has no deadline to spend funds, instead of the official school budget.
- Submit grant applications due in April.
- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders.

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Host Earth Month Build Day or Garden Day to accomplish a big garden project, if planned.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Hold April events.
- Continue weekend workdays for basic garden maintenance and open garden hours for the wider community. Garden committee members sign up to host.
- Continue the planning process for the May plant fundraising sale if the Garden Committee is committed to holding one. Submit a plant purchase order to a garden center/nursery or to [GrowNYC's Annual Spring Plant Sale](#). Finalize the event flier and share outward with the school community.

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

***Student Gardener Tip:
Help students get the
spacing for planting
right by setting up a
small marker (plastic
spoon or painted
stick) to indicate
where to plant each
seedling.***

May

GARDEN TASKS

- Continue watering beds. Never let newly seeded beds dry out completely.
- The ground is fully thawed in NYC, and you can plant all spring crops. Stagger your planting dates to harvest smaller amounts over several weeks rather than large harvests all at once.
- Erect cages or staking for heavy fruiting plants like tomatoes.
- Cover berry plants with netting that is small enough to prevent birds from getting in, but large enough to allow pollinating insects through.
- Weed freshly seeded beds to prevent crowding young plants.
- Begin harvest of cool season crops like peas and radishes.



MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meeting if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Log any grant awards with either the Parent Association Treasurer or with the school administration. This will be dependent on who the grant was awarded to: the school itself or the Garden Committee as part of the Parent Association, if they are a registered non-profit.
- Log any reporting required for any grants received including pictures and other documentation.
- Continue to track purchase order timeline if using grant funds awarded to the school directly.
- Deposit monies from the May Plant Sale fundraiser. Deposit will be to the Parent Association Treasurer or the school directly. Update the garden budget with final profits from the event.

FUNDRAISING

- Grant writing should be complete for the year.
- Begin writing year-end grant reporting, if applicable.
- Continue to work on and execute non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Complete a big garden project, if planned for this school year.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Hold the May Plant Sale, and other May events if applicable. Ensure there are enough volunteers from the Garden Committee to staff the plant sale, including: plant pickup, selling on the day, and cleanup. See Budget section above on where to deposit monies from the plant sale.

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- Continue weekend workdays for basic garden maintenance and open garden hours for the wider community. Garden committee members sign up to host.
 - Begin the planning process for June events: choose theme, dates, budget, assemble volunteer team, create and distribute flyers. (Ex: Summer Solstice Party).

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight upcoming garden events.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters).
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. Compost work zone) cleanup.

***Student Gardener Tip:
May is a great time to
learn about
companion planting
and plant families.
Plant marigolds and
nasturtium to help
with pest
management.***

June

GARDEN TASKS

- Plant any heat loving seedlings including peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers.
- Keep an eye on any beds that you direct seeded. As seeds germinate, you will likely need to thin them out by removing seedlings that are too close together.
- You should be harvesting herbs, lettuce, spinach, radishes, peas. If you planted garlic the previous fall, it'll be ready for harvest now.
- Focus weeding on any beds with young seedlings and beds that you are using for salad greens.
- As it heats up and the days get longer, you may need to water more frequently. Make sure to adjust any automatic irrigation.
- Add compost or fertilizer every 3 weeks to all fruiting crops.
- Manage pests by using row cover on young plants but be sure to uncover when they flower so they can be pollinated!

MEETINGS

- Hold Garden Committee monthly meeting.
- Devise a summer watering/weeding schedule if school is not in session: many people go on vacation, so you'll need a good plan!
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend monthly Parent Association executive board meetings if the Garden Committee is part of the Parent Association.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to attend the Parent Association Exec Board Budget meeting. This meeting is to set the budget for next year and will be voted upon at the final Parent Association meeting of the year. This is a chance for the Garden Committee Chair/President to advocate for additional garden line items beyond the general committee budget, if applicable.

BUDGET

- Review current budget and grant allocations.
- Close out any final bookkeeping with the school's purchasing agent if the Garden Committee used grant funds awarded to the school directly.
- Garden Committee Chair/President to review the budget with the Parent Association (PA) Treasurer, if the committee is housed within the PA. Confirm the dollar amount earmarked for the Garden Committee that will be 'rolled over' to the next school year.

FUNDRAISING

- Grant writing should be complete for the year.
- Finish writing year-end grant reporting, if applicable.
- Finish all non-grant fundraising opportunities, if applicable.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Continue to coordinate with the garden education team. Focus this month will be on end of school harvest events and summer stewardship planning.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Consider summer projects if there are enough enthusiastic volunteers.
- Summer Stewardship Planning: create the plan for maintaining, watering, and harvesting in July & August. Create a

signup sheet for Garden Committee members and the school community to volunteer. The final summer stewardship will be unique to your school as it will depend on summer access to the garden and if crops will be planted for the summer. Confirm with the school administration access to the garden over the summer. Examples of volunteer schedules include families taking weekly turns watering and doing light garden maintenance, to the Garden Committee hosting weekly garden workdays several times a week.

- Summer Harvest Planning: Work with the school administration or brainstorm with the garden committee how best to share the garden harvests for the months of July and August. Options include sharing with the school community through a weekly sign up, hosting a farmstand, or donating to local food banks. Create a sign-up for weekly harvesting volunteers.

***Student Gardener Tip:
June is a great time to
learn about
pollinators. Observe
the differences
between flowers in
the garden, do certain
insects prefer certain
flowers?***

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Hold June events.
- Continue weekend workdays for basic garden maintenance and open garden hours for the wider community. Garden committee members sign up to host.

OUTREACH

- Participate in the Parents Association meeting to highlight the summer stewardship and harvesting plan. Invite people to volunteer.
- Share flyers for upcoming garden events (include in school calendar, include in any school weekly emails to families, post on school's Facebook page, hang flyers & posters)
- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. Compost work zone) cleanup.

July

GARDEN TASKS

- Harvest weekly.
- Water as needed.
- Mulch to prevent weeds.
- Fertilize, especially fruit producing crops that are in heavy production mode right now.
- Monitor plants for pest damage such as holes, hand pick pests or use natural sprays like neem or castile soap.
- Summer Maintenance: Continue weeding and begin dead-heading decorative flowers after they die to encourage more flowers.
- Start seeding fall crops like lettuce, kale, broccoli, and cabbage.



MEETINGS

- Meet with summer stewardship volunteers as needed.

BUDGET

- Limit summer purchases as with summer schedules there will be limited opportunity to be reimbursed through either the school or the Parents Association.
- Log into the budget any profits made through a garden farmstand, if applicable.

FUNDRAISING

- It's possible that your garden may host a summer farmstand as a way to share the garden's harvest and fundraise for the garden. Plan accordingly with volunteer staffing (student and adult). Create a plan for depositing profits through the summer.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Coordinate with the garden education team as needed. The Garden Education team may be involved over the summer, or they may take the summer months off and leave summer stewardship to volunteers from the school community. The arrangement will be unique to your school.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Consider summer projects if there will be volunteers to pull from to complete.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Follow the plan for Summer Stewardship volunteer days (see June).
- Request additional volunteers on an as-needed basis if the garden appears to need more maintenance on any given week or if there is a heat wave and additional watering shifts are required.
- Follow the plan for Summer Harvesting. Harvesting of produce, whether for donation or a farmstand day, will require additional volunteers (See June). Make sure to have produce bags or boxes for the produce to be stored once harvested.
- Host weekend open garden days where school and community are welcomed to explore and garden. Have garden committee members volunteer to be a garden host for these events. This is an option if the school administration will allow

open public hours during the summer and if there are Garden Committee members willing to volunteer. Consult with the school administration for guidance on summer visitors.

OUTREACH

- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. Compost work zone) cleanup.

***Student Gardener Tip:
Seed saving is easy,
educational, and
important for
sustainability. Try an
easy seed saving
lesson with dried
flowers or fruiting
crops like peppers.***

August

GARDEN TASKS

- Harvest weekly.
- Water as needed.
- Continue to manage weeds, reapply mulch to heavily trafficked areas.
- Continue observing plants for pest damage and responding with hand picking bugs and eggs and/or applying safer soap or neem oil.
- Summer Maintenance: weeding!
- Start planting out fall succession of crops in late August - collards, kale, radishes, carrots, beans, pak choi, chard.
- Start seed saving, depending on the plant type.



MEETINGS

- Meet with summer stewardship volunteers as needed.
- Reach out to Garden Committee members and schedule a September meeting.

BUDGET

- Limit summer purchases as with summer schedules there will be limited opportunity to be reimbursed through either the school or the Parents Association.
- Log into the budget any profits made through a garden farmstand, if applicable.

FUNDRAISING

- It's possible that your garden may host a summer farmstand as a way to share the garden's harvest and fundraise for the garden. Plan accordingly with volunteer staffing (student and adult). Create a plan for depositing profits through the summer.
- Take pictures and document what is going on with the garden to share with funders

GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Coordinate with the garden education team as needed. The Garden Education team may be involved over the summer, or they may take the summer months off and leave summer stewardship to volunteers from the school community. The arrangement will be unique to your school.

GARDEN PROJECTS

- Consider summer projects if there will be volunteers to pull from to complete.
- Register for the New Yorkers for Parks Daffodil Project for free daffodil bulbs for the school garden/grounds. Pickup of the bulbs will be in the fall.
- Prep the garden and outdoor classroom space for the beginning of school in September. Clean any debris that has built up or move elements back into place if they have shifted over the summer months.

EVENTS (PLANNING & HOSTING)

- Follow the plan for Summer Stewardship volunteer days (see June).

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- Request additional volunteers on an as-needed basis if the garden appears to need more maintenance on any given week or if there is a heat wave and additional watering shifts are required.
 - Follow the plan for Summer Harvesting. Harvesting of produce, whether for donation or a farmstand day, will require additional volunteers (see June). Make sure to have produce bags or boxes for the produce to be stored once harvested.
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***Student Gardener Tip:
Many 'weeds' are
edible or medicinal
plants. Make weeding
interesting by
learning about the
many uses for the
plants spreading wild
in your garden!***

OUTREACH

- Update regularly any social media for the garden, if applicable.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean & restock any tools and/or supplies for the tool shed (ongoing task).
- Perform end of growing season garden, outdoor classroom, shed & other garden areas (ex. compost work zone) cleanup.