

Vision

Growing a Garden Community that teaches our children food literacy through a hands-on connection with how food is grown, harvested, prepared and consumed.

Mission

To establish a community of volunteer parents, students, and teachers, united in the effort to promote healthy eating habits through food literacy and gardening fundamentals, with the knowledge, capability and desire to provide the operational support and guidance necessary to maintain an outdoor garden learning environment.

Steele Values – Garden Values

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|---------|--|
| Steele: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We value our outdoor environments as a way to learn. |
| Garden: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We encourage teachers, students and parents to dig, plant and grow.• We will create a safe place to learn the fundamentals of gardening.• We are good stewards of the earth who promote sustainable gardening techniques.• We educate our children on food literacy by creating a hand-on connection between seeds, plants, plows, and forks. |
| Steele: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We value risk taking. We create a safe environment that allows people to experiment and make mistakes. |
| Garden: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We try new things.• We provide the opportunity to explore the way food is grown and learn from our failures and successes. |
| Steele: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We value an integrated curriculum. We design units of study to meet our children's needs and interests. |
| Garden: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We cultivate lessons from the garden that utilize math, science, reading and writing fundamentals and that can be used to support curriculum learning.• We provide an outdoor learning laboratory for exploration & contemplation. |
| Steele: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We value experiential learning. We facilitate learning through real life examples. |
| Garden: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We provide the opportunity for students to participate in the growth cycle, grow their own food and expand that knowledge to their personal environment. |
| Steele: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We value collaboration. We share resources and leadership to achieve common goals. |
| Garden: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We envision the garden as a community effort including parents, teachers, students and community members coming together to teach our children and grow personally.• We promote healthy lifestyles in our children and community through eating, exercising and working together. |

Goals and Programs:

Current Programs:

(Expand to provide detailed explanations of each current and new program)

- Maintain the current level garden activities and student interaction
 - Seedlings
 - Planting seeds with students,
 - Watering
 - Transplanting
 - Distributing to students
 - Planting in garden
 - Garden Operations –
 - Vision,
 - Planting, maintenance, weeding & watering , bedding down and composting coordination
 - Financial forecasting & oversight
 - Coordinating and managing garden prep w/ work groups,
 - Youth Farmers Market
 - Garden to Cafeteria
 - Cooking Programs

Healthy Eating Habits

- Production that encourages the children and meets the need of our existing and future programs
 - Fruits and vegetables that supplement our home meals through the YFM
 - Replace existing trees with fruit trees
 - Establish a backdrop to the steel sign of pear trees
- Increased focus on garden grown items in the cafeteria

Curriculum integration

- Establish lesson plans that integrate the garden into existing math, science, reading and writing curriculum's
 - Plant Science: how plants are involved with other plants, animals and people. Explore the functions, structures and life cycle of plants
 - Life Science: Worm compost bed
 - Social Studies: Explore farming techniques from other cultures and implement some in our garden
 - Business: Understand the economics of maintaining a garden and income generated from produce
 - Art: Create plant-based dyes; vegetable prints; paper making with flower petals, seeds, etc. still-life opportunities

Student Ownership

- Individual plots assigned to each classrooms to plan, plant, maintain and harvest with operational oversight
- Some purely experimental beds
 - A bed divided up for experimental crops
 - Seed collection
 - Supplies collection

Community Engagement

- Parental Educational opportunities:
 - Provide resources to parents to engage and assist their children in home gardens as an extension of our community effort
 - Speaker series on healthy eating & cooking
 - Garden consultant to assist parents in extra-curricular gardening efforts
 - Encouraging and promoting healthier eating habits for our children
 - Community Night(s): providing insight into garden activities and enrichment
- Communication: Develop a strategy to inform and educate parents and community in garden activities and events
 - Create excitement around the garden
 - Weekly or Monthly: News from the garden in Steele Stallion
- Sub-Community: Older children mentoring younger in gardening activities
- Partnering:
 - Garden sponsors
 - Multi-generational involvement

Plant Sale

- Use student and parent grown plants in sale to increase proceeds and promote home planting

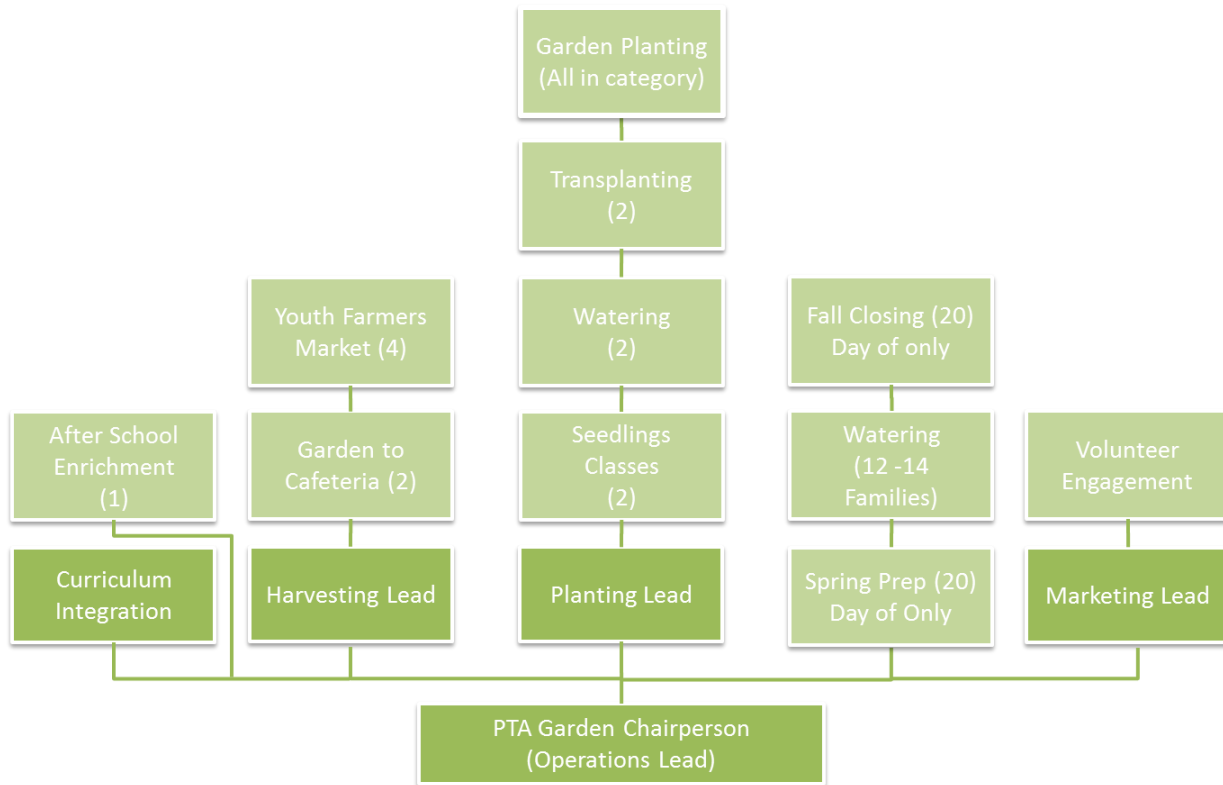
Food Code

- Mindful of what we eat
 - Trying new food
- Respecting how we eat
- Taking only what we eat

PTA Support

Volunteer Coordination

We expect to need five leadership positions, a PTA chairperson and four program leads; at some point we may consider adding an additional operational lead. Leadership positions will have a seasonal focus and be expected to participate in planning activities as well as garden-wide activities across the year. Program support for each leadership role will be provided by an estimated fourteen (14) consistent volunteers for the program season. Additionally, 54 seasonal and very short-term volunteers to maintain the garden will be required. We anticipate additional volunteer requirements as the curriculum integration effort grows.



Capital Funding

With limited history available for review and contingent on future donations and recycling efforts, the Steele Garden day-to-day operations seem to have been supported by income from the Youth Farmers Market, Garden to Cafeteria and special grants. We hope that through our combined effort, we can engage the students more often while increasing our production to bring additional funds to the garden. In addition we have discussed pursuing sponsorship opportunities with local businesses. Our goal is for the garden to be self-supportive.

With that in mind, there are four areas of funding concern: DPS requirements, equipment, watering and repairs. First, without more investigation, we have been told that DPS may require gardens to become

handicapped accessible. Our understanding is that this would require new paths finished with crusher fines instead of mulch as well as significantly raised beds. We do not believe the funds currently available or the income generated by the garden would be sufficient to meet these requirements. Secondly, the scope of the garden is large, and the volunteer population is small at the moment. The garden traditionally maintains the entire northwest corner of the school grounds as well as the beds, compost, and surrounding areas. Depending on volunteer-power, or lack there-of, equipment such as a roto-tiller, lawnmower and secure and accessible storage may be required. Thirdly, we paid for and have valves installed to permit automatic watering. We still require timing as well as water delivery equipment. A configuration and method for water delivery to each plot has not yet been determined and may be dependent on crops selected for rotation through that plot. Automatic watering will conserve water and decrease the need for volunteers through the elimination of manual watering (some may still be required) as well as reduce the number of weeds requiring removal. Lastly, depending on further investigation, there appears to have been some damage to the watering system for the trees north of the greenhouse. Repair and additional water to some fruit trees may be required.

Marketing & Communication Aid

We anticipate using established PTA communication channels to promote activities and volunteer support for the garden. As such, from time to time we will request assistance with printed materials for distribution to the parents, teachers and target community members. Further support from the PTA web administrator may be required if we move the Garden online presence to the PTA website.

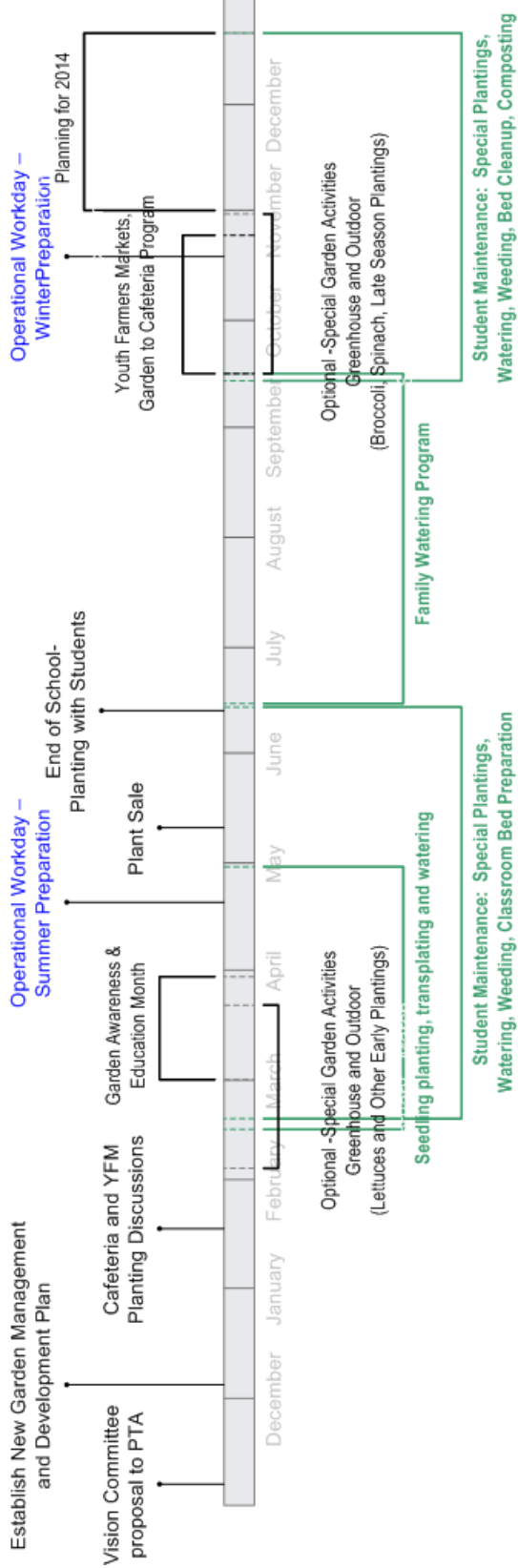
Accounting & Budget Management

Our intention is to deposit all Steele Garden generated funds into an account specifically to maintain garden program operations and managed by the PTA. We would like to be able to report periodically on the revenues and costs generated by the garden for discussion with students as well as to make sure we are appropriately maintaining our budget.

IT Support

Support from the PTA web administrator may be required if we move the Garden online presence to the PTA website.

Timeline:



Timeline

2012	
November 7	Present Vision Committee proposal for garden management and development plan
December 5	Establish new garden management and development plan
2013	
January	Cafeteria and Youth Farmers Market – Planting Discussion
February 15 – April 30	Seedling planting, transplanting and watering
March	Garden Awareness & Education Month
February - March	(Optional) Special Garden Activities: Greenhouse and outdoor lettuces and other early plantings
February - May	Student Maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Plantings – Watering weeding • Classroom bed preparation
April	Spring Operational Workday – Summer Garden Preparation
May 11	Plant sale
May 13	End of School – Garden planting with students
May 13 – Sept 15	Family Watering Program
September - October	Youth Farmers Market
September - October	Garden-to-Cafeteria
September - October	(Optional) Special Garden Activities: Greenhouse and outdoor Broccoli, Spinach and other late season plantings
September - Until	Student Maintenance : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Plantings – Watering, weeding • Classroom bed cleanup • Composting
October	Fall Operational Workday – Cleanup, winterize and prep for fall
November - January	Planning 2014

Financial Summary

Income:

- Youth Farmers Market
- Garden to Cafeteria
- Whole Foods Bag program
- Grants
 - Y-to-Z
 - Whole Foods
- Sponsorships
- PTA

Costs:

- Amendments
- Soil
- Mulch
- Tools
- Miscellaneous materials
 - Seedling Soil
 - Seeds
 - Potting materials
 - Grow lights, stands and warming mats
 - Shading cloth and hoops
 - Cold protection
 - Trellising
- Water
- Infrastructure Improvements
 - Sprinklers
 - Raised Beds
 - Crusher paths
- Trees for replacing trees with fruiting trees