

2019

# KIDS IN THE GARDEN

A CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR MAKING  
THE GARDEN A PART OF YOUR  
CLASSROOM

PREPARED BY



**RICHMOND FOOD  
SECURITY SOCIETY**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This resource was a collaborative effort between the Richmond Food Security Society Team (Ian Lai, Paige Inglis, Sarina Clay-Smith), and Richmond School District 38 staff and administrators (Anita Lau, Chris Marin, and Kimberlee Dunnigan), with Cease Wyse providing First Peoples perspective and overview. An enormous thank you to everyone involved in helping this project come to fruition.

*Left: Students cleaning out Mason Bee trays in preparation for Spring.*

The Richmond Food Security Society (RFSS) has been working in Richmond for almost twenty years, starting as an action group of the Richmond Poverty Response Committee, to becoming an independent society in 2009.

Our mission is to inspire a robust Richmond food system through education, advocacy, and community building initiatives.

At time of writing, RFSS manages Richmond's vibrant community gardens, organizes a food waste-diverting Fruit Recovery Program, has a seed library, provides Food Skills workshops, as well as youth programs focused on food system learning from elementary and high school students.

## ABOUT RICHMOND FOOD SECURITY SOCIETY



# ABOUT THIS CURRICULUM

This curriculum is built upon the desire to provide tangible resources and reliable information for our stakeholders. This is the third iteration of our “curriculum”, updated here to remain current and adapt to the latest B.C. Curriculum.

Our Kids in the Garden program has us teaching many of these lessons in schools, but more often than not, we can only build so much capacity, and teachers are often looking for more help with getting kids out into the garden.

This open-source guide is not only meant for teachers we work with, but anyone working in food and garden education. This is a living document, and we would appreciate that those that do use it, provide us with feedback and updates to keep improving our teachings. We hope it inspires you and your students to get dirty and keep learning!

## INTRODUCTION

### How to use this curriculum

Here you will find resources for implementing the garden into your classroom.

Within each topic, you will find a lesson plan, worksheets, and sometimes extra resources like powerpoints. For the lesson, you do not need the worksheets, however, we know these visual tools can help students grasp the subject. For some subjects, slide decks are also included in the teaching materials.



*Above: Students learn about all different kinds of seeds.*

*Below: Ian Lai shows his honey bees, which we bring in an observation hive to schools every year.*





## Where to find resources

At the end of each lesson plan, you'll find resources specific to the topic. These are online websites with information, links to where you can purchase materials, or our recommended sources or books. There is also ample information on the internet if you search the specific topic or 'school garden'..

Within your community, there are likely organizations or like-minded individuals that can help you or point you in the right direction for your project. Do some research, connect. We're stronger when we work together.

# STARTING A GARDEN AT YOUR SCHOOL

Having a garden at your school is more than just putting in a few beds. It's also about building the capacity of teachers to use the garden as a learning environment, and building a culture around outdoor learning, and a willingness and excitement to help out with the garden.

Here we describe some of the ways which can be used to build that capacity and culture.



*Above: Dandelions, their roots and greens here, are full of nutritional benefits, and students always marvel to learn about them.*

### 1. Start small.

Start with potatoes in garbage pails, or herbs in pots. Starting small is a great way to teach yourself, your students, and your admin about gardening, what it takes, and the benefits to classroom learning. Creating a large garden can be overwhelming, so as you build support for your garden, it's best to keep it well-maintained and show your commitment.

### 2. Build a team.

You can't do it alone, nor should you want to! Propose a meeting for any interested teachers to discuss your garden. If no teachers are interested, perhaps there are parents who would like to volunteer, or community partners or your school district you could enlist to help out. If you're able to, it's great to establish a garden committee with regular meetings. This isn't always of interest or possible for everyone, but it ensures accountability and clear communication and has proven successful for other schools.



### 3. Promoting the garden to teachers, students, parents, and admin staff.

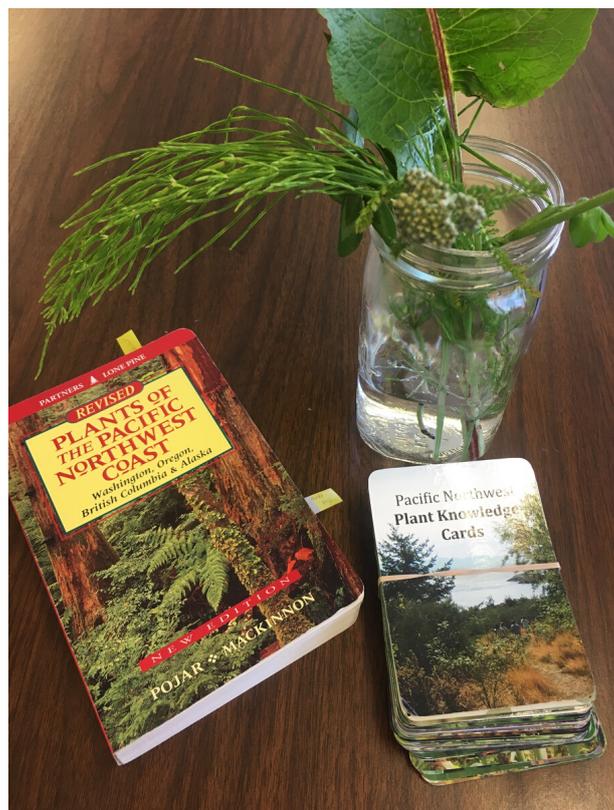
To encourage teachers out in the garden, you could invite a class to join yours, and lead the session, or simply share a garden lesson plan with garden-timid teacher. To engage students, you could assign garden responsibilities such as watering to students, start a garden club, or bring the garden into a class project. To engage parents, you could send a letter home informing parents about what the students will be doing in the garden this year. You could also invite them to volunteer in class on gardening days, as well as present at a PAC meeting about the garden. PACs usually are happy to chip in for garden funding. To get administrative staff on your side, serve them up some school-grown veggies from students, and invite them to classes in the garden.

### 4. Create a funding strategy.

Whether it is asking local businesses to donate supplies, writing for grants, asking your parental advisory committee, or wherever—the money has to come from somewhere. Gardens don't need to be expensive, and you can generally keep your budget pretty low, but the actual building cost might be your biggest expense. Brainstorm how you are going to receive funding for this, as well as where money will come from to support the ongoing supply of compost, seeds, tools as they wear out, etc.

### 5. Bring in the experts.

Usually, you can either hire a local organization to come teach students about the garden or offer a Professional Development session to teachers, or simply reach out to gardeners in the community to come help out for a session or two. Sometimes this could seem either like a lot of money to spend, or a big ask from a volunteer, but usually subsidies are available, and the money is well spent, if it means building the confidence and capacity of the school in terms of taking care of the garden.



*Above: Some of our teaching materials.*





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	2-5
Autumn Garden Care Lesson Plan .....	7-13
Autumn Garden Care Handout .....	14-15
Local Eating Lesson Plan .....	16-22
Local Eating Handouts .....	23-25
Seeds Lesson Plan .....	26-31
Seeds Handout .....	32-33
Worms and Vermicomposting Lesson Plan .....	34-40
Worms and Vermicomposting Handout .....	40-41
Mason Bees Lesson Plan .....	42-48
Mason Bees Handout .....	49-50
Planting Our Garden Lesson Plan .....	51-58
Planting Our Garden Handout .....	59-60
Soil Lesson Plan .....	61-67
Soil Handout .....	68-69
Edible Weeds and Wilds .....	70-77
Honey Bees .....	78-84

