August 16, 2013

WHS Learn + Play
Edible Garden
Brigitte Baur, Parent Volunteer

http://www.whslearnandplaygardens.org
Garden Timeline

Grants & Planning: Fall-Winter 2012-13
Design & Construction: April-May 2013
Growing Seeds & Planting: May-June 2013
Summer Garden Club: June-August 2013
Harvest Celebration: October 2013

Green Schoolyard
Engineering/Construction: Spring/Summer 2014
Where did we begin?

- Student Surveys
- Parent Surveys
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Existing Site Conditions
- Opportunities & Constraints
- Master Plan Design
Stakeholder Interviews - Responses

- Field and Court games are VERY popular
- Always lines at swings and slides
- Turf is saturated 90% of the time
- Desire to bring art outdoors
- Need Smooth Loop Walking Paths
- Community need for more soccer fields
Student led Fundraising Efforts

Vote for a Change
With your change!

Vote for the playground option of your choice by placing your coins in the container.
Community Outreach + Marketing

New garden a step toward sustainable playground

Michael Kontosnik, a fourth-grader at Hammerschmidt Elementary School, paves the way into a garden bed May 13 during the school’s edible garden project. He is helped by parent volunteers, vice principal and photography teacher Sarah Strom.

Cooper is using her professional experience of designing sustainable landscapes to develop a plan for interactive school grounds that offer up opportunities for students to learn and play in nature. She also has a second-grader at the school. Cooper, along with the kindergarten teacher and the principal, would like to see more outdoor learning opportunities for students.

The Momentum Keeps Growing

During the past month, the WHS Learn-Play Gardens Committee has been working hard within the community to raise awareness of the sustainable children’s play and learning environments and partnerships within the village.

The County of DuPage Valley Improvement Grant was awarded for more than $10,000, which includes the installation of new railings and the addition of a bridge that will connect the playgrounds.

The WHS Spirit Wear store also began. You can find an assortment of items in an array of colors at garageandsales.com/shopmath.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel also linked to its page on the WHS website.

The Chicago Tribune also featured the WHS Learn-Play Gardens project.

More online

To learn about the project, visit WHSLearnPlayGardens.org

The Buzz

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More online

To learn about the project, visit WHSLearnPlayGardens.org
Transform an ordinary elementary school playground into a naturally interactive gardenscape and foster a healthy environment to learn + play.
Inspiration

Western Avenue School
Geneva, IL

The Learning Garden
San Francisco, CA
Volunteer Build Day
April 2013
Student Garden Club
May 2013
Growing Plants
Student Build Day
May 2013

• 100+ Student Volunteers
• 23 Adult Volunteers
• 4 Stations:
  – Moving Soil
  – Moving mulch
  – Art for the Garden
  – Placing Stepping Stones
Moving Soil
Art for the Garden
Stepping Stones
We did it!!!
New garden a step toward sustainable playground

By SARAH SMALL
ssmall@shawmedia.com

LOMBARD - It all started with muddy children and an old, rusty drain in the outfield of a baseball diamond.

Now, there is a plan in the works to change the playground and grounds at Hammerschmidt Elementary School. The first step was creating an edible garden last week.

"There are lots of drainage issues, and we're constantly battling a lot of mud in the field," said Andi Cooper, who is leading the Hammerschmidt Learn and Play Gardens project.

Other parts of the school grounds are in need of repair, too, she said. Playground equipment needs to be updated, as do school bike racks. There also is a pair of unsightly dumpsters positioned on one of the highest elevation points of the campus.

Cooper said the outside of the school doesn't match the energy and vibrancy of the inside.

"For me to come here and see the quality of the outside of the school, 'Guys, we can do better,'" she said.

Cooper is using her professional experience of designing sustainable landscapes to develop a plan for interactive school grounds that offer opportunities for students to learn and play in nature. She also has a second-grader at the school.

Components of the long-range project include new playground equipment, soccer and baseball fields, a walking path, a butterfly garden and an outdoor classroom.

Ultimately, one of the main goals of the project is to connect the curriculum to the outdoors," said David Danielski, the school's principal.

More than 100 students and 25 parent volunteers gathered after school May 10 to prepare six garden beds for the new edible garden. Each grade, kindergarten through fifth, will have its own bed to plant and care for vegetables. The vegetables will be planted in classrooms at the school and transferred outside toward the end of the school year.

Materials and supplies for the garden were funded with a grant from FORWARD, a county-based organization working to prevent and reduce childhood obesity.

"There has been a lot of excitement, particularly with the students," Danielski said. "When we solicited volunteers, we had an overwhelming response."

In the edible garden, students will plant pumpkins, gourds, lettuce, beans and herbs. During the summer months, the garden will be tended by volunteer groups, and the food harvested will be introduced into the school's cafeteria for students to sample or donated to a local organization.

The goal is to generate enough money through grants and fundraisers to begin construction next summer.

"We're gaining momentum," Cooper said. "People see that this is really going to happen. When you start with a big dream, it's still just a big dream."
Placing the Seeds of the WHS Learn + Play Gardens

Posted on April 19, 2013

The third blog post for our April series Getting Outside to Volunteer features Andi Cooper, Director of Business Development at WRD Environmental. Andi is working on a project to transform the campus at her son’s school into a WHS Learn + Play Gardens. One of the most important steps was to bring together a dedicated group of parents, teachers, school administrators, and students to help make this dream come true!

By Andi Cooper

It’s a chilly Saturday in April and I’m standing with my family, our principal and 15...
Planting!
Harvesting
Capital Campaign

• January 2013 Kick-off
• Grants
• Legacy Campaign – 3 Tiers
• Corporate and community sponsorship
• Over 15 fundraising activities
• Capstone Nov. 2013 Auction
Next Steps

- Curriculum
- Ongoing maintenance
- Compost
- Blog?