



healthy
northland
STATEWIDE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



Community Transformation Grant
Healthy School Food Coordinator
Farm to School / School Gardens
August 2012 – September 2014

Outcomes and Recommendations Report

Submitted to Duluth School Board, Education Committee, August 12, 2014

Duluth Public Schools Administration, July 24 and August 19, 2014

by Jamie Zak, Healthy School Food Coordinator(HSFC)

Working Definition, Activities of Farm to School: Local purchasing, School gardens, School garden produce in cafeteria or classrooms, In-class education, In-class snacks, Out-of-classroom learning, Other....related to increasing food literacy and healthy eating among the K-12 population.

1) Outcomes

a) Farm to School / School Garden Food Literacy Grants

i. School Garden program planning and installation at

- Lincoln Park Middle School (\$5000)
- Ordean East Middle School (\$5000)
- East High School (\$1500)
- Myers-Wilkins Elementary School (\$2000)
- Congdon Park Elementary School (\$2000)

ii. Planning process for each site produced:

- School Garden Mission Statement
- Year-at-a-Glance, and Maintenance Plan

Community partner: UM-Extension St. Louis County Master Gardener Program. (MWES and CPES Gardens each have a Master Gardener assigned to them.) **Substitute teacher pay and instructional materials were provided in the amount of: \$10,000**

iii. HSFC worked to coordinate and sanction with district administration, especially departments Child Nutrition Services and Facilities Management, the school garden installation, plus activities and outcomes related to Farm to School and School Garden Programming that connects classroom, cafeteria, and community. Site principals and Farm to School/School Garden champions at each site were instrumental in this process. **Healthy School Food Coordinator time applied to Duluth Public Schools in the amount of: \$35,000**

iv. Duluth Public Schools Farm to School webpage as a clearinghouse of success stories, useful technology, district systems that assist in the sustainability of DPS School Gardens / Farm to School Programming: <https://sites.google.com/a/isd709.org/farm-to-school/home>

b) On August 20, 2013 Healthy School Food Coordinator, Jamie Zak, received recognition from the Duluth School Board for service to the schools increasing student health through school gardens and food literacy.

c) Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Farm to School Equipment Grant Recipient, January 2014-December 2014. **Grant award in the amount of: \$12,000** (with 50% match from ISD 709=\$24,000)

i. We sought funds from the MDA Farm to School Equipment Grant for light processing equipment: knives, cutting boards, and food processors. The equipment will increase our capacity to utilize Minnesota/Superior Grown products in our cafeterias. We are also sought grant funds from the MDA Farm to School Feasibility Grant to hire local professional chef and food safety trainer, Arlene Coco, for Farm to School training with cafeteria managers in Duluth Public Schools on how to use the equipment and integrate whole produce with new and existing recipes, but we did not receive the Feasibility Grant.

The above activities will be supported by existing Farm to School activities such as: current MN Grown product procurement from the distributor, school gardens, FACS and FFA programs, and taste testings in the classroom. The project will be further supported by: Farm to School promotional materials, Farmer-School adoptions, and district wellness policy revision to include Farm to School as a strategy for healthy eating. We are motivated to expand our capacity to keep our food dollars local and anticipate signing on to our local "Superior Compact" (www.goodfoodnetwork.org), which is a purchasing commitment of 20% local by 2020 and 50% by 2050.

ii. Bean Recipe Test Kitchen and Robo Coups training at OEMS and LPMS

iii. August/September 2014, presentation to DPS Cafeteria Managers on Farm to School programming

d) Healthy School Food Roundtable – March 13, 2014

i. 45 adults (and 10 kids) in attendance representing parents, School Board officials, School District administration, public interest groups, and all 13 Cafeteria Managers were paid to attend. There were no teaching staff in attendance.

ii. League of Women Voters, School Food Survey

iii. Outcomes (see 3. Supporting Documents, d, below)

e) USDA Farm to School Support Services Grant and Victory Fund proposals, submitted April 2014, awards announcements: August-October 2014

The Carlton Cook Lake St. Louis Community Health Board (Support Services agency) aims to engage with schools that have the highest free and reduced lunch rates and communities that are experiencing high numbers in economic disparities. The state rate for children ages 0-17 living in poverty is 13.9%. In Cook County, the rate is 15.2%, while in Lake County it is 16.35% and 40% in St. Louis County. The proposed project will provide the collaboration, equipment and education necessary to assist local School Food Authorities (SFA's) and their respective school sites to grow, purchase and process produce that has been grown locally.

i. Education:

The Farm to School K-12 Educators and WRELC Organic Farm manager-educator will integrate into the school system and provide external resources available through Wolf Ridge ELC Organic Farm. Training and support for classroom teachers of grades K-12 in 7 schools (5, ISD 709 sites and 2, ISD 381 sites) on integrating academic standards into nutritional lessons, agricultural literacy standards, and the lessons of the garden will be delivered. Agricultural Education programs in the Duluth and Lake Superior School Districts will use the Farm to School curriculum in their courses to involve students directly in the process of moving produce from

farm to fork. The educational component provided by Wolf Ridge ELC will include on-site field trips to the Sustainable Ag Project (SAP) at the University of Minnesota, Duluth and to Wolf Ridge ELC for 4 schools representing 34 classes and 724 students. Through the enhancement of all of these educational components, the topic of where your food comes from will become embedded in student learning. Farm to School learning will go beyond the traditional classroom setting, by connecting and engaging students, parents, teachers, food service, farmers and the local community into the food system that sustains us all.

(Included only with Victory Fund proposal) Culinary Test Kitchen Chef and Food Service Trainer, Arlene Coco to perform test kitchen activities that include regional food for menu items and will train food service from ISD 381, ISD 709, and Wolf Ridge ELC.

ii. Equipment:

The proposed project will provide the equipment necessary to increase the amount of food produced at the school sites as well as the processing capacity of produce from the school gardens and local farmers. From the lessons we learned through the initial school gardens, we are now in a position to increase the square footages and acreages at the school sites. This will not only provide additional produce for the school food service, but additional learning opportunities for students in the garden. To increase the consumption in the schools we need equipment and supplies including: Hand Washing Stations, Produce Rinsing Stations and Salad Spinners for each of the 7 pilot schools.

The WRELC Organic Farm's largest acreage (3 acres) is currently unable to be used for food production with the high populations of whitetail deer. A nearby farm has erected a DNR approved high-tensile deer fence giving us the technical and structural experience and expertise for success on the Wolf Ridge Organic Farm. To increase the cultivation of the land and soil (3 additional acres of vegetables), we need to purchase a spader cultivator. This cultivation tool maintains soil structure and the bed system layout minimizes compaction while also providing a model tillage system for other farms in the region.

iii. Collaboration:

The Western Lake Superior Farm to School regional collaborative (staff and partners) will convene quarterly to share successes and work to build policy, systems, and environmental change that affects buying power, efficiency, and support for our regional project at large.

The Farmer-Buyer Logistics Operator will work with the two school districts and WRELC to gain efficiencies in purchasing and the local farmers to gain a consistent market, both in price and quantity, for their product. The Operator will work to simultaneously develop both the supply and the demand for local produce and facilitate the business relationships of the SFA's and the local producers. This will extend beyond the simple exchange of products. By developing strong relationships between the producers and consumers (local students and their families), additional opportunities along the supply chain will become available. The Logistics Operator will work in partnership with the Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association, Lake Superior Farm Beginnings, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Minnesota/Superior Grown label initiative.

iv. Total potential USDA and/or Victory Fund grant funding for ISD 709 Farm to School / School Garden programming, starting January 1, 2015 = \$37,750 or \$55,250 (with Food Service training)

f) Regional DCGP Fall and Spring School Garden Trainings

- i. Each training had about 15 of 30 participants representing Duluth Public Schools, K-12 teaching staff, students, and parents
- ii. Community partners: Sustainable Agriculture Project @ UMD Farm, Clover Valley Farms

iii. **Substitute teacher pay and instructional materials provided in the amount of: \$8000**

g) **Total Farm to School / School Garden financial contribution to ISD 709 by 9/30/14 approximate amount = \$80,000**

2) Recommendations

a) **September 24, 2014: DPS School Garden Teacher Workshop**

- i. Participants to be personally invited to convene with HSFC one last time – with clearance from site principals; substitute teacher pay provided for 30 participants
- ii. Align with DPS Professional Development program
- iii. Morning Session – Sharing success stories, barriers to success, and district systems/resources information
- iv. Afternoon Session – MDA Farm to School agent to conduct teacher training on *Minnesota School Gardens: A Guide to Gardening and Plant Science – Featuring 31 K-12 lessons linked to the Minnesota Academic Standards*
- v. September 13, 2014: Regional School Garden Bus Tour!!! (hand out)

b) **Include School Gardens in future professional development**

c) Include Farm to School / School Gardens in future **Wellness Policy revision** and implementation (see 3. Supporting Documents, a-c, below)

d) Child Nutrition Services to **provide stipend for School Gardens**

- i. Terms of FNS memo SP 32-2009 state, "School Food Authorities may use funds from the nonprofit school food service account...with the understanding that the garden is used within the context of the (FNS program), i.e. selling the food or providing food in the classroom as an educational lesson, and...as long as items are used for the purpose of starting and maintaining the garden".
- ii. Outlined in USDA Farm to School Support Services grant proposal: CNS budget will make available **\$200 per school year, per school site** for schools with School Gardens, or academic studies in the indoor classroom related to food literacy and gardening, for the purchase of seeds, potting soil, and/or soil amendments such as compost to ensure viability and sustainability of DPS Farm to School/School Garden projects.

e) Include in district funding structure a stipend position for **Farm to School/School Garden Coordinator** as the opportunity presents itself. In the mean time, consider existing positions that may have potential to keep the Farm to School / School Garden momentum going via integration into upcoming projects and/or to utilize as an outdoor classroom/educational resource, such as Civic Engagement Specialist, Curriculum Director, or CNS interns.

f) Child Nutrition Services, Facilities Management, and Curriculum to **release communications** to their workers (cafeteria managers, building engineers, and teaching staff) that voices support of DPS School Gardens: to maintain and utilize in collaboration with diverse school site personell, as an important teaching tool to demonstrate healthy eating, and to utilize as an outdoor classroom.

g) **Promote** the good work of Child Nutrition Services for their district-wide implementation of the requirements of the 2013 Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, recent food safety audits, and any Farm to

School / School Garden efforts happening in the cafeteria to increase student-teacher-parental knowledge and participation in the school breakfast and lunch programs.

3) Supporting Documents

- a) Wellness Policy: Duluth Public Schools-specific recommendations by HSFC
 - i. Children and Their Eating: Guidelines for the School Nutrition Staff
 - ii. EWG's Clean 15 and Dirty Dozen
- b) *Sample School Wellness Policy: School Gardens* – Public Health Law Center, June 2011
- c) *Sample School Wellness Policy: Farm to School* – Public Health Law Center, June 2011
- d) 3.13.14 Healthy School Food Roundtable, *outcomes*
- e) DRAFT Farm to School / School Garden Coordinator job description
- f) *Serving Locally Grown Produce in Food Facilities*, an MDA, MDH, U of M Extension document
- g) "School Garden Team" worksheet
- h) "School Garden Maintenance Plan" worksheet
- i) EHS, OEMS, LPMS, CPES, MWES – School Garden Mission Statements
- j) Example Year at a Glance – Congdon Park ES
- k) Superior Compact purchasing agreement, official sign-on at www.goodfoodnetwork.org
- l) *Minnesota School Gardens: A Guide to Gardening and Plant Science – Featuring 31 K-12 lessons linked to the Minnesota Academic Standards* (free copies available)
- m) *New School Cuisine Cookbook* by Vermont Food Education Every Day (FEED) (available for PDF download at:
http://www.vtfeed.org/sites/default/files/New_School_Cuisine_Cookbook.pdf)

4) Photo Documentation

- a-e) Each School Garden of the grant recipient sites
- f) Teachers engaged in the planning process
- h) School Garden Training activity: "Cold Frame/Hot House" – On season extension technology, physical and earth science concepts, problem solving, and data interpretation.
- i-j) OEMS and LPMS students engaged in "Bean Recipe Test Kitchen" project along with Family and Consumer Science teachers and Cafeteria managers from both sites, and local chef, Farm to School and Food Safety specialist, Arlene Buscombe Coco.