

## GARDEN PARTY PLANNING

### ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE

- Meet with teachers, administrators and groundskeepers to select the Garden Party date and plan the location of the garden beds, compost bins, and soil and mulch piles. Complete a 'Use of Facilities' form for the event if necessary.
- Create a Garden Party workday plan: See "Typical Workday Activities" listed on page 2.
- Order or solicit donations of soil, mulch, organic compost, vermicast, tools, and garden bed materials as needed. Plan for pickups and deliveries.
- Announce Garden Party date (fliers, newsletter, website). Recruit volunteers. Ask volunteers to bring supplies as needed: refillable water bottle (to cut down on waste), snack or potluck dish (healthy, waste-free), tools labeled with their name, cardboard, etc.
- Arrange for a few volunteers to lead a kids' activity on Garden Party day (e.g. seed saving; food prep with garden produce, such as pesto; planting seeds in newspaper pots; painting bucket gardens; creating garden signs; decorating milk cartons for plant pots; other garden and recycle art activities).

### THE WEEK BEFORE THE GARDEN PARTY

- Coordinate with school administration and groundskeepers for the unlocking of gates and nearby restrooms and classrooms (for electricity source) on Garden Party day.
- Ask the school administration to announce the Garden Party in the school's marquee and/or on bulletin boards around campus.
- Send fliers home to families and post the fliers around campus.
- Gather unwaxed, corrugated cardboard as needed (if building new raised beds or sheet mulch gardens and/or adding cardboard and mulch to garden pathways). Ask supermarkets and other stores for cardboard. Ask your school cafeteria and custodians to save cardboard.
- Gather tools, wheelbarrows, and pickup trucks.
- If building new garden beds, measure and mark the location of the beds with measuring tape and spray paint or flags.
- Coordinate with school for mowing/weed whacking around garden areas as necessary.
- Optional: Invite local officials, businesses, and community groups to participate in your school's Garden Party. Send out a press release to announce the event and your school's garden program.



### ONE DAY BEFORE THE GARDEN PARTY

- Thoroughly soak the ground with water where trenches for any new garden bed borders will be dug. This will make digging easier.
- Thoroughly soak the garden soil to facilitate digging.
- Write out the day's step-by-step activities on a white board.
- Optional: Take "before" photos of the garden areas.

### THE BIG DAY!

- Set up sign in and name tag area. Hang or post any banners or signs.
- Display the white board with step-by-step activities for the day.
- Set up kids' activity area.
- Set up snack, drink, and zero waste station.
- Set up cardboard prep station (remove most tape, staples and plastics, open and flatten boxes).
- As volunteers arrive direct them to sign in, create a name tag, label their tools, and help with cardboard prep.
- After cardboard is prepped and volunteers have arrived, gather the group and make a welcome announcement. Describe the activities for the day: kids' activity, snacks and drinks, label tools, garden work plan, thank yous, etc. Encourage safety via proper tool use, staying hydrated, and washing hands well after gardening and before eating. Take a group photo!
- Split into even groups with at least one supervisor in each group. Volunteers will need to be guided through the activities.
- When building new garden beds, take the time to do it right – the beds will be there for a long time!
- When finished, thank everyone for coming and make sure volunteers enjoy the snacks. **Good job!**



# How to...

## Plan and Run a Garden Party Workday



### TYPICAL WORKDAY ACTIVITIES

#### BEGINNING OF EACH SEMESTER

(At Least One Week Before Planting):

- Build garden beds, sheet mulch gardens, compost bins, trellises, and other structures as needed.
- Remove weeds, loosen and water garden soil.
- Harvest and sift compost.
- Add compost and other soil amendments to the garden soil (see “supplies” list).
- Add mulch around fruit trees.
- Add fresh cardboard and mulch to garden pathways.
- Create garden signs.



#### END OF SCHOOL YEAR:

- Harvest any remaining produce for volunteers to take home.
- Harvest and save seeds from the gardens.
- Remove weeds, loosen and water garden soil.
- Leave in place any perennial plants like herbs, collard greens, etc.
- Remove and chop old garden plants. Place chopped plant parts over the soil (except for weeds) and cover with a 2-3” layer of composted mulch. Water the layers well to aid decomposition. Take these steps to protect the garden soil and discourage weed growth over the summer.
- Add mulch around fruit trees.
- Add fresh cardboard and mulch to garden pathways.

## SUPPLIES

### GARDEN PARTY TOOLS

- Picks (at least one per bed)
- Shovels
- Rakes
- Garden hoes
- Pitchforks (great for mulch)
- Spade forks (to loosen soil)
- Buckets
- Wheelbarrows
- Hand tools
- Pruners and loppers
- Gloves (adult and child sizes)
- Rototiller (optional)
- Water keys
- Hose
- Drill and drill bits (if necessary)
- Saw (if necessary)
- Extension cord (if necessary)
- Permanent pens for labeling tools

### GARDEN BED MATERIALS

- Corrugated, unwaxed cardboard
- Newspaper (no magazines)
- Soil
- Mulch
- Soil amendments (compost, vermicast, composted manure, composted mulch)
- Garden bed materials: boards, posts, and screws

### COMPOST BIN MATERIALS

- Wooden Pallets
- Discarded bicycle tubes

### MARKING BED LOCATIONS

- Measuring tape
- Spray paint or flags

### OTHER WORKDAY SUPPLIES

- Sign in sheets, pens, and clipboard
- Folding table, tablecloth
- Name tags and pens
- Whiteboard and dry erase markers
- Banners or signs (to direct volunteers)
- First aid kit
- Camera
- Kids’ activity supplies
- Snacks and drinks: Think zero waste, local, and healthy! (e.g. fresh fruits and ice water in beverage jug for reusable water bottle refills)
- Zero Waste Station: Buckets labeled for trash, compost, and recycling

