

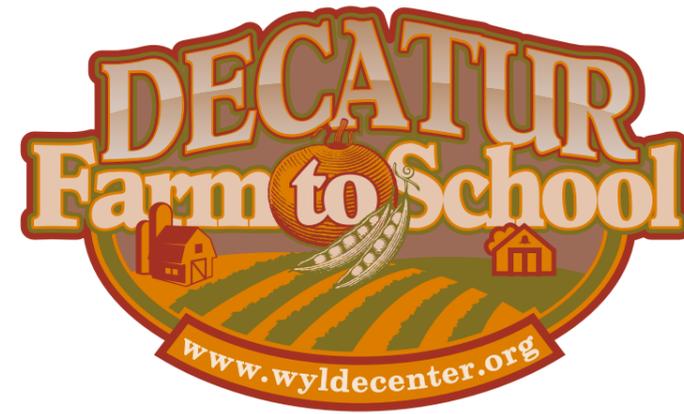


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Purpose of newsletter: To keep parents, students, school personnel, community members, and other interested parties informed of the Wylde Center's Decatur Farm to School programming in the community.



SPRING 2015 **NEWSLETTER**



Get Your Taste Buds Ready...

Sugar snap peas are this season's selection for our upcoming taste test. Peas make a great low calorie/high fiber snack that are also full of Vitamins K, B6 and C, and we are hoping that we will have 100 percent student participation this spring. Almost every school in the City Schools of Decatur planted sugar snap peas in their respective gardens for the district wide taste test that will occur during the last two weeks of May. Students will help harvest the peas around May 15 – 18th, and schools will be sampling the peas during that week. CSD nutrition staff and DF2S volunteers will conduct the taste tests. The results of the taste test will appear in the Fall edition of this newsletter.

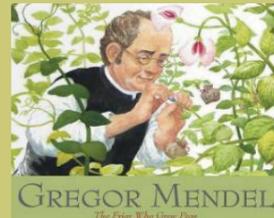
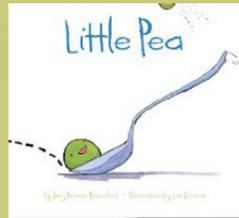
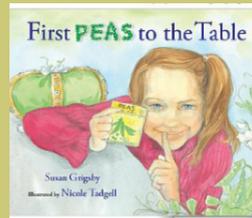


A Decatur Farm to School Tradition: Decatur Farm to School Donates Books and Lesson Plans to City Schools of Decatur

In conjunction with the district-wide Taste Test of sugar snap peas this spring, Decatur Farm to School (DF2S) has selected three books to be donated to the Pre-K through fifth grade school libraries.

College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center (CHECLC) will receive two copies of *Little Pea* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal. The elementary schools will each receive two copies of *First Peas to Table: How Thomas Jefferson Inspired a School Garden* by Susan Grigsby. Lastly, 4/5 Academy at Fith Avenue will receive three copies of *Gregor Mendel: The Friar Who Grew Peas* by Cheryl Bar DOE.

Along with the books, teachers will have access to lesson plans that incorporate the books and align with the curricula of the different grade levels.



We would like to thank Little Shop of Stories for providing these books at a discounted rate, and to Tabitha Wiedower, former CSD elementary school teacher and current DF2S volunteer who selected and donated the books on behalf of DF2S.

**Support Farm to School today.
Make a tax-deductible donation online on our website.
www.wyldecenter.org**

News from City Schools of Decatur Nutrition Department

In keeping with the recommendations made by the Ultimate Menu Committee and consultant Rick Hughes, the Nutrition Department continues to seek ways to make cafeteria foods more wholesome and locally sourced, and CSD kitchens more efficient. Here are some recent updates:

Reducing Sugary Products

We continue to make a conscious effort to choose ingredients and products that do not contain High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS). Examples of this change include replacing jelly with honey and pancake syrup that does not contain HFCS, and replacing pancake and muffin mixes with whole grain products. We rarely offer sugary desserts at meals, and if we do they are fruit-based desserts that are made from scratch like apple crisps or peach cobblers. We have also limited the availability of chocolate milk; it is no longer available at breakfast.

Locally Made Entrées Replace Prepared Foods

We have also eliminated many of the pre-made entrée items such as shrimp poppers and fish sticks in exchange for entrées made from scratch. Dried potatoes and sweet potato tots have been replaced by real mashed potatoes and other, less processed forms of sweet potatoes. Lastly, we are slowly incorporating the use of fresh, wholegrain breads which come frozen and ready to bake. We do not have the capacity at this time to treat all bread products in this manner.

Increasing Kitchen Consistency & Efficiency

The Nutrition Department is in the process of compiling a master standardized cookbook to limit recipe confusion and increase consistency. In addition, it is now standard that all CSD nutrition employees must be ServSafe Certified to ensure sanitary and safe kitchen practices.

Preschoolers Eat Differently than High Schoolers

It's no big surprise that preschoolers' palates are a little different than older students. In recognizing that difference, the CHECLC kitchen will start operating as a separate kitchen from the other kitchens in the district. This change was made to reduce waste and cater more specifically to the nutritional demands of preschool students.

Continuing Our Quest to Respond to Feedback

In order to capture feedback from high school students, we recently completed an online survey for the high school. Per parents' requests, we have also begun to post carbohydrate counts and egg allergies for each menu cycle. If you have questions or feedback for the Nutrition Department, please contact Ana Kucelin at akucelin@csdecatur.net.

Thank You Partners



Thank you to the City Schools of Decatur and Carrot & Stick for supporting Farm to School initiatives.



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Decatur Farm to School Spotlight: Tamara Jones and Moira Bucciarelli

If you have ever wondered what goes on at the corner of Commerce and Howard Avenue, you might be pleasantly surprised to hear that Decatur High School (DHS) has been the host of an amazing community garden for several years now (started by alumnus Anna Rose Gable, class 2009), a culinary arts garden and a pollinator garden for several years now. All three gardens have been cared for by the DHS Garden Club with the help of two very dedicated parent volunteers, Tamara Jones and Moira Bucciarelli. As DHS continues its building expansion, the community garden is moving to the Wylde Center's Sugar Creek Garden, while the pollinator garden and the culinary arts garden have now moved close-



er to the school. The culinary arts garden will continue to grow food and herbs, such as garlic, arugula, collards, and kale to be used by DHS culinary arts students. When asked why they support garden activities at Decatur High School, Moira and Tamara responded:

"I enjoy cooking, gardening and working with people in the garden, which is a great combination when

working with the DHS culinary arts students. I love the idea of having the students pick produce straight from the garden to prepare in their kitchen. Chef Rian Macdonald has been very supportive of the farm to table concept and has been happy to bring the students out to the garden to help plant and pick. This fall, he challenged the students to gather whatever was growing and prepare something creative. They came up with some delicious drinks, appetizers, soups and salads. I have no doubt the students will grow from this experience."

~Tamara

"Some high school students have a genuine sense of curiosity and awe about plants and how they can be used for health or cooking. I think they enjoy being outside of the classroom. It is so rewarding to work with them and be inspired by their curiosity and energy."

~Moira

City Schools of Decatur Students Experience Farm to School in Different Ways

Renfro Middle School's Garden Complements Curriculum

Under the care of Krysta Johnson and her International Perspectives students, the Renfro garden is flourishing. Five of the eight garden beds are planted for early spring crops and the remaining three will be planted with summer crops right after spring break. The spring beds will be rotated to summer plantings as soon as their crops are harvested. To complement the 8th grade curriculum, they are planting a Native American three-sisters demonstration garden which includes corn, beans, and squash. Beans will climb corn trellises, adding needed nitrogen naturally while tethering the top-heavy plant. The squash acts as a natural mulch preventing erosion, evaporation, and weed-growth.

A grant from Decatur Education Foundation (DEF) purchased the materials for the Design Engineering students to build a garden shed. Soon they will begin a student mural project on the garden-facing side of the shed. A second grant from DEF will be used to allow students to design and build outdoor classroom tables. A PTA grant was used to purchase some tools and materials, as well as programming from the Wylde Center to build compost systems so that RMS students can create their own compost. The garden will continue to grow as more and more teachers use it. Five RMS teachers are applying to a School Master Gardener Certification program this summer through the Cooperative Extension Service.



You are invited to see the Renfro Garden for yourself. RMS will be hosting **Art in the Garden on Thursday, April 30, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm** which will be held in the back field and the adjacent Renfro Garden.

Students from the Design Engineering and International Perspectives programs will have goods for sale to support their programs including planters, plants, bird houses, and baked goods, and students from the Strings program will be providing live music.



(Photo top) RMS garden bed laid out for spring plantings. (Photo above left) Maha Sidi and Mrs. Johnson assemble a compost bin. (Photo above right) Ashley Seaborn checks on the status of seeds sprouted in the classroom.

Frasier Center Joins the DF2S Family

The Wylde Center provide some Farm to School programming for their two- and three-year-old classes. Nichole Lupo, Wylde Center's Garden to Classroom Educator, recently taught Frasier Center students a unit on seeds. After reading *The Tiny Seed*, by Eric Carle, the students planted radish seeds in a portion of Decatur High School's Culinary Arts garden. Nichole will return to the Frasier Center for two more lessons at which the toddlers will learn about pollinators and will harvest (and taste) the radishes they helped plant.



Wylde Center Garden to Classroom Educator Nichole Lupo helps Frasier student Kalie Kucelin plant some radish seeds in their new garden.

The Westchester Family Creates a Garden

Westchester Elementary has its own school garden! After six months of planning and fundraising, Westchester faculty and parents joined together to plan, budget and build four raised beds for the new school to use. Starting as a wish from Mrs. Howard's 2nd grade class, the school garden has become a reality with the help of a Decatur Education Foundation grant, the PTA and the assistance of Westchester parents like Joey Zeigler with Zeigler Home-stead Services. Since the raised beds were installed in mid-March, Mrs. Howard's class has filled the beds with soil, and the second graders and kindergarteners have planted all sorts of vegetables, including the taste test vegetables, Sugar Snap Peas.



Westchester students and parents fill the garden beds.

Supporters Enjoy Spring Dine Out



Margo Sullivan from CHECLC and her brother Elliot from Oakhurst (Left) chose to dine on pizza from Sapori di Napoli, along with the Watkins, (Right). (Bottom left): Flora Jane from Glennwood Elementary also chose pizza. (Bottom Right): Claudia Chilik, Oakhurst mom of Brian and Christopher, helps sell accessories at the Dine-Out.

Decatur Farm to School Offers High School Students Summer Internship Opportunities

For its fourth consecutive summer, Decatur Farm to School will be offering a six-week, paid summer internship to three lucky Decatur High School students. The DF2S summer program serves two purposes: first to offer students a hands-on opportunity to partner with gardeners, farmers and chefs in the hard work of cultivating fresh local foods, and preparing these foods for consumers; and second, to encourage students to share their ideas about how to increase meaningful DF2S activity with high school-aged students. The selected interns will work at a combination of farms, gardens and local restaurants to experience the entire farm-to-table process. Once completed, the interns will report about their experiences in the fall edition of this newsletter.



2014 Decatur Farm to School Summer Interns Declan Tillman, Aisha Muhammad and Zoey Laird on the day of their final presentation.

We would like to thank everyone who dined out in support of Decatur Farm to School at our bi-annual Spring Dine Out on Wednesday, April 15th. As our main fundraisers, these Dine Outs are an integral part of continuing all the City Schools of Decatur's healthy eating initiatives and school garden programs. We would like to also thank our tireless volunteers and our amazing restaurant partners for helping us make this happen.

Our restaurant partners include: Brick Store Pub, Cakes & Ale, Farm Burger, Lawrence's Cafe, Leon's Full Service, Makan, Mojo Pizza n' Pub, Oakhurst Market, Raging Burrito, Sapori di Napoli, Seven Hens, Steinbeck's Ale House, Twain's Brewpub & Billiards, The Iberian Pig, The Imperial, Universal Joint, and Wahoo! Grill. In addition, we would also like to thank all the local businesses who donated raffle prizes, Oakhurst Farmers Market and their vendors Doggy Dogg, Queen of Cream, Zocalo Salsas, Banjo Cold Brew Coffee, Cheeky Maiden Soap Co., and King of Pops.