



GRASSROOTS GARDENS WNY SCHOOL GARDEN APPLICATION

Grassroots Gardens WNY is a determined group of activists who educate and lead committed neighborhood gardeners. We collaboratively cultivate and manage more than 1,000,000ft²(and growing!) of green space in Buffalo and Niagara Falls. Our work is rooted in the belief that a garden has the power to transform an urban neighborhood. Gardens deliver beauty and escape and produce food in unexpected places. A garden creates a shared sense of purpose that empowers a community, creates environmental awareness and improves public health.

*****The application deadline is November 30th.*****

For Office Use Only: Date Received:_____

Comments: Accepted:_____ Incomplete: _____ Rejected:_____

Grassroots Gardens WNY
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*****By applying you are committing to steward the community garden for AT LEAST 3 years.*****

Thank you for taking the first step in beautifying your neighborhood!

Grassroots Gardens WNY (GGWNY) is here to assist you through the process of applying to set up a school garden. If you ever have questions about the application please feel free to call or email us at your convenience.

The application deadline is November 30th.

Approved Community Garden Projects Will Receive the Following Support from GGWNY:

- Support to access land if needed (majority of schools will have decision-making authority over their land)
- Limited liability insurance for regular garden activities
- Education and programming support from dedicated staff
- Hydrant or water access in relevant situations (unfortunately, this benefit is limited to the City of Buffalo)
- Free vegetable seedlings annually
- Free garden beds and construction support: First year school gardens may choose between the following two options, free of charge:
 - Up to four (4) 4'x8' raised beds free of charge. More beds may be added after the first season depending on garden caretaking capacity and need.
 - Up to eight (8) portable [Earthboxes](#), which allow for more flexible programming and garden location, and easier care but less growing space.
- Free soil: up to 4 yards of soil, compost, or mulch annually, with additional availability dependent on funding
- Tools and equipment borrowing privileges from our supply, or access to our Tool Library membership

Expectations of School Gardens

- We require that the school and responsible staff commit to at least 3 years of caretaking and maintenance of the garden.
- We require AT LEAST ONE person to act as a primary contact with GGWNY and suggest coordination between school staff/administrators to reduce the burden on one person.
- We require that at least one person from your garden visit and participate in AT LEAST ONE GGWNY new garden orientation. We will reach out in late winter to gardeners whose application we accept regarding orientation dates.
- We require the following communication contact points directly with our staff:
 - Submission of initial application in the fall before **November 30th**
 - Submission of seedling orders in **February** prior to the start of the season (order form will be provided)
 - Submission of soil & compost needs in **March** (order form will be provided)
 - New bed build requests or Earthbox orders must be made **before May**
 - For direct program assistance with students, please contact our staff at least 2 weeks in advance of the date of your request.
 - **Failure to adhere to these general timeframes may prevent GGWNY from being able to offer you support in a timely manner.**
- We require the support of school administrators and an understanding with maintenance/groundskeepers regarding the upkeep of the garden space. Please see page 7 of this document
- Grass must be mowed regularly throughout the season.
- Garden beds including vegetable beds and flower beds must be weeded throughout the season.
- Vegetables must be properly cared for and watered regularly.
- The garden area must be kept clear of trash and debris.
- **In the event that there is a change in the lead contact or the garden will no longer be utilized, we request immediate notification. Failure to do so may affect our acceptance of requests for support in the future.**

Tips on Preparation and Maintenance of your Garden Space

- We recommend a day of cleanup and preparation before installation of the raised beds, and also a spring workday to open the garden in preparation for the seedling order and a fall workday to close up the garden for the season.
 - A good first project is to prepare your site before installing raised beds, and to plan where the beds and pathways between them will go. This way you have enough time for a harvest in your first year.
- The seedling order will typically need to be picked up during mid to late May, depending on seasonal weather. Vegetables need to be planted in raised beds above ground that contain at least 10" of organic soil provided by GGWNY, and only with lumber provided by GGWNY as it cannot be pressured treated. Store-bought bagged soil and compost is typically safe, but please do not solicit donations from unknown sources due to contamination risks.
- Regular watering and work days with students, parents, or other staff need to be organized to maintain the appearance of the garden. The garden is to be well cared for (i.e. not blighted or overgrown, unless intended for native ecosystems). If the lead gardener cannot be there, a neighborhood gardener should be on-site so that planned projects are honored.
 - Weekly weeding and harvesting is important to fully utilize the garden and is important to keeping up the aesthetics of the space. Schedule larger work days in Spring, Summer, and Fall to tackle larger projects such as building raised beds, creating pathways, and installing art and signage.
 - Be creative and plan activities and events that will involve neighbors or parents with your garden. They might become your best volunteers.
 - If GGWNY receives complaints or feels that a garden is not adhering to being good stewards of the land or to the community, the community garden will be subject to be decommissioned if the problem is not addressed.

In the following pages you will find the School Garden Application. Take your time in filling out the required information and contact our staff at our office if you have any questions, thank you!

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Seasonal Plan for Garden

*Let us know how you'll be spending your time in the garden during the seasons (planting vegetables in spring, building bird houses in summer, hosting community harvest events in fall, closing down the garden for winter, etc...). Use words and pictures to provide us with as much detail as possible. For specific considerations regarding the school year, we encourage you to think about fast-growing spring and fall crops that align with the presence of students, and also the maintenance of the space through the summer months. **If no students or community members will be utilizing the garden during the summer, please plan accordingly to temporarily shut down the garden or plant low to no maintenance plants.** Reach out to our staff for more advice and support if needed.*

Spring:

Summer:

Fall:

Winter:

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Garden Narrative / Letter of Intent

Garden Narrative / Letter of Intent

What are your motivations for creating a community garden? How do you envision your community garden changing the neighborhood or school? How do you plan on getting school staff, parents, and student programs involved in the project?

Garden Contact & Site Information

Garden Site Information

Garden Name: _____

Location of Proposed Garden (Full Address + Zip code): _____

*Landowner:

*Approximate Area of Lot: _____

**If you seek a garden on a private vacant lot, you must attach a copy of a Letter of Support (LOS) from the landowner granting your group permission to use the lot for the purpose of establishing / maintaining a community garden. The landowner information can be obtained from City of Buffalo <https://property.spataleest.com/ny/buffalo#/>) or for Niagara Falls (<https://niagaracounty.prosgar.com/>). For Niagara Falls and Buffalo, GGWNY can provide a template Letter of Support.*

Garden Contact Information

Primary Contact Name:

Organization / School: _____

Primary Contact Home Address: _____

Primary Contact Phone: _____

Primary Contact Email: _____

Secondary Contact Name: _____

Secondary Contact Phone: _____

Secondary Contact Email: _____

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Names and Phone numbers/emails (if available) of people who are committed to working in the garden (staff, parents, neighbors etc.)

1. Name: _____ Number: _____ Email: _____

2. Name: _____ Number: _____ Email: _____

3. Name: _____ Number: _____ Email: _____

4. Name: _____ Number: _____ Email: _____

5. Name: _____ Number: _____ Email: _____

Are there any other organizations in your neighborhood (or near the proposed garden site) that you have or are forming partnerships with to help with the establishment and upkeep of the community garden? Please list them:

List sources of funding, in-kind services (supplies, professional advice, plants & materials, volunteers) that your school or program plans to put toward creating and maintaining your garden. Include fundraising plans if possible:

Do you have the support of the school's principal? _____

Principal Name: _____

Principal Phone Number: _____

Principal Email: _____

Is there a different primary contact during the summer season? _____

If yes, please make sure their information is included as the secondary contact

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If you are applying for a school garden it is required that you submit a written letter of support from the Principle and/or other administrative staff of the school stating that they support the garden and will commit to supporting its upkeep and maintenance. It is also required that you reach out to your school's groundskeeper or maintenance staff and have them sign that they will commit to assisting in mowing the area where the school garden is located. Please attach the administrative letter of support to this application and have a maintenance staff member sign and date below.

Maintenance Staff Name: _____

Maintenance Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____

Applicants must read and put their initials by each of the following signifying an understanding of each expectation:

Garden space must regularly mowed: _____

Garden space shall be clear of trash and debris: _____

Garden beds and flower beds will be weeded and watered regularly: _____

The school garden shall maintain regular contact with GGWNY Staff : _____

At least 1 member of the school garden attend Gardener Orientation in Spring: _____

Policies and regulations of GGWNY shall be followed: _____

I have thoroughly read and understand the expectations and responsibilities listed in this application for community gardens in the GGWNY garden network: _____

Our school commits to working towards incorporating a garden budget in our school planning: _____

We commit to including garden budgeting needs in applicable grants that we apply to: _____

We understand that even a small step towards independently funding our garden helps GGWNY offer more resources to communities with less fundraising capacity and ability: _____

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Garden Design

Draw your garden. Give us an idea of how your garden is going to look once finished! Use the space below to draw the layout of your future community garden (i.e where the raised beds will go, trees, shrubs, perennial beds, etc...). We don't expect you to be a Picasso, so give it your best effort! Complete this with interested staff, students, and others – the more engagement, the more buy-in you create.