

Borton Primary Magnet School

The Borton Community Garden Tucson, Arizona

During the past five months, parents, volunteers and kids have worked on establishing The Borton Community Garden, and now it is truly ready to be the nutrition education area it was designed to be.



With our class garden last year, students were a part of the planting process, chose where to place plants and herbs, and as the edibles grew, the students sampled. When visitors would come to the classroom, we always had a willing tour guide in the class to show and teach our guests about what we were growing. I never thought I would hear a 7 year old student say, "I love chard" or another state that they "preferred kale over greens." This was a change from the sugar and hot cheeto breakfast/lunches I saw in the beginning of the year.

This experience transformed our classroom as students were eager to water the plants or check for tomato horn worm invasions. We culminated our year with a harvest celebration and a stir-fry of the veggies as well as many students' first experience with tofu. Kids started making better choices, and we all know we strive for making good choices.

It inspired me to write a grant last January to create a larger edible garden that could feed the needs of our students. I received the grant this summer and worked with the local community food bank to fully integrate the surrounding community in its goal for sustainability. In it I stated the want to integrate the edible garden into our after-school program, have community potlucks, create our own school farmers market, and most importantly, give our students the tools to keep the earth growing and being in charge of it.

Students and classrooms are responsible for collecting eggs from our happy hens: Nugget, Roxy, Rosa, Pickles, Henny, and Red Hawk each day as well as feed them and clean their cages. Students select veggies for their classrooms to snack on and also harvest veggies to sell at our farmstand on Fridays before and after school.

The Borton Community Garden would not be what it is today without the help of our community and parents. It is just another thing we teach our students about, and it will stay with them forever. Because of the grant and donations, we have TONS of activities I can copy, curriculum guides, seeds and more. We have meetings every other Wednesday to discuss garden happenings, but there are always other times to chat.



Garden Coordinator Contact:

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Planting a mesquite tree.



Building the chicken coop.



The farm stand.