TITLE | EDUCATION OUTSIDE SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR GARDEN EDUCATORS

CATEGORY | Garden Educator Management & Coaching

OVERVIEW | This document outlines various roles, systems, and practices that can be used to support garden educators.

What this resource is:

This resource outlines the various systems that Education Outside utilized to support garden educators. These systems are described briefly here, and expanded upon in the sections below.

- *School Support:* This included a variety of staff and community members, such as the school secretary, custodian, principal, teachers, social worker, psychologist, parents/guardians and neighbors. It also included a designated school site advisor who helped garden educators get oriented at their school and provided feedback throughout the year.
- *Peer Garden Educators:* In the 2018-2019 school year, Education Outside had 25 first year garden educators, 24 second year garden educators, and 4 third year garden educators. They supported each other through informal collaboration time and formally through a mentorship program, regional groups, and online forum.
- *Program Managers:* In the 2018-2019 school year, Education Outside program managers (PMs) each managed 10-13 garden educators. They provided direct support for garden educators through monthly site visits and semiannual reviews.
- *Resource Support:* These resources included a weekly newsletter, online forum, tool lending library, site budget, monthly checklist, and site binder.

Why this resource was created:

Based on feedback from garden educators, Education Outside created and implemented systems to provide support and increase garden educator success. These systems were modified over the years based on additional feedback. This resource summarizes these systems and provides recommendations based on what we have learned over the years.

How to use this resource:

This resource summarizes the various people and resources that Education Outside used to support garden educators. We suggest reviewing it to determine what pieces your school or organization can incorporate into your own programming. Not all Education Outside systems will be applicable to every user, and many will need modifications, but we hope this document can provide useful strategies and inspiration for School Garden Support Organizations and others in the field. Where possible, we have included recommendations based on feedback data gathered over the years.

School Support for Garden Educators:

Education Outside asked every school to designate one teacher to be the garden educator's School Site Advisor (SSA). This person was often designated by the school's principal at the beginning of the year and had specific duties, including: supporting the garden educator with orientation at the beginning of the year, being available for questions in the first few months, and providing feedback to the educator. We found that SSAs were most helpful to garden educators at the beginning of the year. By the end of the school year, many garden educators reported receiving more support from other school staff, outside of the SSA. These unofficial school garden champions supported in a variety of ways. For example, guardians and neighbors helped deliver materials to garden workdays, school librarians helped locate relevant books, school social workers and psychologists provided advice about how to best support students, and teachers collaborated on lesson plans. Since every school is different, the specific staff that provided support varied from school to school. Nevertheless, the SSA provided valuable support to many garden educators, particularly at the beginning of the year, and we recommend that schools designate a similar point person for new garden educators. The resources below include an agreement form that was signed by Education Outside SSAs at the beginning of the year as well as a framework for garden educators to use during a feedback meeting with the SSA at the middle and end of the year.

Data from 2018-2019 feedback surveys indicate that garden educators became increasingly integrated in their school communities after working with them for a year and were able to access more support in their second year of service. We recommend that School Garden Support Organizations use a similar multi-year model for garden educators where possible.

School Site Advisor Agreement Form
Thank you for supporting your school's garden educator! This form outlines the responsibilities of the School Site Advisor. Please read it thoroughly and sign below.

Education Outside School Site Advisors will...	✓
Within the first month of school:	
- Identify and meet the garden educator	
- Review the garden educator position description and familiarize yourself with Education Outside's mission.	
- Introduce the garden educator to your school site. Introduce them at the first staff meeting, show them the staff lounge, staff mailboxes, staff restrooms, etc.	
- Connect the garden educator with staff and community involved in science, sustainability, environmental literacy, school greening, and/or health/wellness initiatives.	
Ongoing throughout the year:	
- Be available throughout the year to answer questions the garden educator may have about the school's operations or procedures.	
- Support the garden educator in developing their teaching practice by providing feedback directly to the garden educator and to the educator's program manager when solicited.	
- Invite the garden educator to staff gatherings and other community events.	

Signing the Orientation Overview Checklist confirms that you have read and agree to the above responsibilities.
School Site Advisor name: _____
School Site Advisor email: _____

School Site Advisor / Garden Educator Feedback Meeting

Education Outside strongly encouraged all garden educators to have a facilitated, 15-20 min feedback conversation with their SSA in the fall and spring. These meetings were a supplement to the formal mid and end of year evaluations conducted by Education Outside program managers and focused on the three strands of the Education Outside garden educator position: Learning & Teaching Outdoors, Leadership for Community Engagement, and Outdoor Classroom Design. SSAs provided important insight and feedback for garden educators. Education Outside provided a gift card to SSAs who made time for these meetings as a token of appreciation for their time.

Education Outside garden educators were asked to provide SSAs with a copy of the *Education Outside Best Practices for Building Classroom Culture*, available in the Table of Contents, in advance of the feedback meeting. They were provided with these questions to guide the feedback meeting:

Learning & Teaching Outdoors:
- What went well during the lesson you observed? What could be improved?
- Which of the Education Outside Best Practices do I use consistently, and which were missing or should I work to improve?
Outdoor Classroom Design:
- Is the Outdoor Classroom clutter free, organized, and safe?
- Is it designed in a way that is conducive to learning?
- What are some techniques that you use in your indoor classroom that I might use in the outdoor classroom?
Leadership For Community Engagement:
- What have you noticed about my work and ability to build relationships in the school community?
- What kind of garden event would you suggest holding in order to support community building?

Email Template for School Site Advisor / Garden Educator Feedback Meeting

Dear School Site Advisor,

As we approach the end of the semester, I'd love to have a brief conversation with you to get your feedback on my work with students and the school community. Do you have time during the week of [DATE] to meet [BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL] for 20 minutes? It would be great if you could provide feedback on my lesson scheduled on [DATE] and your perception of how I'm engaging with the school community during this meeting.

Please let me know if this is something you're willing to do by [DATE]. Education Outside will give you a thank you gift card as a token of appreciation. Thank you for your time, perspective, and willingness to be a School Site Advisor this year!

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME]

Peer Support for Garden Educators:

In the 2018-2019 school year, Education Outside had 53 garden educators. All educators participated in weekly professional development training sessions and various events throughout the year which supported community building between peers. With this structure, Education Outside garden educators had many peers they could lean on for support- from collaborating on lesson plans, to borrowing tools, to splitting bulk supply orders for garden supplies. Not surprisingly, Education Outside garden educators consistently reported that one of the most important sources of support came from their peers. Roughly 85% of Education Outside garden educators reported that their peers responded to their work related questions, and 100% felt they had at least one person within the organization they could go to for support. The following outlines some of the systems that Education Outside used to foster peer support within the organization.

Mentor Program

The Education Outside mentorship program was an optional program that allowed educators in their second or third years to share advice and learnings with first year garden educators. Mentors answered questions via phone or text, provided extra opportunities for lesson shadowing, and shared resources as well as their experience with mentees. Tenured garden educators were excited about supporting their newer peers in this way without incentives or formal time set aside by Education Outside.

Regional Groups

Regional groups were made up of 7-10 garden educators who worked in close geographic proximity. The regional group structure allowed for more intimate discussion and support. This was particularly useful for Education Outside's monthly workdays, where garden educators would gather at one site within the regional group to complete site improvement projects. Regional groups were also used to form small discussion groups during PD trainings. To encourage community building within regional groups, Education Outside provided a small stipend for each group to have a potluck or other small event each semester. Regional groups were viewed as an effective support system by approximately 70% of Education Outside garden educators in the 2018-2019 school year. We recommend that School Garden Support Organizations utilize a similar structure to support educators where possible.

Lesson Shadowing

Education Outside garden educators consistently reported that seeing peer garden educators teach was one of the most helpful things they did to improve their own teaching practice. Education Outside encouraged lesson shadowing as often as possible and provided a reflection template to use during observations (see Appendix A).

Community Building Events

Education Outside hosted several events throughout the year to build community within the organization and strengthen peer support networks. These included off-site retreats, short hikes, potluck/catered lunches, and semiannual "field day" events, involving relays and other team games. These were often incorporated into professional development time and were an important part of the culture at Education Outside.

Program Manager Support for Garden Educators:

Education Outside program managers (PMs) provided one-on-one support to a group of roughly 13 garden educators in the 2018-2019 school year. PMs provided lesson feedback and regular check-ins during site visits, helped garden educators set goals and hold them accountable, facilitated weekly professional development training sessions for garden educators, and handled various supervisory and administrative tasks, including timesheet approval. Some of these duties are described briefly below. The resources and support systems provided to PMs are explained in more detail in *Education Outside Support Systems for Program Managers*, available in the Table of Contents.

As previously mentioned, first and second year garden educators reported differences in who provided them the most support. In the 2018-2019 school year, first year garden educators reported receiving the most effective support from PMs, while second year garden educators reported receiving the most effective support from school staff. Still, in the 2018-2019 school year, 88% of garden educators overall reported that their PMs provided effective support. We recommend that School Garden Support Organizations utilize PMs or a similar role to support garden educators, particularly via site visits in person where it's possible to develop relationships and provide on-the-ground support directly.

Site Visits

PMs visited each garden educator once per month in the 2018-2019 school year. Each site visit lasted approximately two hours, including one hour for a lesson observation and another hour for a brief check-in meeting. During the check-in portion of the site visit, PMs helped garden educators brainstorm solutions to issues that they were facing at their school site (ranging from supporting students who were disruptive during class to preventing vandalism in their outdoor classroom to navigating difficult conversations with other adults in the school community). They also used this time to help garden educators set goals and monitor their progress toward completion and check their progress on administrative tasks such as data entry and timesheet submission.

In addition to regular site visits, PMs conducted mid and end of year reviews with garden educators. During these meetings, garden educators had a chance to reflect on their work during the previous semester, conduct a self-evaluation, and provide feedback to their PM. PMs similarly reflected on the garden educator's work and growth during the semester and provided feedback to garden educators.

PMs used lesson observation and check-in templates during site visits, as well as review templates during mid and end of year reviews. All of these resources can be found in *Education Outside Support Systems for Program Managers*, available in the Table of Contents.

Professional Development (PD) Training Facilitation

Education Outside PMs helped facilitate various PD sessions for garden educators throughout the year. As explained in *Education Outside's Training Approach*, Education Outside PD had three strands: Learning & Teaching Outdoors, Outdoor Classroom Design, and Leadership for Community Engagement. Each PM specialized in one of these three strands and facilitated trainings for that strand specifically throughout the year. In the 2018-2019 school year, Education Outside had two PMs specializing in Learning & Teaching Outdoors, two PMs for Outdoor Classroom Design, and one in Leadership for Community Engagement.

Office Hours

In the 2018-2019 school year, Education Outside began offering office hours as a way to provide additional but optional, support to garden educators between site visits. Garden educators were able to sign up for 30-60 minute appointments during designated times with specific PMs. For example, they could schedule office hours with a PM who specialized in Outdoor Classroom Design if they had questions about a building project or with a PM who specialized in Learning & Teaching Outdoors if they needed help crafting a lesson plan. They could also schedule office hours with their assigned PM.

Additional Resource Support for Garden Educators:

Weekly Newsletter

Education Outside released a newsletter every Monday containing the sections described below. The newsletter was a highly valuable resource for garden educators; in 2018-2019, 100% of Education Outside garden educators reported that the newsletter was helpful or very helpful. We highly recommend School Garden Support Organizations utilize something similar to support garden educators.

- Introduction: a short letter from a staff member related to a recent event, organizational update, follow-up from a recent training, or motivational article.

- Professional Development: a brief description of the training happening that week, including location, time, and any required homework.
- Tasks: a summary of tasks to complete that week, based on the monthly checklist (Appendix B)
- Announcements: brief announcements from Education Outside departments.
- Highlight of the Week: pictures of 1-2 garden educators doing unique and exemplary work in the field

Tool Lending Library
Education Outside managed a small tool lending library for building projects and garden workdays. The lending library included drills, electric sanders, various saws, staple guns, measuring tapes, hammers, speed squares, levels, clamps, sawhorses, wire cutters, paint/paint brushes, and safety items, such as ear, eye and respiratory protection. The lending library required staff member management.

Online Forum/Resources ("Tool Shed")
Education Outside utilized a Salesforce platform for internal resource and knowledge sharing called the Tool Shed. The Tool Shed contained links to various resources (i.e. curriculum, worksheets from trainings, and how-to documents). It also contained a forum where garden educators could post and respond to other educators' comments and questions, as well as view the Q&A forum between garden educators from previous years. This forum was viewed as helpful by 70% of garden educators in the 2018-2019 school year and we recommend that other School Garden Support Organizations utilize a similar tool or take advantage of external forums, such as the School Garden Support Organizations Google Group.

Site Budgets
Education Outside provided a site budget of varying amounts, usually $400 - $1000 per year, to garden educators. The following considerations were taken into account when determining the amount to allocate to each school:
- If the school was able to cover the cost of supplies for the garden using PTA or other funding, garden educators usually did not receive an Education Outside site budget.
- Schools in their first year with Education Outside received a larger site budget, usually $1000, to cover start-up costs (i.e. tools and other garden/cooking supplies).
- School size and the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL%) were considered when determining site budget amounts. Schools with no PTA or no parent financial support were given larger budgets.

Monthly Checklist
The monthly checklist was an electronic tool for garden educators to stay on track with their various tasks from month to month. It was also used by PMs to ensure consistency in programming between sites and to hold garden educators accountable to their work. Education Outside used this checklist to inform the scope and sequence of professional development trainings offered, ensuring that trainings were timely and relevant to the work that garden educators were doing month to month. (For a sample professional development scope and sequence, see *Training Calendar Scope and Sequence*, available in the Table of Contents). We suggest using the sample checklists in Appendix B as a starting point for developing your own customized checklist.

Site Binder
Each Education Outside school had a site binder written by previous garden educators at their school. The purpose of the site binders was to provide site-specific information to future garden educators. This included the history of programming at the school, an overview of the outdoor classroom and its evolution, important contacts at the school, and more. Each site binder followed a template provided by Education Outside, available in Appendix C.

Sample Program Manager Weekly Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Office (Admin/meetings)	Site Visit	Site Visit	Office (Admin/PD Prep)	PD
PM	Office (Admin/meetings)	Site Visit	Office Hours	Office (Admin/PD Prep)	PD

Sample Program Manager Monthly Schedule

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Monday	Office (Admin/meetings)	Office (Admin/meetings)	Office (Admin/meetings)	Office (Admin/meetings)
Tuesday	Site Visit	Site Visit	Site Visit	Site Visit
Wednesday	Site Visit	Site Visit	Site Visit	Site Visit
Thursday	Office (Admin/PD Prep)	Office (Admin/PD Prep)	Office (Admin/PD Prep)	Office (Admin/PD Prep)
Friday	PD	Office (Admin/PD Prep)	PD	Office (Admin/PD Prep)

Sample Garden Educator Weekly Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Teaching/Lesson Planning				PD
AM	Garden Work	Read Newsletter			PD
PM	Teaching/Lesson Planning				PD
PM			Office Hours*	Peer Support* (Regional Group/Mentor/etc.)	PD

Sample Garden Educator Monthly Schedule

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Monday	PM Site Visit (2hrs)			
Tuesday		Office Hours		
Wednesday			Office Hours	
Thursday				Peer Support (Regional Group/Mentor/etc.)
Friday	PD Training Session	Site Admin Time (Finish Education OutsideTasks + School Tasks) /Workday	PD Training Session	Peer Feedback on Videotaped Lesson

Appendix A: Peer Lesson Shadowing Reflection Sheet

Peer Shadowing Reflection Sheet

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Name of Educator Teaching the Lesson: *School:*   *Date:*   *Grade level:*

Lesson title/objective:

Lesson steps/timing:

Three strengths:

Three areas for improvement:

Other Notes:

Appendix B: Garden Educator Monthly Checklist

These checklists are divided into admin tasks or tasks that fall within the strands that Education Outside used for professional development: Learning & Teaching Outdoors, Outdoor Classroom Design, and Leadership for Community Engagement. For additional information on these strands, see *Education Outside's Training Approach*, available in the Table of Contents. These checklists are not comprehensive -each school and outdoor classroom has different needs. However, the lists do reflect the tasks that Education Outside believed that all garden educators should complete. We recommend using this as a starting point to develop a checklist with details, particularly due dates, specific to your context.

September Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Create your email signature, including your job title, school address and school or personal phone number	8/31
Outdoor Classroom Design	Walk through your site to ensure it's kid-safe (no dangerous trash, exposed nails, etc.)	8/31
Admin	Sign up for online forums, such as the School Garden Support Organizations Google Group	9/7
Admin	Read your school's site binder	9/7
Admin	Identify and meet with your school site advisor and school principal. Get an understanding of some of the systems at school: What is the day schedule? How does drop-off/pick-up work? What is the school emergency plan? How is the garden class schedule formed? Ask for a school roster, including names and contact information of school staff.	9/7
Admin	Introduce yourself to other school staff, including the secretary, custodial staff, security staff, lunchroom staff, librarian, counselor, social worker and psychologist	9/7
Admin	Attend a staff meeting and introduce yourself	9/7
Admin	Find a copy of last year's class pictures in order to learn student names	9/7
Admin	Find your mailbox in the school office, or ask for one if there isn't one designated. Also find school/garden keys and set up printing/copying capabilities in the school office, if possible.	9/7
Leadership for Community Engagement	Introduce yourself to as many classes as possible - give a 5 min intro	9/7
Leadership for Community Engagement	Attend Back to School Night	9/7

Leadership for Community Engagement	Find out when staff meetings occur and begin attending meetings	9/7
Leadership for Community Engagement	Find out if there are any school-wide events during the first semester and add them to your calendar	9/7
Leadership for Community Engagement	If possible, get a sense of the budget that your school or parent group can provide and add this budget information to a spreadsheet to track your expenses	9/7
Leadership for Community Engagement	If your school has a PTA, plan to attend the first meeting	9/7
Leadership for Community Engagement	Check out your School Accountability Report Card, or similar resource that provides demographics/other information about your school	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Meet with each grade level team to discuss how they want to align their curriculum with your scope and sequence	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Solidify your teaching schedule. Share with teachers/principal and post to a bulletin board or hallway wall	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Schedule and prep for your first classes. What community building exercises will you do? What rituals and routines will you implement?	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Shadow a garden educator, taking notes with the Peer Lesson Shadowing Reflection Sheet (Appendix A)	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Schedule a classroom teacher check-in for 30min - 1hr	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Take an inventory of your teaching items and make a plan to purchase any items needed to start teaching	9/7
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Make name tags for your classes, or ask teachers to have students wear their name tags during your classes	9/7
Outdoor Classroom Design	Review Building Your Outdoor Classroom: The Top 10 (available in the Table of Contents)	9/7
Outdoor Classroom Design	Deeply water your annual beds and perennials if they have not been watered over the summer	9/7
Outdoor Classroom Design	Take an inventory of the garden materials available and order any items necessary	9/7
Outdoor Classroom Design	Order compost and develop a plan for amending annual beds	9/14

Admin	Schedule your September site visit with your program manager	9/14
Leadership for Community Engagement	Identify school communication channels (with and for school staff and from the school to parents)	9/14
Leadership for Community Engagement	Ask questions and get to know your school community. Are there any traumas that have occurred in the community? Moments of joy/celebration? Are there any students who had a hard time last year?	9/14
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Teach your first classes	9/14
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Share a copy of your semester or year-long scope and sequence with your teachers	9/28
Outdoor Classroom Design	Order compost and develop a plan for amending beds	9/28
Outdoor Classroom Design	Use your scope and sequence to determine if there are specific annuals you will need for lessons, and make a plan for planting them	9/28
Outdoor Classroom Design	Develop a planting plan for your annuals and begin planting	9/28

October Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Schedule your October site visit with your program manager	10/1
Leadership for Community Engagement	Research available grants and make a plan for submitting applications to those of interest	10/5
Outdoor Classroom Design	Identify the perennials on your site and make a plan for planting more if needed	10/5
Outdoor Classroom Design	Organize your outdoor classroom - dispose of unnecessary clutter!	10/15
Outdoor Classroom Design	Determine if there are any construction projects or infrastructure updates you'd like to complete this year (Use Building Your Outdoor Classroom: The Top 10, available in the Table of Contents, as a guide)	10/19
Admin	Develop SMART goals and share them with your program manager	10/19
Leadership for Community Engagement	Update/add to your school bulletin board - include your class schedule, student work, workday advertisements, volunteer sign-ups, etc.	10/31

Leadership for Community Engagement	Make an effort to recruit at least one school community volunteer	10/31
Outdoor Classroom Design	Get a few stations up and running (i.e. dig zone, watering station, etc.)	10/31
Outdoor Classroom Design	Plan your first garden workday	10/31
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made so far	10/31

November Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Schedule your November site visit with your program manager	11/1
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Shadow another garden educator, taking notes with the Peer Lesson Shadowing Reflection Sheet (Appendix A)	11/15
Admin	Send feedback surveys to classroom teachers to collect feedback on your first semester (See Program Evaluation & Feedback in the Table of Contents)	11/26
Leadership for Community Engagement	Reach out to your school site advisor and ask for feedback (See email template for SSA, above)	11/30
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	11/30

December Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Schedule your December site visit with your program manager	12/1
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Update your planned scope and sequence for spring semester	12/21
Outdoor Classroom Design	Prep your garden for winter break. Do a deep watering or coordinate with school community to water, clean up trash/clutter, remove or turn upside-down anything that will collect rain water and house mosquitoes	12/21
Outdoor Classroom Design	Lock up valuables before winter break (make sure your shed is secure!)	12/21
Admin	Complete the program support survey to provide feedback from the first semester	12/21
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	12/21

January/February Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Schedule your mid-year review with your program manager. Make sure you've completed your self-evaluation.	1/10
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	1/31
Outdoor Classroom Design	Start planning your spring garden. What/when will you plant? Will you seed directly, start seedlings with students, or buy as starts from a nursery? Use your Scope and Sequence as a guide to plan your garden for cooking, celebrations, and/or science lessons.	2/1
Admin	Schedule your February site visit with your program manager	2/1
Outdoor Classroom Design	Plan another garden workday	2/15
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	2/28

March/April Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Schedule your March site visit with your program manager	3/1
Learning & Teaching Outdoors	Shadow another garden educator, taking notes with the Peer Lesson Shadowing Reflection Sheet (Appendix A)	3/15
Outdoor Classroom Design	Lock up valuables before spring break (make sure your shed is secure!)	3/22
Leadership for Community Engagement	Plan a community event with your school. Ideas include: worm bin workshop, windowsill herb garden workshop, family garden exploration/ tour after school, harvest to snack, spring garden giveaway, Mother's Day plant sale, taste test, tea party… See Back Pocket Activities, Art Projects & Celebrations, and Icebreakers in the Table of Contents.	3/22
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	3/31
Admin	Schedule your April site visit with your program manager	4/1
Admin	Send feedback surveys to classroom teachers to collect feedback on your first semester	4/26
Leadership for Community Engagement	Reach out to your school site advisor and ask for feedback (See email template for SSA, above)	4/26
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	4/30

May/June Checklist

Strand	Tasks	Due Date
Admin	Schedule your end of year review with your program manager. Make sure you've completed your self-evaluation.	5/1
Outdoor Classroom Design	Plan your final garden workday	5/1
LTO	Plan your end of year/last class celebrations with students	5/1
Outdoor Classroom Design	Make a plan for summer maintenance in your outdoor classroom. Will anyone water? Will you plant cover crop or mulch the beds?	5/17
Admin	Complete the program support survey to provide feedback from the second semester	5/20
Admin	Update your garden budget/expense tracker to reflect any purchases made this month	5/31
Admin	Take an inventory of your garden and teaching supplies. Record this information in your site binder for next year.	6/7
Admin	Update your school site binder for next year (see Appendix C)	6/7
Outdoor Classroom Design	Lock up valuables before summer break (make sure your shed is secure!).	6/7

Appendix C: School Site Binder Template

The purpose of the site binder is to record information learned over the year(s) in order to pass on information to future garden educators at the same school site. The following is a template that Education Outside garden educators used to record information.

Example Elementary School Site Binder Table of Contents

Overview:

How to Use this Binder Template

This Site Binder document is a resource for you to better understand the specifics of the Education Outside program at your school site. While every garden educator shares the goal of engaging students' interest in science and connection to nature, this work looks different at each site depending on the specific needs of the community. Our hope is that this site binder will help you to better understand the scope and specifics of your position.

In this document you will find: information on the culture of your school community, including important people and events; class information including routines and structures, teaching schedules, and the previous garden educator's curriculum; an overview of the physical garden space including past and future projects and maintenance recommendations; and some suggestions for your early weeks in the position.

Our hope is that this document grows and evolves as you continue to improve the program at your school site, so it becomes both a resource for incoming garden educators as well as a rich history of the program. You should feel free to return to this document often to update information and add your perspective, and we will provide time for this work during Professional Development days throughout your service term.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document thoroughly and gain a better understanding of your site's particular needs. We do not expect you to master all of the information in this document, however; it is simply meant as a resource to help you gain a better picture of your position before you begin. If questions arise as you are reading, please feel free to reach out to the Education Outside staff and we will gladly answer them as best we can. Thank you and we're very excited to have you joining us this year!

Letter from Previous Garden Educator

The goal of this letter is to welcome the incoming garden educator and get them excited about working at your school, while providing a realistic understanding of the school climate and some challenges that they may face. The hope is that this letter will provide a more personal introduction to the site binder. These are some ideas of what you could write about, in a very general way (everything will be fleshed out later in the binder in more detail):

- How Education Outside has enriched the lives of students and community members at the school -- some memories, anecdotes, student quotes, etc.
- Your top three hopes for Education Outside at your site
- How Education Outside fits into the school community
- Major projects you are proud of and want to see continue
- Some challenges you've faced
- Favorite parts of the space/most challenging spaces
- Your contact information, if you want!

School Community:

General Information

School Name:
Address:
Neighborhood:
Start time:
End time:
# of Students:
Office Phone:
School/PTA website:

History of Education Outside at *X*

<u>Pre-Education Outside history of garden program</u>
Include important information here about what existed before Education Outside. Did the parent community or an outside group create the garden? Was it used for classes? Please keep this relatively short, and understandable to those who may be new to this work.

<u>Previous Garden Educators and Major Projects</u>
*The general idea here is to give a **bulleted list** of previous garden educators and the major developments they completed at the school, to give a sense of when the program started there and how it has evolved. This can also be a nice place for you to reflect and write what you've accomplished in your time at your school!*

Years at School, Your Name
  - Bullet list of developments, in chronological order

ex: 2013-2015, Taryn Colonnese
  - Summer 2013 - Construction of garden, tore up asphalt and installed raised beds
  - Fall 2013 - First year of Education Outside at Spring Valley; planted donation plants
  - Spring 2014 - Installed pathways in pollinator garden, purchased plants, built Tuff Shed

School Culture
In this section, please write a short narrative about your school's environment and culture, focusing on some of the following topics. Bullets are okay!
  - What does an incoming garden educator need to know to have an easier time joining the school community?
  - What do you wish you had known going in?
  - Important information about students' experiences outside of school
  - What was your first semester like regarding forming relationships at the school
  - Family involvement
  - Culture among teachers
  - Tips for managing relationships (update email to principal? Flowers for teachers?)
  - What is your role within the school (beyond teaching classes?)

Who's Who in Your Community
The idea here is to provide information on:
  - Key teachers and staff with blurbs about how Education Outside connects with them
  - Parent groups, support system, how it is involved
  - People involved in sustainability/wellness/culture of school
  - Best ways to communicate with key groups (teachers, parents, principal, PTA, after school program)
  - Other organizations is where you can list important partnerships with external groups. It could also be a great place to list where you bought supplies, lunch, other fun things in the neighborhood, etc.

In the "Additional Comments" section, you have the option of writing in a quick blurb about the person if they have a particularly important role in the life of the Education Outside educator, or if you have suggestions for ways of contacting people.

Teachers/School Staff

Name	Grade Level	Room Number	Email	Additional Comments
E. Xample	Office	100	XampleE@sfusd.edu	She sends out the Wednesday envelopes every week - if you have flyers you want going out with parents, let her know and she will tell you what she needs to make it happen

Parents, Interns, and Volunteers

Name	E-mail	Role	Additional Comments

Committees

Committee	Previous Active Members	Purpose	Additional Comments

Outside Organizations/partnerships

Organization	Resource/Purpose/Details	Contact Person	Email/phone number

Community Workdays
- *Frequency: How many times per semester?*
- *Organization: Who helped you? What was your role?*
- *Structure: What do you often do - garden work, potluck, community workshops, etc.? Were there particular activities that were often involved?*
- *Advertisement: How did you spread the word - posters, note in weekly folder, etc.?*
- *Extra notes: Things you've figured out work well or don't work*

Ongoing Community Events
Here, list any particularly important events that the new garden educator will want to have a sense of in advance.

Ex: Beautification Day
Happens at least once a year on a Saturday, generally in the fall, and the community comes out to clean classrooms and generally spruce up the school. The organizers will likely get in touch with you to see if you have any garden projects you'd like to add to the list, and it's a great chance to get some big things completed! The PTA organizes it, so check in with them if you want to know when it will be -- they should know pretty early.

Teaching:

Teaching Schedule
Class Schedule from 2017-2018
- *Monday*
- *Tuesday*
- *Wednesday*
- *Thursday*
- *Friday*

Provide a sample weekly schedule (i.e. a screenshot of your Google calendar, table with schedule or bulleted list.)

Provide a sample daily schedule. Ex:
- *7:30 to 8:00- Morning email check, odds and ends*
- *8:00 to 9:00- Garden maintenance*
- *9:00 to 9:30- Prep for classes, take a deep breath*
- *9:30 to 10:15- Class 1*
- *10:15 to 10:30- Break/Clean-up*
- *10:30 to 11:15- Class 2*
- *11:15 to 11:30- Clean-up, eat*
- *11:30 to 12:05- Compost Monitor assistance (in cafeteria)*
- *12:10 to 12:55- Class 3*
- *12:55 to 1:05- Clean-up*
- *1:05 to 1:50- Class 4*
- *1:50 to 3:30- Lesson plan, check e-mail again, other maintenance tasks, sustainability projects*

Scope and Sequence
*The goal of this section is to give the incoming garden educator an idea of what you taught in previous years, but more importantly to share what you would **suggest that they teach**. Feel free to include notes about lessons teachers loved and want repeated or lessons that flopped and you never want to do again. Format this as you see fit - make a chart, bulleted list, etc. From feedback, we heard the most useful info would be a lesson title and brief description.*

Class Information

Please include here any important information not covered in Scope and Sequence:
- *School culture of science instruction by grade level, including what each grade level wants from their time in the garden if appropriate*
    - *Example 1st grade: The first grade teachers do a lot of science on their own, so it's worth having a lot of conversations to make sure things don't get repetitive. I had great success with 1st grade having them plant their own individual pea seeds and measure them. Amy and Kim are also very welcoming about taking time in their grade-level meetings to chat about Education Outside classes.*
- *Summary of what has been most successful (broadly speaking)*
- *Student needs and successful past activities, in general*
- *Notes on after school, recess, mentoring, additional teaching opportunities, and other responsibilities that may show up in the schedule below*
- *Pictures of students in the garden and/or student work to offer as examples (throughout this section, or you could also link to an online photo album if you have one)*

Classroom Culture and Routines

- *List your garden rules/agreements and how they came to be (i.e. did students and community members help to decide on them? Are they aligned with school rules? Did different stations have particular rules that would be worth keeping consistent?)*
- *If your garden is used outside of class time, now is the chance to discuss any challenges that arise from this, and recommendations for the new educator*
- *Feel free to describe your hopes for the outdoor classroom culture and what you think is needed to make them a reality*

Physical Site & Site Development Plan:

Map and Infrastructure

Map

Please provide a map of your garden. Be sure to indicate areas that Education Outside has responsibility for maintaining, and if applicable, areas that the Education Outside garden educator should not take responsibility for maintaining. Please indicate perennial planting zones, annual beds, and important teaching areas or stations.

Infrastructure

Here, list any major or important infrastructure elements, particularly if you did not note them on the map, with any necessary comments about their use or maintenance.
- *Ex: Classroom Table*
    - *The lower half of this table is for student tools -- they know they can come and pick up shovels, magnifying glasses, and other materials from here during recess and free time. If you don't want them using certain materials, simply remove them from this area.*
- *Ex: Green Leaf Compost Bin*
    - *At bottom of stairs. Students use this when sweeping in the garden as an area to dump the leaves. Things break down very slowly in this bin but can be useful as mulch for the native plant garden.*

Maintenance Recommendations

This is a space for you to add in comments on maintenance. Consider the following questions:
- Are workdays the major maintenance time, or do you have parent volunteers or interns that help? What's worked and what has not? What do you recommend moving forward?
- Biggest challenges so far? What have you done so far to address them?
- Are there certain parents, listed above in People to Know, who the garden educator should reach out to for tools or other maintenance support? You could mention them again here.

Upcoming Projects

List of projects in process and those that you think would be useful to complete in the future to move toward the long term vision. This will help garden educators set SMART goals around infrastructure for their next year. If you'd like, you may format this as a list or as project descriptions that would be easy for a new garden educator to pick up and tackle.

  - Ex: Build two picnic tables for central grassy area
    - You can purchase picnic table kits at Lowe's for easy assembly. These will be a big help to have during cooking lessons!

Inventory & Budgeting:

Materials for Your Use

ITEM	RECOMMENDED QUANTITY (approximated. varies depending on class sizes)	QUANTITY AVAILABLE
Pencils	50	
Hand-held pencil sharpener	6	
Tape + dispenser	1+	
Glue sticks	1 per pair of students (~11-17)	
Colored pencils / crayons	Enough for 1 container per group of students for group work (6+)	
Scissors	1 per pair of students (~11-17)	
Clipboards	1 per student (~22-33)	
Nametags	# of students in schools	
Folders/science notebooks	# of students in schools	
Bug boxes	1 per student with extras (~35)	
Magnifying glasses	1 per student with extras (~35)	
Trays	1 per student (~22-33)	
Activity bins	1 per group of students for group work (6+)	
Rubbermaid organizational bins	Enough to store all materials (6+)	
Trowels	1 per student (~22)	
Spade / shovel	2+	
Digging fork	1+	
Pruners	3+	
Student gloves	1 for every pair of students (~11)	

Adult gloves (assorted sizes)	10+	
Student watering cans	1 for every pair of students (~11)	
Hose	1+	
5 gallon buckets	5+	
salad spinner	1	
Set of 3 paring knives	1	
wok and wooden spoon	1	
mortar and pestle	1	
cooking scissors (set of 12)	1	
box grater	1	
dishtub	2	
heavy cutting board	1	
kid cutting boards (set of 3)	3	
medium-large bowls	3	
small bowls (set of 24)	1	
peelers (set of 3)	1	
tongs	2	
colander	1	
Measuring spoons and cups	1	
18 gal container	1	
butane stove	1	
butane canisters (set of 4)	1	

Also briefly list any resources that are not obvious which may be useful to the next educator.

Example:
   - Extra irrigation tubing behind shed
   - Storage area behind the B building with pots, soil, etc.

Use of School Resources
Briefly list school resources you use - copying, laminating, etc. Can your school supply you with things like pencils, markers, tape, etc. or does this come out of your own budget?

Budget Summary
Briefly list how you have used funding for supplies, organized as you see fit.

- *Did you use only Education Outside funding, or did money for the garden come from other sources (PTA, grant, afterschool)?*
  - *Did those sources have any restrictions on the materials you were able to purchase?*
  - *If using school funding, who should the garden educator speak to to sort out the process? What was the school budget last year?*
- *Do you have donation letters you used (if yes, can you attach a copy of one)?*

Rough Budget Breakdown
Here, please include a broad suggestion of how much you spent in different categories for each semester. This will help the new garden educator understand how far their budget can go. Please do not itemize this list, but instead do what you can to simplify it. See example below, but feel free to change the categories.

<u>*Fall Semester*</u>
- Teaching Supplies: $50.00
- Plants: $100.00
- Cooking supplies (2 cooking days/class): $200.00
- Other: $50.00

<u>*Spring Semester*</u>
- Teaching Supplies:
- Plants:
- Cooking supplies (2 cooking days/class):
- Other: