School Learning Garden at Cleveland Academy
Lessons Learned in Hawai‘i

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1. Introduction
   a. Our proposal is centered around implementing a “Learning Garden” program at Cleveland Academy of Leadership.
   b. Cleveland Academy is the local elementary school located in Northside community of the upstate, District 7, runs through grade 5
   c. The main areas of focus: Food Security & Nutrition
   d. The Northside Community has been categorized as a food desert. (Paragraph 9) . http://www.cityofspartanburg.org/northside-initiative The Northside Project has taken steps to mitigate and improve these issues by implementing Harvest Park: the Community Urban Farm, Farmer’s Market, and Monarch Café Hub. See link for further information about this area of the Northside. http://hubcityfm.org/harvest-park/

2. Emphasis of Proposal
   a. Two key links that could enhance existing efforts:
      i. The Kids
      ii. Education
   b. The Northside has devoted a lot of energy, resources, and love into creating a place like Cleveland Academy. These kids are the future of the Northside community. Their involvement is important.
   c. The way to get them involved and aware comes through education in an enjoyable hands-on environment.
   d. Aim to teach kids lessons about food security and nutrition in order to cultivate this community-wide mindset early on.
   e. With the learning garden, the emphasis will not be on how much is grown, rather it will be on how much is learned.

3. Existing Community Garden: Why isn’t this enough
   a. Rents out plots, partners with the local Farmer’s market, and encourages volunteers and participation from the community.
   b. Our focus is on a different project. Getting the kids at Cleveland involved would be more effective is there was a space on school grounds, a place
that belongs to the kids, and a place that is incorporated into their regular school curriculum.

c. Taking kids off school property would require additional time, supervision (crossing streets), and several additional liability issues that all could be avoided.

4. Cleveland Academy of Leadership
   a. The Leader in Me based on the 7 habits of highly effective people.
   b. Incorporated into education and activities so that they can become effective leaders
   c. This community is very invested in these kids. They know that they’re the future of this place - important to instill a value of sustainability and the community in them as children
   d. One thing that’s great about a learning garden is that so many different areas of learning can be incorporated and we believe that the seven habits can be integrated as well.
   e. Examples:
      i. Habit number 2: beginning with the end in mind. A garden requires goal making and careful planning if you want it to be successful. If you make a goal to grow a row of lettuce, you then make decisions based on your end goal.
      ii. Habit number 7: sharpening the saw. Part of that is keeping yourself active and healthy physically and mentally. One thing mentioned by the coordinators of the Hawaiian gardens is that this is a time for the kids to unwind and enjoy themselves while learning. She mentioned that they start each session with a song that reminds them of their connection to the land and some quiet time to destress and let go of their worries. Not to mention, just working outside and with the Earth can be therapeutic.

5. Mala’ai School Garden: Intro
   a. “Our mission is to cultivate the relationship between students and the land through growing and sharing nourishing food in our outdoor living classroom. Our work reaches beyond the boundaries of our garden connecting land stewardship, culture, health, and pleasure with lifelong learning.”

6. Mala’ai Learning Garden
   a. The Mala’ai Learning GARden was founded in 2003 at Waimea Middle School on the island of Kauai.
   b. It was started by a physician in the area who was concerned with the health of her patients. She wanted to target middle school students to introduce instil early healthy habits. They were quick to correct us when we called it a school garden, because it is actually a learning garden. Where a school garden suggests food production, the learning garden is about using the garden for hands-on, outdoor classroom activities. It is
funded by donations and grants. Since 2003, the garden is actually a model school garden for the state.

c. They follow the Hawai‘i School Garden Curriculum Map, which connects core curriculum with the garden. It has 4 themes and each has topics and learning outcomes with suggested activities that align with school and health standards. So it is created for busy teachers who understand the benefits of a learning garden but don’t want to build their own curriculum.

i. Themes:
   1. A sense of place and self, and how sustainable living is rooted in a deep knowledge of place and self
   2. Explore connections with soil and plants. As children work in the school garden, they discover the connections and relationships they have with the living world, both seen and unseen.
   3. They study the importance of nutrition
   4. Nature’s Design explores the garden system

ii. The Hawai‘i School Garden Curriculum was created by teachers for busy teachers who may not be gardeners themselves, but intuitively understand the benefits of inquiry-based, place-based, project-based learning for their students.

7. Instagram account for Mala‘ai Learning Garden
   a. https://www.instagram.com/malaaigarden/
   b. Eventually, we would like to see the school learning garden at Cleveland Academy produce some snacks. The Mala‘ai garden has an instagram account, which we added to the white page. Here is a post about snacks made during summer school.

8. Feedback from Waimea Students
   a. Healthy snacks straight from the garden -Learning about different crops and how to grow them -Taking care/Malama Aina -Being able to share what they do with their families -Taking produce and recipes home to families -Growing and eating different foods -No GMO -Trying new things -Beauty -Starting new seeds and watching them grow -Something different than their regular classes -Being outside and breathing fresh air -FUN -Spending time with friends and teachers in a different environment -Moving around/doing physical work -Working together -Hands on learning by doing, not by being told -Teacher gets to know students in a different way and work alongside students -Feeling successful
   b. The students gain appreciation of the land, which will support sustainable habits. They gain confidence in their ability to complete a project, which is important for future life projects.

9. Mala‘ai Garden Annual Report
   a. Mala‘ai Garden 2015-2016
i. 5200 Hours of Student Learning
ii. 297 Classes
iii. 6000 Fresh and Healthy Snacks
iv. 266 Students Provided with Garden Experiences
v. 855 Pounds of Produce Harvested

b. This has been a 10+ year process. None of this was achieved overnight. This serves as an example of the type of impact that a Learning Garden can have on both a school and a community.

c. See link for more information on Mala’ai Garden http://malaai.org

10. Photos of students at Malai’ai Garden

11. Short Term Plan for the Learning Garden
   a. Have a Clear Mission and Vision
      i. Suggestion: To provide a hands on learning environment for the students at Cleveland Academy with a vision to cultivate the mindset for nutrition, food security, and community involvement at a young age
   b. Involve People from the Beginning - establish a volunteer base early.
      i. Door hanger invitations
      ii. Ribbon cutting ceremony
   c. Start Small and Do Well
      i. What’s important to keep in mind is that the ultimate goal is to educate. Producing food is only an extra perk here that can possibly be achieved over time.
      ii. So you should start small, but establish that you plan to grow and better the garden. Communicate your vision and have goals for those involved.

12. Short Term Goals
   a. One thing that we want to implement early on is solar powered light posts that charge during the day and light the garden at night. This was a suggestion from another group who has this as a focus. It would be a great way to educate the students about renewable energy and also provide a means of security.
   b. We also need to keep the Butterfly creek in mind and not use pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers that would runoff into it and cause problems. And if they must be used, we need to make sure that they are not making it into the creek by maybe having a reservoir that takes them into the ground safely.
   c. We would also like this to be an educational hub. It can be an opportunity to tell the kids about the rest of their community. For example when teaching them about keeping the creek clean, we could suggest visiting the Butterfly creek.
d. We would also like to collect compost from the school’s cafeteria and yard waste because this can provide wonderful fertilizer for the garden.

13. Current Curriculum Ideas
   a. The Eat Smart, Move More Campaign
      i. This is a campaign implemented in the state of South Carolina to get kids outside more and eating healthy. They have played a large role in influencing and helping school gardens across the state, especially through the Garden Program which was implemented by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture. There are already some schools participating in this campaign in Spartanburg county and through the Upstate.
      ii. The model curriculum we found was specifically written for gardens in South Carolina and modeled to fit the state’s agriculture and weather patterns. This curriculum covers almost everything, including:
         1. Resources
         2. Lesson Plans
         3. Opportunities for Volunteers and Students
         4. Plans for garden creations
         5. Soil and water guidance and advice for different areas in South Carolina
         6. Advice on types of Gardening Containers
         7. Information on harvesting time
         8. Types of bugs and animals that are attracted to gardens
         9. The health factor and impact on childhood obesity that a school garden has
         10. Lessons on how to connect the garden to every school subject
   b. Sources:

   a. This curriculum that is currently in use also focuses on many of the topics that we found very important in the creation of a learning garden, including:
      i. Having a school garden committee
ii. Focus on healthy alternatives
iii. Leveraging of resources
iv. Importance on student involvement
v. Curriculum integration and connection of learning in the classroom as well as outside. “Gardenology” encompasses a wide range of topics that can be found inside the classroom, especially in relation to science classes
vi. Community involvement and a solid volunteer base
vii. Use of the produce in the school or in the community
viii. Sustainability of the garden
ix. Constant monitoring to ensure that the garden lasts

b. Sources: Same as previous slide

15. Photo of Garden Class at Mala’ai Learning Garden
   a. This is a photograph from the Instagram page of the Mala’ai Learning Garden. This garden focuses on impacting every part of the child’s life, not just textbook learning traditions.
   b. Source: https://www.instagram.com/malaagarden/

16. Long Term Goals of a Learning Garden
   a. The suggested mission for this learning garden is to provide a hands on learning environment for the students at Cleveland Elementary with a vision to cultivate the mindset for nutrition, food security, and community involvement at a young age
   b. School Wide Participation
      i. We hope that it would soon have school wide participation, with every student having a chance to experience the garden in some way
   c. Growth within the school
      i. Constant growth is a goal to keep the learning garden from becoming stagnant or disappearing
   d. An Inter-school Garden chain through District 7
      i. Expansion of a garden chain, like they have in Hawai’i, would expand the knowledge of learning gardens across the district and create a support program for the schools.
   e. Creek for Irrigation
      i. Potential use of the creek for irrigation to have a stable and constant clean source of water.
   f. Future partnerships
      i. Partnering with groups across Spartanburg county to maximize impact of this learning garden.
17. Potential Partnerships
   a. VCOM: Medical students can connect with the younger generation and could also help to educate teachers, leaders, organizers, and volunteers on food security and nutrition.
   b. Local Colleges: Wofford/Converse: Greek life, organizations, teams, and other students looking for service and volunteer opportunities as the project grows.
   c. Middle/High School Students: Similar to college students, will continue to get the broader community involved.
   d. Hub City Farmer’s Market: Long term goal, food can be sold at the Farmer’s Market potentially acting as a catalyst for more members within the community to frequent there.

18. Challenges
   a. Reusable resources from the neighborhood or other areas may not be suitable for a garden
      i. Solution: materials from demolished houses
   b. The soil/land in the area may not be suitable for growing
      i. This would then require something like planter boxes/alternate ways of growing produce
      ii. Solution: Wofford students run tests for a class
   c. Finding someone to run the garden and ensure its success from year to year so that it does not disappear over breaks
      i. Solution: hiring an employee for the garden
   d. Making it a year-round garden and adapting to changes in the weather