



*Paving the Road for
Community Engagement in a
Garden Based Learning Program*



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MSUS Project*

Martin Luther King Early Childhood Center

- 100% of the students receive free or reduced lunch
- Situated in the middle of two food deserts
- Impacted by urban blight and lack of adequate shade landscape



Approach



Environment School

Creating a functioning socio-ecological relationship.



Social Parent/Teacher Association Community Organizations

Determine what the community vision and participation interests are for the garden space, increasing a Sense of Place



Economic The Farm at South Mountain and Local Businesses

Provide opportunities to support and volunteer in the garden program and developing economic opportunities within the space.

Fall



Students using containers to garden facilitated by ASU interns every other week.

Spring



Students were given a square foot garden to replicate the weekly lessons at home.

Vision



Vision Building

1

Build capacity in classroom learning

- Children gardening
- Lesson plan alignment

3

Expand physical footprint of the garden

- Homeroom classroom boxes
- Functional acreage of garden boxes
- School orchard

2

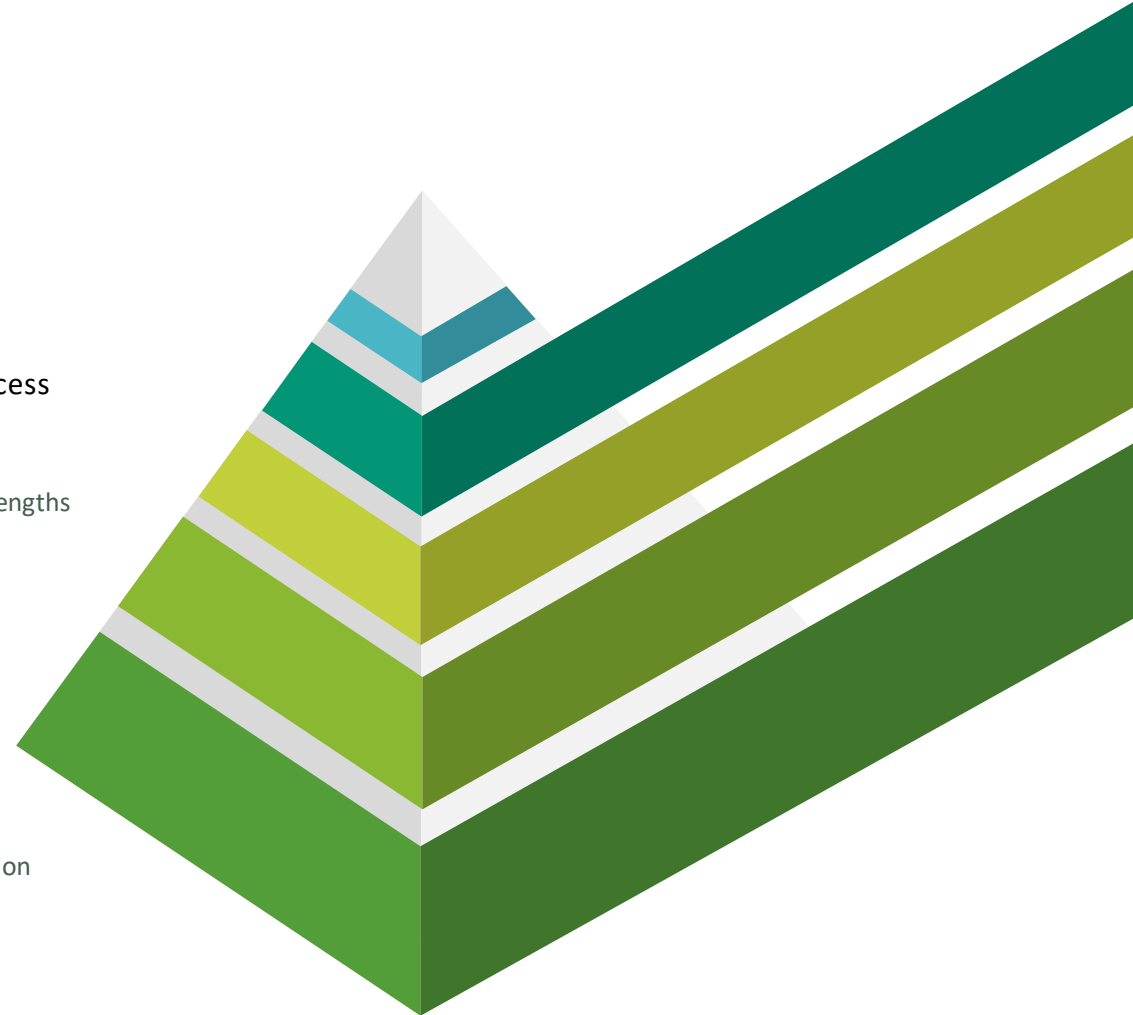
Invite parents and community into the process

- Informed and given a voice in the process
- Vision workshops to uncover capabilities and strengths

4

Space is center for community

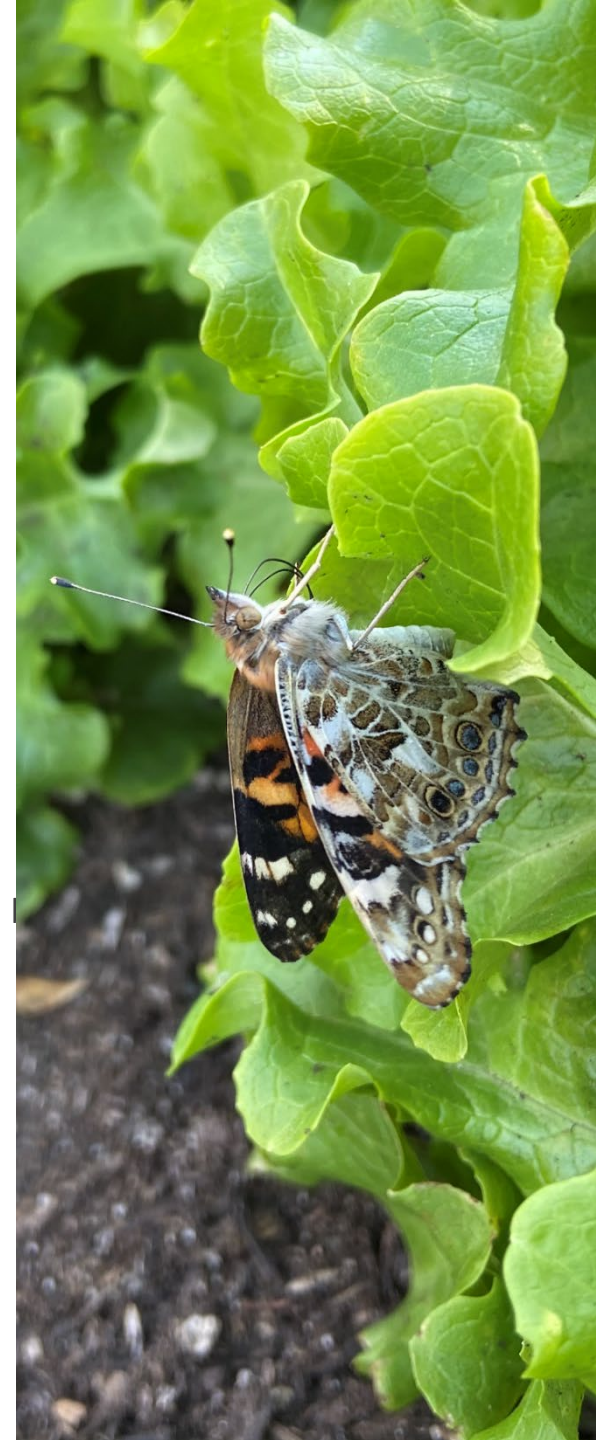
- Community is able to use space for food cultivation
- Excess produce can be sold





Garden Infrastructure

- ✓ Milkweed garden completed
- ✓ School is registered with the Monarch Watch Waystation Program
- ✓ Irrigation System installed for each homeroom garden
- ✓ Square Foot Garden Boxes delivered



Community

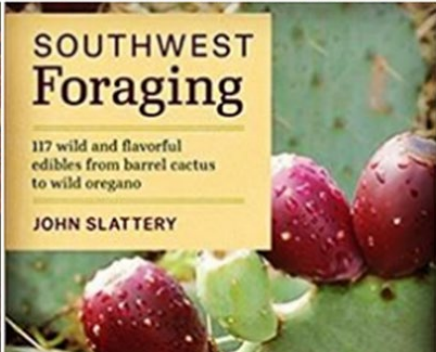


People Infrastructure



Business





There was an desire expressed for local and culturally relevant items. Two garden boxes are being designed and sponsored by local foragers.



NFARM.ORG

Peggy Sorensen on Foraging Edible Plants in the Desert
g>Discovering the wonders of harvesting native and urban trees,...

Square Foot Gardens



COVID-19 Impact



01

Last day of school was 3/6

We held the butterfly release party and the students have not returned.

02

Produced online lessons

Anticipating a two week closure, ASU interns and I produced mini lessons for distribution.

03

School closed for duration

It was difficult to solicit feedback from the staff as they navigated through this.

04

Began meal distribution

Two days a week families are able to collect three meals for each child under 18

Next Steps

1

Continue project at MLK

3

Foster network of community members

2

Establish nonprofit

4

Expand Footprint





*Thank you for your
time today!*

Questions?