



## Edible Schoolyard Garden Immersion Week

### Summary

The Edible Schoolyard Immersion week developed in this last year when King Middle School adopted a new 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade class schedule, which changed our typical weekly layout of how often and for how long we could see students in the garden. In order to maximize time with students we needed to be flexible and pilot seeing the students every day for a week, rather than once a week over a 3-8-week period.

- The Edible Schoolyard Garden Immersion week was developed where each science class from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are scheduled for a full week of garden programming and essentially come to the garden every day of the week.
  - The 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes receive two weeks of immersion, one for each semester.
  - The 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes receive one week in the spring rotation.
- The students are presented with track descriptions in their classroom prior to their garden week and are asked to vote by ranking their top to least favorite.
- The track groups work with an individual garden teacher for the duration of the immersion week and work together to complete goals set forth.

### Track Descriptions

Each garden teacher creates their own track based on their own interest and specialization. Track descriptions are also based on the needs of the garden for that season.

- In some cases, tracks for the week have an overarching theme, where each track makes an attempt to include activities that relate to the theme.
  - The overarching theme helps to connect the students' garden experience to academic standards.
  - In the first rotation for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders, our theme was ecosystems.
- Examples of the kinds of tracks we offer are shown in the *Scope and Sequence* take homes and help to illustrate all the standards being covered.

### Voting Process

The voting process has been our attempt to give choice and flexibility to the students. It's also a way to achieve student buy-in, while setting up the dynamics of the groups for success. This is an example of one of the voting ballots we used for one of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade immersions:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

After each option below, please circle if it is your 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> choice.  
(You can only have one 1<sup>st</sup> choice, one 2<sup>nd</sup> choice, etc.)

All About Chickens (with Ms. Rachel):	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Climate Change (with Mr. Geoff):	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Gardening & Cooking (with Mr. Jason):	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Mini-Habitats (with Ms. Tanya):	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>

Thank you! We will do our best to place you in one of your top choices.

### **Opening Circle** (5-8 minutes)

We use the opening circle to welcome the students and frame the class. Garden teachers rotate the role of facilitating opening circle.

1. Introduce the week's immersion tracks. Remind students that they voted for their tracks beforehand and the garden teachers did their best to give students their first or second choice.
2. Answer questions about how the week will run, reminding students that they will not meet in their classroom for the remainder of the week, but will meet at a designated spot identified by their group leader.
3. Divide into track groups.

### **In the Field** (Mon.-Wed. average of 45 minutes, Thurs. or Fri. 90 minutes)

After opening circle, students break –up into their track groups. Each group has an average of 6-8 students and one garden teacher.

1. Check-in question and review of the week and the goals.
2. Meet up spot in the garden is identified for the week.
3. Each track group works on their goals and projects for the week, integrating student buy-in, when possible.

### **Closing Circle** (Last 20 minutes of their final day, either Thursday or Friday)

For the immersion weeks, our closing circles are designed as a culminating process. The tasting is prepared by one of the track groups, and it usually consists of a prepared snack. Some of the prepared tastings we've done are kale pesto on bread and salad wraps with fava bean puree or beets.

1. The tasting is introduced and served in the Ramada. The same protocol is observed, where students wait to eat before everyone served.
2. Report backs are done after the tasting. Each group has the opportunity to share about their week.
3. Appreciations and shout outs are done, if time permits.