



Dear Neighbors and King Community,

I am so excited to share with you that the Edible Schoolyard is going to welcome our very first beehive in the garden next week! We have been working with a local beekeeper for almost a year to prepare for this addition to our pollinating friends in the garden and, on Thursday or Friday of next week, he is going to bring the hive to ESY. I hope that you will join us in this exciting opportunity to be on the forefront of edible education!

I am sure you have lots of questions, and I would like to address some of the questions that have come up during the past 9 months of our preparation.

Q: Where will the hive go?

A: The new hive will live on the hillside in between the tool shed and the track. If you haven't been down there in a while, we have begun to expand the garden into this area. With the support of BUSD, we cleared the overgrown hillside and are terracing the hillside and planting apple trees for a hillside orchard.

Q: Won't people mess with it? Will the bees be safe?

A: We are building a fenced in area for the hive so that you cannot see the hive from the track and you cannot just get into the pen to disturb the hive. Signage will encourage people to observe the hive without disturbing the occupants. We have weekly checks on the bee population to ensure the safety and long-term health of our beehive. Our beekeeper has reported consistently over the first year that the hive is thriving and even had to divide it this spring!

Q: Will we have Edible Schoolyard honey?

A: YES! Awesome, right?

Q: Is that safe? It seems scary, what if someone gets stung?

A: This is such an important question and one we have worked hard to answer. Because of the incredible population of bees and pollinators that live here in Berkeley, there is already the possibility that anyone on campus can get stung. Our new hive will not cause a noticeable increase or change in the bee population on campus, as bees travel up to 2 miles to do their work. We have worked with the main office and parents of students with known allergies to have an action plan for those students in the event that he/she is stung by a bee. All ESY staff have had Epi-Pen training and know how to administer the medication if they need to. If a student gets stung and does not have a known allergy, we have an action plan for that, too. All ESY staff are trained on how to identify and treat a mild reaction or anaphylactic



shock and the steps to calmly and effectively triage and treat the sting. There will be a bee-kit in the tool shed and in the ESY office with Epi-Pens, individualized action plans, and the general action plan for treating bee stings, in the event they happen.

Q: Will the students learn about the hive?

A: Yes! This is actually the most important and exciting part! The bees will be integrated into lessons for 6th and 7th graders. 6th graders already do a bee lesson where each student catches a bee and examines it, but now we are going to include the hive in a lesson for 7th grade humanities classes on Meso-America (did you know that the Mayans kept bees and sweetened their cacao with it?). The beekeepers have designed the hive with a flap that can be put up to look at what is going on inside the hive. They will also make presentations in the spring to 6th grade students who will learn about honey and how to harvest it. There are so many fun opportunities for craft projects with beeswax, selling ESY honey at our plant sale, and educating everyone what an important role pollinator's play in our food system!

I will send this information to our parents as well. Please let me know if you have any questions that aren't answered, we want to make sure everyone is ready to welcome the bees!

All best,
Kyle