

A PROFILE OF SCHOOL GARDENS AND GREENHOUSES IN LA PLATA COUNTY

1. **Riverhouse Children's Center:** flower and vegetable garden
Contact: Lindsay Sherman
2. **Children's House of Durango:** flower and vegetable garden
Contact: Stacy Zimmerman
3. **River Mist Preschool:** flower and vegetable garden ***
Contact: Jennifer Tuo
4. **Durango Early Learning Center:** flower, sensory and vegetable ***
Contact: Lesley Lach, Garden Contact,
5. **Needham Elementary:** xeric garden and indoor sunroom, vegetable garden*** Contact Julie Beekman
6. **Park Elementary:** learning preserve and raised bed gardens
7. **Durango High School:** greenhouse and raised bed gardens
Contact: Robert Ortiz
8. **Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary:** greenhouse and garden ***
Contact: Shari Fitzgerald and Kristi Wiebel (garden) Janine Collins (greenhouse)
9. **SUCAP Early Head Start and Montessori:** garden
Contact: Joe Pointer
10. **Florida Mesa Head Start:** garden
11. **Fort Lewis College:** garden and greenhouse
Contact: Marcus Renner, FLC Environmental Center
12. **Southern Ute Academy:** garden and greenhouse***
Contact: Linda Daniels
13. **Fort Lewis College, Campbell Center:** butterfly and sensory garden
14. **Sunnyside Outdoor Learning Project:** outdoor learning space
15. **Animas Valley Elementary:** vegetable garden ***
Contact: Renea Muller, Chris Isgar, and Cindy Erickson
16. **DeNier Youth Center:** vegetable garden***
Contact: Marye Jackson and Lisa Wilks
17. **Escalante Middle School:** greenhouse and garden in progress
Contact: Sharon Orr
18. **Ignacio Community and Youth Garden:** in progress
Contact: Diane Downing and Kip Koso

For a profile of these school gardens visit www.thegardenprojectswcolorado.org

(Excerpt from the 2007 La Plata County Food Assessment available at www.sustainableswcolorado.org/cfa.htm- Chapter 5: School Food)

**Updated in 2008/2009



RIVERHOUSE CHILDREN'S CENTER

School: A non-profit daycare facility for children aged zero to five serving 60 youth in the Durango area.

Location: 495 Animas View Drive, Durango

Garden: (2004 to current) Vegetables, Herbs, and Flowers

Contact: Lindsay Sherman, Director

Garden programs at the Riverhouse are designed to encourage experiential learning, environmental awareness, and provide healthy locally grown food for school lunches. Garden beds are located inside and outside the playground area. The garden is expanding to include a sensory garden where kids can learn which plants are for touching, tasting, seeing and smelling. “



CHILDREN'S HOUSE MONTESSORI

School: Montessori program for three to six year olds, including a half-day kindergarten program, extended childcare program and summer day camp.

Location: 1689 West 3rd Avenue Durango, CO 81301

Garden: Vegetables, flowers

Contact: Stacy Zimmerman, Director

The garden at the Children's House may be small at only 100 square feet, but they are able to grow enough to incorporate the garden into their daily routine, the school curriculum, and even an occasional snack. The garden program is in synch with many of the other academic principles of the Montessori school.



RIVER MIST LEARNING CENTER

School: Preschool and Childcare Center for ages 1 through 5

Location: 2441 County Road 225 Durango CO 81303

Garden Contact: Jennifer Tuo, Director maezscow@yahoo.com

Rivermist Learning Center vegetable garden is ¼ acre in size and includes spinach, lettuce, beans, peas, squash, sunflowers, carrots, onions, and pumpkins. The produce is shared in their lunch and snack programs. In addition to garden, they have a 60 x 10 foot greenhouse/hoop house and an orchard with 10 fruit trees. The students are involved in planting, irrigation, and harvesting.



DURANGO EARLY LEARNING CENTER (DELCO)

School: Toddler to Pre-Kindergarten childcare center

Location: 890 East Third Ave Durango CO 81301

Garden: Vegetable and sensory garden

Garden Contact: Lesley Lach delc@gobrainstorm.net

Teachers and students utilize the garden daily. Gardens at DELC are part of the entire school curriculum including math, science, arts, health and reading. Their sensory garden is filled with plants to enhance the children's touch, smell, taste, sight and even sound. They grow gourds, pumpkins, peas, lettuce, spinach, carrots, basil, parsley, beets, tomatoes, zucchini, onion, garlic, Aztec beans. In 2008, DELC added a toddler garden continues seeking new funding to expand their gardening and cooking opportunities for the kids.



ESCALANTE MIDDLE SCHOOL

School: Durango 9R Middle School

Location: 141 Baker Lane, Durango

Garden Contact: Sharon Orr

Excerpt from Sharon Orr and the May 2009 Newsletter

“The greenhouse and garden now have water, which is an independent system so we can grow year around, thanks to Michael Brennan and his crew for getting it in. The Rotary Club provided us with a grant to “fire-up” the greenhouse so we can grow, grow, grow. The kids made birdhouses, beautifully painted cloth grocery bags, and cookies, which we sold along with Spring bulbs. We have been busy germinating seeds and learning about different vegetables and fruits. With our proceeds from the sale we plan to buy drip irrigation and amendment for the garden.”



NEEDHAM ELEMENTARY

School: Durango 9R Elementary School Pre K-5

Location: 2425 W 3rd Avenue Durango, CO 81301

Garden Contact: Julie Beekman and Beth Sarren

Needham's garden projects include a native garden, indoor sunroom, classroom plant boxes and a outdoor vegetable garden. The outdoor native plant garden and indoor sunroom have been in use for several years. In 2007 they added 30 plus earth boxes to their school classrooms. In 2008 Needham broke ground on a new outdoor vegetable garden with 8 raised beds for each grade level.

This year several classes took ownership and responsibility for planting the raised beds. Carrots, salad greens, tomatoes, and squash were among some of the most productive crops. Summer programs included a weekly garden club. Class activities included sheet composting or soil lasagna, and seed saving and activities.



ANIMAS VALLEY ELEMENTARY

School: Durango 9R Elementary School Pre K-5

Location: 375 Hermosa Meadow Road, Durango

Garden Contact: Renea Muller, Chris Isgar and Cindy Erickson

The purpose of the garden project is to introduce students to the growing and harvesting of food and to encourage environmental awareness. The garden is an interdisciplinary, cross-curricular, educational enrichment project. The garden area is used as an outdoor, hands-on learning environment that exposes students to sustainable food practices and healthy eating. In addition, the garden will also be used to advance the following End Policies: Literacy, Math, Science, Visual Arts, Life Skills and Health.

The garden covers 2,983 sqft of land with 1,280 sqft of raised bed planting surface and 400 sqft of in-ground beds. The garden was built in October of 2008 and the first planting was done in May 2009.

The learning garden will also be used to enhance the District 9R Wellness Action Plan – Part 2 Nutrition Education. It has always been a goal at Animas Valley to reach the exemplary category in the Wellness Action Plan. Because students will prepare, for consumption, the vegetables, fruits and/or herbs that are grown, teachers will be able to collaborate with the school nutrition staff to use the cafeteria as a learning laboratory. Students will learn about nutrition requirements and become involved in menu planning and food preparation. Instruction will involve hands-on activities that engage students in enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant participatory activities. 2009 was a great growing season.



PARK ELEMENTARY

School: Durango 9R School Grade Level Pre K-5

Location: 623 E 5th Street, Durango, CO 81301

Garden: Learning Preserve and Raised Beds

Garden Contact: Linda Wilkinson, Park Elementary Teacher (updated 2006)

In 2004, Park expanded the Learning Preserve to include the addition of raised garden beds. The raised beds are used to grow corn, beans and squash. In the spring, the upcoming third graders meet their new teachers and discuss the purpose of the gardens, the history of the Anasazi people and their connection to agriculture. Other uses for the raised beds and learning preserve include incorporating lessons on plant adaptation, bird adaptation, teaching about different biomes in our area and artistic expression.



IGNACIO HIGH SCHOOL GREENHOUSE

School: Ignacio IJIT Public High School, Grades 9-12

Contact: Tessa Gamble, Agriculture Teacher, Ignacio High School



DURANGO HIGH SCHOOL GREENHOUSE and GARDEN

School: Durango 9R Public High School for grades 9-12

Location: 2390 Main Avenue, Durango CO 81301

Contact: Robert Ortiz

In 2008, the DHS greenhouse was used by the agricultural and horticultural classes. Students grew vegetable starts for the Manna Soup Kitchen garden. In addition to the attached greenhouse, DHS has added another greenhouse and raised bed gardens to expand their capabilities.



FORT LEWIS MESA ELEMENTARY

School: Durango 9R School Pre-K through 5th grade

Location: 11274 Hwy 140 Hesperus, Colorado 81326

Garden: Greenhouse and upcoming garden

Garden Contact: Kristi Wiebel and Shari Fitzgerald (garden contact)

Greenhouse Contact: Debbie Harris and Janine Collins (greenhouse contact)

The FLM greenhouse has been in use for 30 years. The greenhouse is open to all students to utilize, especially the 1st grade students as they study plant biology and soil composition. Dirt Club, an after school program, hosts weekly spring classes in the garden and greenhouses. The greenhouse is also used to support a spring Mother's Day and Vegetable Sale each year. In addition, transplants starts were also grown for 4 community and school gardens.

The Quinisa Memorial Learning Garden at Fort Lewis Elementary is an incredible example of the potential a school gardens have to integrate gardening into several aspects of the school's character, activities and curriculum. The garden design includes four distinct zones, a bird and butterfly garden, a flagstone work center for classroom activities and various raised beds. The zones represent the different growing conditions in southwest Colorado including the alpine and sub alpine forest, mountainous, high desert and low desert zones.

Each grade level participates in class projects based on their grades' curriculum. Some completed projects include a peace pole, that incorporates culture, world geography, language and community development; a picket fence project, with over 180 hand painted pickets by teachers and students; composting bins that teach about soil properties, recycling and decomposition. There are 10 unique raised bed gardens that match each class's individual character or their grade's curriculum. Examples include a wildflower and sensory garden, three sisters garden, cowboy garden, Colorado history garden and the garden of "thyme/time." In the 2009-10 school year, classes have participated in hands on activities that enrich their existing science curriculum. This 10,000 square foot garden sits in a courtyard visible from several classes. Due to the size and scope of the project, FLM is a three-year project and although everyday is a

work in progress, students, teachers, and the community have already reaped numerous rewards from this awesome outdoor learning space.



SUCAP EARLY HEAD START, HEAD START AND MONTESSORI

School: Early Preschool, Preschool and Montessori Influenced for 0-5 year olds.

Location: 279 Capote Avenue Ignacio, Colorado 81137

Garden Contact: Joe Pointer, Early Head Start Coordinator

For over six years SUCAP Early Head Start and Head Start have had a vegetable garden and several flower gardens available for academic integration, community involvement and school snacks. There is one large vegetable garden approximately 30 x 50 feet where they grow most of their vegetables and several additional flower gardens located outside the Head Start classrooms.



DE NIER YOUTH CENTER

School: Youth Center and School for Adjudicated Youth

Location: 720 Turner Drive, Durango

Garden Contact: Lisa Wilks and Marye Jackson

DeNier Youth Center started a vegetable garden to incorporate gardening activities into the classroom curriculum as well as provide food for the school lunches. The garden includes several raised beds where you can find pumpkins, tomatoes, green beans, potatoes, onions, garlic, and strawberries. In 2009, students participated in the garden as one of their elected classes. Students made journals, posters, and a scrapbook of their garden and even received awards for their produce at the La Plata County Fair. The food produced goes right to the DeNier kitchen.



FLORIDA MESA HEAD START

School: Preschool program located at the Florida Mesa Elementary School.

Location: 216 Hwy 172, Durango CO 81303

Contact: Janelle Crabtree, Preschool teacher

Garden: The garden began in the spring of 2006, spearheaded by teachers, parents and grandparents. For the first year, they grew strawberries, sunflowers and pumpkins in a 4 by 6-foot plot. Everything planted was grown from seed.



FORT LEWIS COLLEGE GARDEN GREENHOUSE

School: Fort Lewis College

Location: 1000 Rim Drive, next to Justice Hall

Garden and Greenhouse Contact: Marcus Renner, Fort Lewis College
Environmental Center

Fort Lewis College garden incorporates the use of native plants, drip irrigation, permaculture practices and a space for hands on academic and community integrations. Started in June 2001, Fort Lewis College maintains an on-site garden open to all students and professors. In 2008, FLC received a grant to start gardens project for FLC interns to collaborate with other garden programs in the community.



SOUTHERN UTE TRIBAL ACADEMY

Location: Ignacio

Garden and Greenhouse Contact: Linda Daniels, school nurse

In 2006, the Southern Ute Academy with the help of the Ignacio community built a Growing Spaces greenhouse to use for curriculum integration and an annual school meal. In addition to their greenhouse space, the Southern Ute Tribal Academy also has received recognition from the National Wildlife Federation for its incorporation of its expansive habitat gardens with a focus on distinct zones and the native plants found in each one. A sensory garden also enhances the children's experience interacting with the garden. Gardens are used for classroom activities and integration. Produce is used in the lunch program when possible. (updated 2008)



FORT LEWIS COLLEGE CAMPBELL CENTER

School: Daycare and Preschool Facility for zero to five year olds

Location: 1000 Rim Drive, Durango CO 81301

Garden Contact: Susie Wanatka

In the spring of 2005, the Campbell Center started an on site Bird and Butterfly Garden in the playground. Kids at FLC Campbell Center have daily interaction with their new garden space. (updated 2006)



SUNNYSIDE ELEMENTARY

School: Durango 9R K-5

Location: 75 County Road 218, Durango CO 81303

Garden Contact:

An outdoor learning project is in progress for Sunnyside Elementary. Great strides in landscaping and funding the learning project have been made. (updated 2006)



NEW Ignacio Community and Youth Garden

School: Youth and Community Garden

Location: Sun Ute Rec Center, Ignacio

Garden: Vegetable and sensory garden

Garden Contact: Diane Downing and Kip Koso and Jenn Bartlett

A new community and youth garden space will break ground in the winter of 2009. The space will be utilized primarily by youth from the Boys and Girls Club.