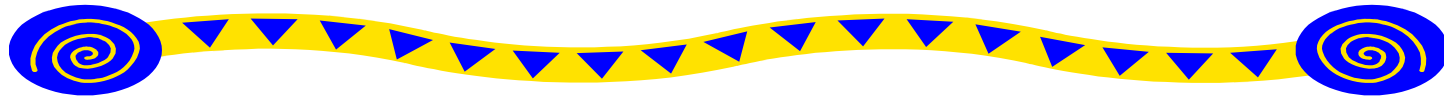


# citysprouts

school garden 'learning labs'  
for Cambridge Public Schools





# Quality Expanded Learning Time Partnerships: Guiding Principles

## **I. Common Purpose**

The partnership supports a shared set of goals established by both partners. These goals are aligned to both partners' mission and vision.

## **II. Complementary Content**

The school seeks out community learning organizations with expertise that complements that of their own teachers and staff, establishing partnerships that bring outcome-driven programs, resources and services to the school that correspond with its goals for Expanded Learning Time.

## **III. Communication**

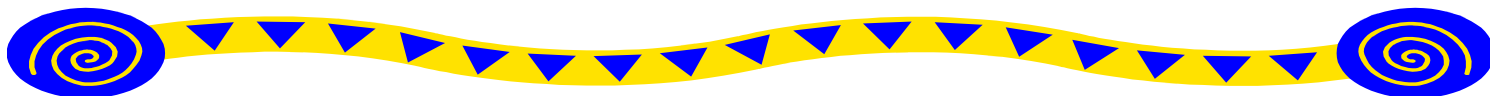
There is clear, consistent communication between partners on two levels: between the leadership of the school and community learning organization responsible for managing the partnership, and between the teachers and staff that work directly with students.

## **IV. Flexibility and Adaptation**

Both partners are flexible in adapting existing programming to create a customized partnership that fits the unique context of Expanded Learning Time.

## **V. Continuous Improvement and Sustainability**

The partnership is a multi-year endeavor, with responsibilities for relationship-building, fundraising, and continuous improvement shared by both partners.



# COMMON PURPOSE

The partnership supports a shared set of goals established by both partners. These goals are aligned to both partners' mission and vision.



## Mutual and Reciprocal Interests

- ❖ Expand and deepen the Project Based Learning experiences of students
- ❖ Expand the use of the ML King schoolyard garden for teaching and learning.

# COMPLEMENTARY CONTENT

The school seeks out community learning organizations with expertise that complements that of their own teachers and staff, establishing partnerships that bring outcome-driven programs, resources and services to the school that correspond with its goals for Expanded Learning Time.

❖ The principal in planning with the staff identified the need to strengthen its project based learning initiative.

We viewed the ML King, PROJECT BASED PLAN documentation from 2006-2007 and identified Science as the CORE curriculum around which the PBL was being developed.



❖ We also felt it important to align the PD focus with the CPS Science frameworks. It also seemed critically important to draw the Science Dept. and the Science Mentors into the PD work with the staff. This partnership should not operate in a vacuum or be competing with other demands for teacher time.

# COMMUNICATION

There is clear, consistent communication between partners on two levels: between the leadership of the school and community learning organization responsible for managing the partnership, and between the teachers and staff that work directly with students.

❖ The Principal met with us regularly to coordinate the schedule of time for us to meet with staff. She also advised us on the development of the topic focus for the PD sessions. This planning was informed by the Workshop Evaluation Feedback we collected at the end of each PD session.

❖ The PD sessions included Science Mentors for the Grade Clusters, CitySprouts Garden Coordinator, Principal, as well as other support staff as possible by their schedules: Literacy Coach, Technology Teacher, Library Media Specialist, Math Coach,



# FLEXIBILITY and ADAPTATION

Both partners are flexible in adapting existing programming to create a customized partnership that fits the unique context of Expanded Learning Time.

- ❖ Curriculum planning was expanded to become more interdisciplinary.
- ❖ Garden Coordinators adapted their support in the Garden to reinforce and extend the concepts and activities for the Science unit being taught for that specific grade.
- ❖ Student Elective being taught by CS staff.
- ❖ PD led by the Math Coach assisted by CS Educational Co-Directors focused on using the schoolyard garden to support and the TERC Investigations math curriculum.



# CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The partnership is a multi-year endeavor, with responsibilities for relationship-building, fundraising, and continuous improvement shared by both partners.

- ❖ Extending the math curriculum through the garden.
- ❖ Math in the Garden Night for Parents.
- ❖ Redesign of the Summer Internship Program for sixth-eight grade students.
- ❖ Planning the next cycle of PD with Acting Principal.
- ❖ Collaboration with Science Dept. to revise Science Units providing substitute student learning activities that support using the garden.



**SUPPORTING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE:** A larger context for partnerships for professional development efforts whose aim is to enlarge the “tool box” of teachers for their work with students.



- ❖ Enduring questions, reflection about practice, and sharing practice.

- ❖ Learning experiences that are intellectually vigorous, self-renewing, and rewarding for participants.

**At the same time provide leadership and support by:**

- ❖ Focusing district initiatives and attending to competing mandates.

- ❖ Allocating financial and human resources.

- ❖ Assessing and celebrating progress and successes.

Community Matters- We need to look at the education of not just our children but of all of in the larger context of our democratic values and ideals. We need to see this process of learning in the vast expanse of our lives and being in the world (not just being in school). We need to join the domains of our schools and community organizations in the service of others. Change requires a community- people living and working together, assuming some common responsibility for something of deep concern and interest to all. This is what I think it takes to engage, empower, and inspire us all.

E.J. Dionne has said it best to remind us that, “The great reforming generations are the ones that marry the aspirations of service to the possibilities of politics and harness the good work done in local communities to transform a nation.