Center for Green Schools Fellows: The Year Ahead

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Our Green Schools Fellows have been hard at work in the Boston and Sacramento school districts, wrapping up their first years and looking forward to the 2012-2013 school year. They've made some incredible accomplishments so far, and we're looking forward to the year ahead!
Sacramento City Unified School District update – Farah McDill

I now have a much better sense of the saying "time flies when you're having fun" - my first year as the Green Schools Fellow at Sacramento City Unified School District has flown by! Through my position in SCUSD, I've been able to work with so many different departments and projects, including the Healthy Foods Task Force, which increases access to healthy foods by creating gardens at every school and working with the maintenance department on garden construction.

My biggest accomplishment this year was working with our student green teams on Project Green. I worked with green team advisors at 15 schools across the District where students conducted a green school audit, and developed and presented their recommendations to a panel of local professionals. The professionals then scored the teams from a developed rubric in order to allocate $5 million of funding set aside by the school board for student-recommended green school projects.

I foresee my second year of the fellowship being as exciting and inspiring as the first, and there are many projects I am eager to get started. The Healthy Foods Task Force is planning a fall school garden tour & showcase to correlate with the fall festivals that many schools already celebrate. This will allow school sites to show off the incredible work accomplished in gardens across the district. We are also going to create a team of garden champions, made up of current outstanding gardeners that will help to expand gardens to schools across the district.

As I mentioned above, the district level green team will prepare a sustainability report for 2012 that will be a benchmarking document so that we can track changes made district-wide for years to come. When complete, the report will be presented to the school board. This past June the funding for Project Green was awarded to the school sites. This coming year I will be working with a project specialist to implement the projects with the help of each site green team. It will be a wonderful opportunity for the students to see their hard work come to fruition. Additionally, I have two projects in the works for the Green Apple Day of Service and I am working with doctors from UC Davis on an indoor air quality assessment. So as you can see, I have many things to get excited about for the 2012-2013 school year. Watch this space!

Boston Public Schools update – Phoebe Beierle

The first year of my Green Schools Fellowship in Boston has been wonderful and we are making great progress toward many of our goals. The 2012-2013 school year is going to be full of fun projects, but there are a few projects I am particularly excited about. The first annual Green Apple Day of Service is coming up on September 29 and Boston Public Schools (BPS) will be conducting energy audits, coordinating recycling drives and cleaning up outdoor classrooms and school gardens. This is sure to be a great project, and one that engages the school district and surrounding community members.

This past school year, BPS established a single stream recycling program and this coming year we will be rolling it out to all 132 schools. This is incredibly exciting as students will be recycling at school just like they do at home and it will mean greater resource and financial savings for the district. All of us at BPS are looking forward to how this will positively affect the school district.

Finally, in the past year I've discovered that BPS operations departments and

schools are leading the way in innovative green efforts but rarely sharing their stories. The Green Schools Program will provide a framework for schools and district administration to go green and be recognized for their efforts. This will be a wonderful way for us to brag about all the great work we've been doing!
What excites me most about all three of these initiatives is that they provide opportunities for students and the broader community to be empowered and become actively involved in improving their school learning environment. With these three projects, and many more, I'm looking forward to the upcoming school year!

Phoebe Beierle
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