



# Project Green

2023

**IMPACT  
REPORT**

## OUR MISSION


Engaging students to grow our community's school gardens by creating a safe outdoor educational environment while nurturing emotional and social development.

## 2023 MILESTONES

**EXPANDED OUR PROGRAM** from 7 to 12 schools across the Rescue Union School District, Latrobe School District, Gold Oak Union School District, and The Academy at District Church.

Piloted a student-led **BEAUTIFICATION IMPACT TEAM** program at Marina Village Middle School enabling 6-8 grade students to identify campus areas for garden and color enhancements. The students also played a significant role in drafting our grant applications.

Partnered with **PROJECT LUMA**, an initiative dedicated to bringing color and positivity to school campuses through murals and other creative installations.

4,000  
**STUDENTS**   
served in  
El Dorado County

12  
**PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS** 

2,362  
**HOURS**   
kids spent digging  
in our gardens

# thank you!

This year, thanks in part to the grants from **Raleys**, the **Latrobe Fund**, the **El Dorado Community Foundation**, and the generosity of parent and community donations we have been able to:

- Create 7 butterfly-friendly gardens in Rescue Union Schools.
- Install 5 compost bins.
- Replenish our gardens and garden beds with soil, bark, gravel, and other ground materials to prepare for the following season.
- Expand gardens at Marina Village, Pleasant Grove Middle School, and Lake View Elementary School.
- Build 2 greenhouses.
- Install 3 large hydroponic units for indoor gardening.
- Plant a variety of fruits, vegetable plants, and seeds in all school gardens.
- Purchase essential gardening tools such as trowels, pots, watering cans, and gloves.
- Repair and install irrigation systems in all school gardens.



**Dig deep  
to fill  
your heart!**

**2nd GRADE  
STUDENT**

**Garden time  
is best friend  
time!**

**1st GRADE  
STUDENT**

## **from parents**

The garden has emerged as a sanctuary for my daughter. The tranquility and solace she finds while playing in the dirt provides a welcome contrast to the bustling atmosphere of the playground during recess. The garden has become a haven where she can connect with nature, engage in meaningful activities, and find peace away from the noise and commotion. I am genuinely grateful for the muddy evidence of my daughter's joyful and educational experiences in the garden.

**LISA S., LAKE FOREST ELEMENTARY PARENT**

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My child had a difficult time finding his footing in his first year of middle school—the transition from elementary school was rocky. He ended up finding a place in the Garden Club during lunch. We are so thankful for the program giving him a place to go during lunch, be active outside, make friends, and have fun!

**MARINA VILLAGE MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT**

## **from educators**



Project Green offers numerous emotional benefits to our students. The garden is not only a welcoming space but also provides them with a sense of purpose by contributing to something larger than themselves, benefiting the entire school community.

It's a place accessible to all students—whether they are in special education or general education, or those who face social or emotional challenges—making everyone feel welcome.

For many of our students, the garden is their favorite spot on campus. I feel so blessed to have Project Green at our school.

**MS. MCKELVEY, LAKE FOREST  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR**

**I love that the  
lunchtime garden  
program is sensory-based  
and unstructured.**

**A TEACHER**

# from garden coordinators

I love watching our kids discover things about nature and themselves in the school garden. Dirty hands and big smiles are the best part of my day in the garden!

**KARA HARRELL, GREEN VALLEY ELEMENTARY GARDEN COORDINATOR**

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Many of the garden's frequent visitors are looking for a safe spot to reset before finishing their day and it's been incredibly rewarding to be able to provide that space for them.

**JACQULYN ESTES, PLEASANT GROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL GARDEN COORDINATOR**

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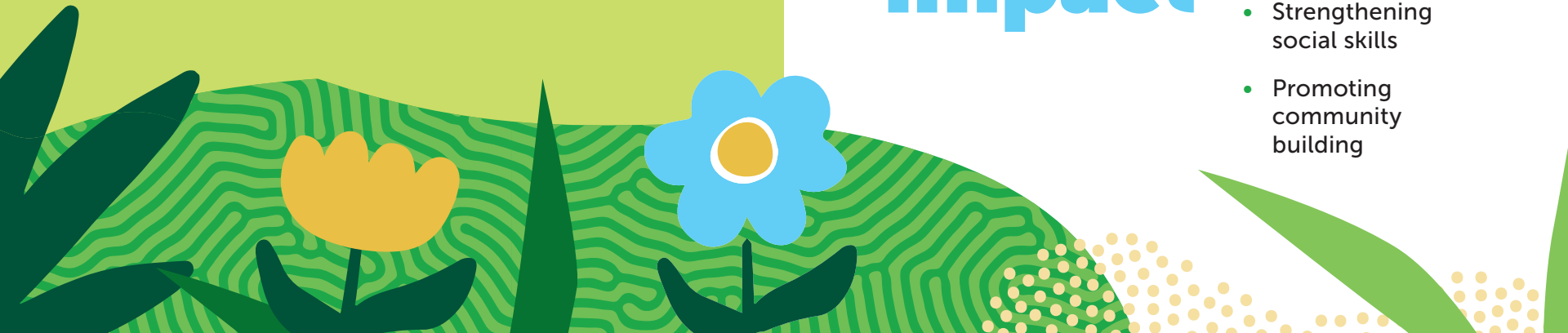
The best thing about Project Green is kids have the opportunity to get up close to gardening—they get to plant, harvest, try new vegetables they are not familiar with, and interact with nature, the insects, the worms, and compost that help our garden thrive.

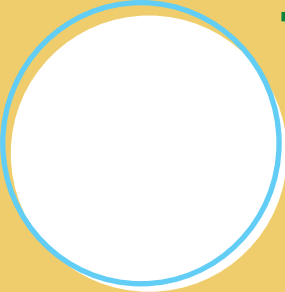
**COURTNEY REPKING, RESCUE ELEMENTARY GARDEN COORDINATOR**



## Project Green's positive impact

- Enhancing environmental stewardship
- Fostering better nutritional attitudes
- Developing leadership abilities
- Strengthening social skills
- Promoting community building





**T**his year has been a remarkable journey for Project Green, and

I could never have imagined in my wildest dreams that we would have achieved so much in such a short time.

Your unwavering support has been incredible, and because of you, we've turned more school gardens into vibrant and flourishing spaces where kids can truly be themselves. These aren't just gardens — they're living classrooms where kids get their hands dirty learning about nature, nutrition, and environmental stewardship.

This year, we expanded our reach to **5 new schools**, bringing the total number of gardens to 12 across 4 school districts. Each garden is a little world of wonder and a testament to what we can achieve together. They are spaces where students cultivate not just plants, but also curiosity, responsibility, and friendships.

As we look to the future, we've got big dreams ahead. **We envision a world where every child has access to a school garden**, and with your continued support, we are confident that this vision can one day become a reality.

Thank you for being part of our green adventure. You're not just helping us grow gardens; you're helping grow our future leaders, thinkers, and doers.

**Stick with us — we've got lots more growing to do!**

With heartfelt gratitude,



Gina Johnston



**ProjectGreenCommunity.org**