

# Volunteer in School Gardens with Walla Walla Valley Farm to School



**Level 1 – Expert** Be the gardening expert at a school garden. Meet with the school garden team to discuss best practices, answer questions and strategize on maintaining great soil, organically managing weeds and pests and designing crop rotations. This position would require approximately 3 hours of time to become familiar with the garden and work directly with the school garden lead and possibly 4 more hours to be the “on call” expert, familiar with the garden and ready to answer gardening related questions. There may also be occasion to be a guest speaker for a class or garden club, depending on your gardening passions!



**Level 2 – Recess Club** Volunteer to assist with or oversee (depending on comfort level) a recess garden club at one school, 1-2 hours, 1/wk for 5-8 weeks. In the fall or spring, some elementary schools will have gardening activities occurring in the school garden one time a week, during lunch recess. At a recess garden club students would have an opportunity to take part in one or two garden activities for about 15 minutes, before the next grade of students would rotate through for their 15 minutes of recess. It is optional for students to join in, so not all students would take part. In our experience about 70 students take part during their lunch recess, which is about 15-20 students at a time. The total school lunch time is about 1.5 hours/day and the club would run once a week for 5-8 weeks. The day of the week is flexible and could be scheduled to meet your calendar.



**Level 3 –After school Club** Volunteer to assist with an afterschool garden club at one school, 1/wk 2 hours, for 5-7 weeks. In the fall or spring, some elementary schools will have an afterschool garden club that meets for 1.5 hours one time a week for 5 -7 weeks, depending on season. A garden education manager (GEM), intern, or parent volunteer will lead the garden club by organizing activities that a group of students will rotate through during the garden club. In the after school garden club, students might work on an art project, help with garden maintenance, cook with garden produce, or follow their curiosity in science. Garden Club is very flexible, but requires 3-4 adults to help oversee all the students. Registration for garden club will be limited to 25-35 students who will register and regularly attend an afterschool garden club.

**Level 4 – Classroom Garden Visit** Volunteer to assist in bringing elementary classes to the garden for lessons to provide planting or harvesting opportunities while bolstering in-class curriculum. K-5 classes invited to participate in garden visits during fall and spring seasons may use WWVF2S developed series of garden lessons which bolster existing science curriculum in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Teachers able to take advantage of the science focused visits, sign up for 3-5 garden visits at a repeating time (example: Mondays 10:30-11:30am) every week or every-other week during the season. The scheduling is completed and lessons are prepared by the GEM. When a class visits the garden, they often break into 3 groups of 8 students. There are 2-3 station activities, which students rotate through over about an hour. Volunteers are needed to oversee a station. There are many classes visiting and many volunteers are needed to help oversee a station. Times will depend on teacher's schedule and we strive to meet their time needs. Once lessons are scheduled the GEM will reach out to find a volunteer to help oversee a garden station. Your help would be greatly appreciated! An orientation is provided before the season and lesson information is provided a few days prior the scheduled visit. Volunteers arrive 10 minutes before the start of the visit to become oriented to their space and materials. Interested? Contact – Beth Thiel [farmtoschool@slcww.org](mailto:farmtoschool@slcww.org)



**Really feeling the school garden magic? Be a GEM – Garden Education Manager!** GEM positions are part - time, temporary employment requiring 12-18 flexible hours per week/per school during the fall and spring school semesters. Successful candidates receive training to coordinate and implement student garden lessons and volunteers. GEMs also help recruit parent and community volunteers and take an active role in the school community through communication and engagement. GEMs are a critical link to a thriving school garden community!