

Ka Lau

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What's coming up in the garden?

Farm to School Coordinator, Jenny Bach, and other LCPCS garden elves (okay, volunteers) invite you to stop by the garden. "It's really beautiful right now," says Ms. Bach. "And the students are excited to eat the food they've grown themselves."

In 2012, LCPCS was awarded a USDA "Farm to School" planning grant. Funds from this grant helped to establish the school garden; lay the groundwork to increase the use of locally grown fruits and vegetables in the school lunches; and sponsor nutrition education and activities. Unfortunately, the school was not awarded the follow-up implementation grant this school year, but over \$14,000 was raised through other, smaller grants. Ms. Bach said that the USDA implementation grants are more normally awarded to school districts, rather than individual schools, but she says that reviewers from USDA encouraged LCPCS to try again for next year.

All elementary grades spend between 45 and 90 minutes in the garden each week, and take part in a monthly cooking class. Each session introduces the kids to a variety of subjects, including beneficial insects and pollination; agricultural methods both current and historic; watersheds; and nutrition. In addition, students in two high school classes, "Culinary Arts" and an agricultural class, grow vegetables they use in their projects. Participants in the Mahope after-school program for middle-schoolers also spend time in the garden.



Third-graders Jade Reid, Isabella Russo, Mahina Crowley and Ava-Amalia Aguirre holding radishes and daikon

School Food Services Manager, Jackie Martin, is working with Ms. Bach and others to incorporate garden produce into the school lunches, primarily kale, lettuce and other greens. "Good Agricultural Practices" (GAPs) and food safety guidelines are strictly adhered to, to make sure the produce is safe.

Starting this month, there will be an LCPCS farmers' market after school every second and fourth Thursday. Fruit and vegetables from the school garden and greenhouse will be available for a suggested donation at a table at the school entrance. If possible, please bring your own bags or plastic containers.

Also, parents and community members are invited to work in the garden every Wednesday morning from 8:00 to 10:00, tea provided. Volunteers are

welcome whenever they can come, although LCPCS is also seeking a committed core group for the rest of the school year. Interested? Call Kristina Hult, garden volunteer and parent, at 895-8775.

Mark your calendars! On April 22, LCPCS will host an Earth Day celebration for students, parents and community members at the upper school garden from 8:00 to 11:00 am. Elementary students will be offering garden tours and performances. There will a number of activities, such as ulu tree giveaways, poi pounding, tree plantings, recipe contests, and much more! "Bring the whole family and celebrate our connection with the earth and all its creatures and gifts" says Ms. Hult.



First-graders ham it up with some kale

Calendar

- Tuesday, March 24 – Governing Board meeting
- Thursday, March 26 – NO SCHOOL; Prince Kuhio Day
- Wednesday, April 1 – Laupāhoehoe Point Memorial service day
- Wednesday, April 1 – Save First! deposit day
- Friday, April 3 – NO SCHOOL; Good Friday
- Saturday, April 4. 10 am – Boys' volleyball game vs. Hilo, at LCPCS

Paki's Kūkākūkā

Last year, the LCPCS Governing Board passed a resolution making it clear that agriculture would be a key component of the LCPCS program. This important statement by the leaders of our school speaks to the importance of agriculture to our community, in both the short and long term. Laupāhoehoe is right in the middle of one of the largest regions of agricultural land in the State of Hawai'i. Agriculture is going to be a key industry for decades to come, and many of our students will find sustainable employment in this field. It is important to note that working in the agricultural industry does not mean one has to be a farmer. Opportunities exist in marketing, finance, foreign relations, transportation, engineering, management, and pest control, just to name a few. Given our community's historical ties to agriculture, and the future of this industry along our coast line, maintaining strong connections to this industry will serve our school and students well.



Seasider Spotlight



Jenny Bach, with second-graders (L to R)
Mana Kowardy and Donovan Wilkins

Born and raised in Hawai'i, Jenny Bach graduated from the first charter school established in the State. She credits the West Hawai'i Explorations Academy, with its hands-on, project-based curriculum, for opening up new worlds to her. "It was not your typical school. There were no classrooms, just space to create things like gardens, shark tanks, and butterfly greenhouses. I was sad to graduate because it meant leaving my projects," she says.

In college, Ms. Bach worked on an organic farm in Puna, and found her passion in the art of growing food. "I never thought of myself as an artist until I began working with plants and soil. This is my favorite medium."

About 12 years ago, she adopted her first bee hives, and soon after that created Bee Love Hawai'i and the Honeybee Education Program. With grant funding from various sources, Ms. Bach put together an educational program and traveled from school to school teaching kids about the importance of honeybees. She also welcomed school tours to her own farm. It was through

this process that Ms. Bach found LCPCS.

Now Ms. Bach (or Miss Jenny, as she is more commonly known) manages the farm to school program, teaches the kids in the garden, and also works with students in the school kitchens to show them what to do once they've picked all that wonderful garden produce.