Caring for school gardens in summer

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• Grow low maintenance plants.
• Attract volunteers.
• Schedule some garden events in the summer.
• Prepare the garden for fall.
Preparing for Low Maintenance
Preparing for Summer

- Water the bed really well for days in advance.
- Use a kelp fertilizer bath and soak no less than 5 minutes and NO MORE THAN 10 minutes. Do not water again.
- Pick off the leaves on the part of the stem that will be planted.
- Plant the tomato very deep or lie the stem down and bury it.
- Mulch like crazy to keep the moisture in the soil and the bed free of weeds.
Another option is wild flowers, which you can match to dry or wet conditions, full or part sun, etc. Visit www.americanmeadows.com for more information about wild flowers.
Attracting Volunteers: Picking Rights

• Set up a couple of dates before the school year ends to provide instruction and demonstrate how to move the hoses around and water. Do not assume people know how to water.

• POST RULES AND SCHEDULE FOR WATERING. Stress accountability.

• Keep weeding to a minimum with mulch.
Scheduling and Guidelines

• Decide ahead how the produce will be shared.

• Before people go their separate ways, set up a few work days during the course of the summer to do jobs beyond watering and harvesting.
Garden Events

- Combine work and pleasure
Garden Events

- Offer home gardening lessons to the community
Garden Events

- Share the wealth
Garden Events

- Make food
Preparing for Fall
You can wait until August to prepare the garden for fall (and enjoy your vacation) or you can...

- Water and mulch the beds or plant a cover crop.
- Plant crops according to when you want to harvest in the fall.
http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/Maps.aspx
Find out what to plant and when online.
In early fall, plan to plant a few things that mature quickly and tolerate cooler weather...such as peas, lettuce and kale.
If you are a teacher, please join this online school gardening community on edWeb. This is a way for educators, gardeners, parents and community volunteers to come together to share information and resources on how to start and maintain a school garden, integrate it into the curriculum and the life of a school, and troubleshoot garden challenges.

http://www.edweb.net/schoolgardens/
Contact

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