

To Whom it Concerns,

The LifeCycles Society's Growing Schools Project is a strong and dedicated supporter of the Reynolds Green Spaces Project. We look forward to contributing support and resources to enable a student centered sustainable food garden as part of this larger project. We believe that providing a space for students to learn from and interact with ecological communities is a tremendous step towards creating ecologically conscious and socially aware individuals and societies.

By incorporating a sustainable food garden into the projects design, not only environmental but key social problems can and will be addressed within this space. Education in food production and distribution has the power to open student's minds to many large and small scale issues relevant to our community. From environmental degradation, to poverty, homelessness and health – hands on experiences in the garden can and do engage students to become more critically aware.

LifeCycles' school food garden program, *Growing Schools*, is celebrating its 12th year of developing school food gardens on school grounds, supporting the integration of the food garden into the classroom with hands-on workshops and resources for the Greater Victoria School region. We are tremendously excited to be working closely with high schools in the region to encourage more food gardens and education programs, and are currently looking at several funding models to increase our capacity and continue growing this work.

Having been involved with the Reynolds Green Spaces Project from the beginning, we are excited by its broad based community and student support. The goal of making the project transferable, so that other institutions can follow in greening their grounds, is equally exciting. Perhaps most encouraging is the goal of deep integration – so that this project is not just a “one off” that installs some pretty plants and forgets them. The goal here is to use this space as a means of encouraging more experiential, hands on learning and more connected, aware individuals. By maintaining student involvement throughout the design and implementation stage, we are ensuring that this goal is met at every step along the way. Growing Schools is proud to be involved in any project that encourages hands on learning and lets students have a voice in the way their institutions are created.

Sincerely,

Matthew Kemshaw
Growing Schools Project Coordinator