

# Longfellow Garden and Cooking Program

The Longfellow Garden continues to grow and change. We added thirteen new garden beds, installed a drip irrigation system, developed an active compost zone, and created a new outdoor seating area for class time. In addition, we recently installed a beautiful outdoor counter and sink for the garden donated by Cheng Designs. Complementing our apple, apricot, and fig trees, we planted a pomegranate bush, a persimmon tree, ground cherries and a raspberry patch. Our squash patch was prolific this year, producing an abundance of pumpkins, winter squash and gourds. The most popular garden activities have been transplanting, making fresh garden pesto, mulching with straw, planting, and seed saving. We have been studying compost, nutrition labels, sugar, tool safety, seasonality, the agricultural history of crops native to the Americas, crop biodiversity, and food access. Students also learned about and tasted the Harvest of the Month each month. Currently, we are busy tasting borage flowers, kale, collards, and chard fresh from the garden. We are beginning to plant warm season crops for harvest in autumn 2008: sunflowers, tomatoes, summer squash, amaranth, cucumbers, and a variety of flowers.

The Longfellow Cooking Program staff continue to introduce new and exciting recipes to students, with special emphasis on nutrition. To the amazement of many, students are very interested in trying new produce. In addition, they want to know more about nutrients that are in the produce.

We have been successful showing students the importance of embracing community by introducing recipes that coincide with the diverse cultures we serve. In the long run, this exchange extends to the families that we serve. Our community approach also allows us to introduce the importance of seasonal and local produce.

In the spring, parents were invited to attend a five session Parent Cooking Class. The classes embraced the same healthy eating themes that we introduce to our students during day classes, including eating seasonal produce, supporting locally grown farmers, expanding our choices of recipes for healthy eating, and accessing recipes from different cultures.



Students closely exam and record observations in the Longfellow garden.

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*Lisa Beard, Garden Instructor  
& Linda Sanders, Cooking Instructor*



Longfellow parents prepare produce for the Three Sister Stew during a parent class on soups, part of a five class series.



Students practice their mincing skills in cooking class.