

BENEFITS OF GREENER SCHOOL GROUNDS

The School Grounds Greening Project connects children with the outdoors in healthy and positive ways. The benefits of greener school grounds are multifaceted and have been documented in recent studies:

Student benefits

- Encourages physical exercise
- Improves concentration
- Spurs creativity
- Increases awareness about nutrition
- Stimulates positive social interactions
- Enhances self-control
- Instills a sense of peace
- Reduces bullying and absenteeism

Financial benefits

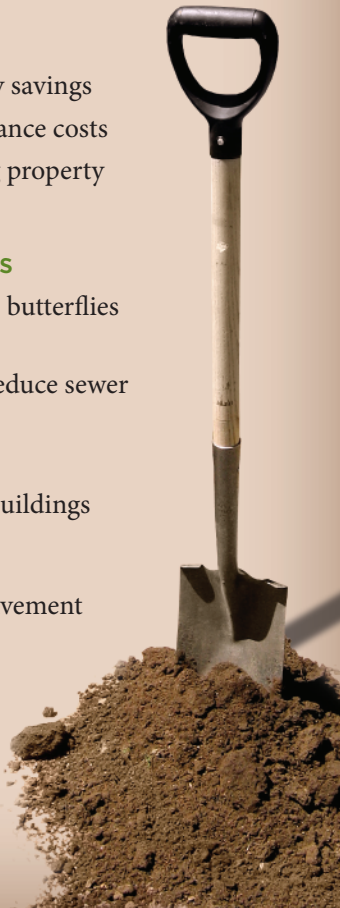
- 10 – 20 percent energy savings
- Reduction in maintenance costs
- Increases surrounding property values

Environmental benefits

- Adds habitat for birds, butterflies and other creatures
- Slows stormwater to reduce sewer overloads
- Improves air quality
- Cools pavement and buildings

Community benefits

- Increased school involvement and support from nearby community members
- Creates a greener, healthier local environment



ABOUT THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) enhances the region's quality of life by protecting and restoring exceptional places. A nonprofit conservation organization founded in 1932, WPC was responsible for the founding of six state parks and has conserved nearly 225,000 acres of natural lands and waterways. The Conservancy owns and operates Fallingwater, the Frank Lloyd Wright house in Mill Run, Pa. that symbolizes people living in harmony with nature. In addition, WPC enriches our region's cities and towns through 140 community gardens and greenspaces that are planted with the help of 8,300 volunteers. The work of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is accomplished through the support of more than 10,300 members. For more information, visit WaterLandLife.org.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY

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Western Pennsylvania Conservancy SCHOOL GROUNDS GREENING PROJECT



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THE SCHOOL GROUNDS GREENING PROJECT

The School Grounds Greening Project brings children closer to nature by enhancing the grounds of Pittsburgh Public Schools with greenery and outdoor green spaces. A partnership of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Grable Foundation and Pittsburgh Public Schools, this project will bring low-maintenance, sustainable greenery to all Pittsburgh Public Schools and is scheduled for completion in 2011.



The project is being carried out by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in collaboration with school staff. Beyond benefiting students, the project helps teachers, parents, custodians and even neighbors get involved in improving the school environment and community.

GET INVOLVED!

Caretaking new green spaces at schools will depend on all of us. You can help by volunteering to become a School Tender. Help us sustain wonderful green spaces that will connect our children to nature for years to come.

For more information, call 412-586-2416 or email SchoolGreening@paconserve.org.



◀ BEFORE



▼ AFTER

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The School Grounds Greening Project:

- adds low-maintenance trees, shrubs and other plants to school grounds
- creates flexible green spaces for outdoor learning, play and reflection
- actively involves students, teachers, staff, parents and community members to sustain of each project
- supports existing school programs such as outdoor science classes or gardens, as well as Earth Day and Arbor Day activities

Designs are planned to ensure simple, long-term maintenance for school custodians and grounds crews. This project will not construct traditional playground structures, nor does it have a curriculum component.

Western Pennsylvania
Conservancy



water, land, life.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

This initiative was inspired by Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods*, which demonstrates that children need nature as much as nature needs children. The School Grounds Greening Project aims to enrich our children's educational experiences and learning environment by creating opportunities to play, learn and socialize in outdoor settings. In the process, it brings ecological and aesthetic benefits to the entire school community. The project also connects Pittsburgh to a growing international movement that aims to give students more contact with nature and the outdoors.



OUR APPROACH

To assure safety and sustainability, each school's project is carefully planned through site assessments and feedback from schools. Trees are planted at safe distances from buildings to prevent structural damage. In addition, shrubs and trees are spaced to ensure the visibility and safety of students. When possible, students are involved in greening their schools from the outset – in order to instill a sense of ownership and ensure the long-term care and maintenance of plants, trees and shrubs that beautify their schools.

We welcome questions and community involvement in the School Grounds Greening Project. To get involved or to learn more, please call 412-586-2416 or email SchoolGreening@paconserve.org.