Milwaukee Parkside School for the Arts
Agricultural Program Overview
Honoring the Past, United in the Present and Committed to the Future

The Parkside Agricultural program consists of 3 hands on learning opportunities: the hoop houses, aquaponics lab and raised bed gardens. Each presents its own unique cross curricular opportunities for students in K4 through 8th grade, along with our 9th through 12th grade partners at Bay View High School.

A myriad of programs are underway under the umbrella of the Agricultural Program. They are categorized under the main theme: ***Honoring the Past, United in the Present and Committed to the Future***. Parkside represents 90% of Milwaukee zip codes. This very special demographic presents an amazing opportunity for community collaboration and cultural celebration within the program.

Current projects are noted below under each category:

Honoring the Past

All agricultural and farming projects honor our past and our WI culture, as such all of our gardening efforts are rooted in the past. Additionally, the 3rd grade students are looking at WI history and the different cultures as they relate to neighborhoods. These students will research recipes and the vegetables/herbs that are used frequently in each culture for traditional celebrations. The recipes will be tested in the aquaponics lab with our new kitchen equipment. The class will compile a recipe book to share with families. Additionally, garden plans will be made for the hoop houses based on these recipes. Example: tomatoes and basil grow well together and will be researched and planned under the Italian culture component & 'Brady Street' research. Additionally, the barn quilt project already completed with the Bay View High School geometry class and Milwaukee Parkside 1st grade students are a testament to WI history, 'honoring our past.'

United in the Present

The aforementioned work being done with 3rd grade as they work with specific neighborhoods and ethnicities will be expanded to include everyone at Parkside. The garden plans for the hoop houses and raised beds will be culturally diverse and an accurate representation of Milwaukee Parkside's very diverse student population – with Asian vegetables, African American recipes and so on and so forth. Through our parent cohort culinary arts class, all cultures are explored and celebrated through food and a time to sit down and enjoy together! Through an art specialist, the Yes Club, 4th grade or a special project in the lab, a large sign or plaque will be developed, with a WI map included and multicultural skin toned hands shaped around it to celebrate the 'Parkside Community Garden.' This will be installed at the Hoop Houses along with the barn quilt panels already created through the Bay View High School geometry class and Milwaukee Parkside collaboration. Further united in the present, these garden planting projects will be completed with Bay View High School environmental and life science students, working together to better our world. Finally, as a unifying project, every student will paint a rock with a word that evokes hope, trust and commitment to one another for a better future. These will be installed to form a river at the Hoop House location.

Committed to the Future

The Compost Club at Milwaukee Parkside is making strides to divert compostable lunchroom waste for a more environmentally friendly approach. The team has researched, photographed, tracked and are now putting together a power point and posters to train the school about this project. An environmentally friendly fundraiser has been launched to cover the small fee needed for the compost to be picked up. This is one example of our commitment to the future. Additionally, the High School and elementary school have collaborated to create educational signs advertising butterfly learning labs, bat conservation, prairie plantings and the orchards. The latter three located at the hoop houses. These are all efforts in sustainability. Future projects may include a bee hive and other environmentally conscious projects.