

## School Garden Report 2023

# Ben Franklin Junior High



Images: Large - Paul Skawinski instructing two students on proper planting technique.  
Small - Principal Joel Burgener participating in the planting.

In 2023, a rain garden, using Wisconsin native plants, was installed at Ben Franklin Junior High. The project was funded by the City of Stevens Point Public Utilities & Transportation Department and coordinated by the local non-profit, Recycling Connections. The project directly impacted approximately 100 students attending Ben Franklin, and indirectly impacted 825 students attending Ben Franklin. This report summarizes the outcomes of this garden installation.



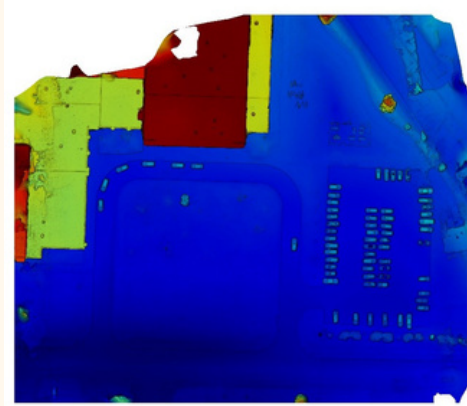
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# Site Selection

Ben Franklin has a lot of flooding issues in front of the school with the road pooling water right at their turn-around driveway where the busses travel. There was considerable discussion on placement for this installation. In the end, it was decided to triple the project in an effort to significantly divert water away from the road and capture as much water from the roof into an overflowing catchment area. The school district created a large berm along the road. The planting area was approximately 1500 square feet. Funds from the Stevens Point Area School District – Facilities Department (\$1,000) and the Ben Franklin (\$1,000) were added to the project to purchase more plants.



Image: Partners and teachers working together to discuss garden placement.



Ariel photos taken during a student lesson given on 4/19/2023 by guest speaker, Chris Radford, North Central Conservancy Trust. Students learned about site assessments and how to use modern technology, like drones, for natural resources management techniques.

# Plant Species

Students and teachers consulted with local partners from Generation Native Plants (Amherst, WI) and J&J Nursery (Wild Rose, WI) to select suitable plants for the soil type and conditions. The following plants were selected for the garden.

- Bicknell's Sedge, *Carex bicknellii*
- Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa*
- Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*
- Golden Alexanders, *Zizia aurea*
- Hoary Vervain, *Verbena stricta*
- Lance-leaf Coreopsis, *Coreopsis lanceolata*
- New England Aster, *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*
- Nodding Onion, *Allium cernuum*
- Pale Beardtongue, *Penstemon pallidus*
- Pale Purple Coneflower, *Echinacea pallida*
- Prairie Coreopsis, *Coreopsis palmata*
- Purple Coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*
- Rough Blazing Star, *Liatriis aspera*
- Showy Goldenrod, *Solidago speciosa*
- Smooth Blue Aster, *Symphyotrichum laeve*
- Stiff Goldenrod, *Oligoneuron rigidum*
- Swamp Milkweed, *Asclepias incarnata*
- Wild Bergamot, *Monarda fistulosa*
- Wild Lupine, *Lupinus perennis*

# Plan Drawings



## Student Design Contest –

The garden design was created by Ashley Zager, Ella Trombley, and Catalyna Jisko.

# Stats

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**1,300**  
Plants

**~100**  
Students Planting

**7**  
Cubic Yards of Compost

## Installation

July 11th, 2023 - Site prepped by excavating the sod and then area was tarped.



September 26th, 2023 - Compost delivered and spread by 4 students.



A special thank you to Generation Native Plants (Amherst, WI) and J&J Nursery (Wild Rose, WI) for supplying the plants. Busy Bee Compost for supplying the compost. Stevens Point Area School District and Ben Franklin Junior High School for the additional funds to pay for more plants.



# Certified as a Native Garden by the National Wildlife Federation

- 1,300 plants ordered
- Materials Purchased: edging, compost, deer/rabbit repellent
- Compost bin installed (coming Spring 2024)
- Laminated plant identification cards printed

## Special Thanks

**Funding:** City of Stevens Point, Public Utilities & Transportation Dept. Stevens Point Area School Districts, Ben Franklin Junior High

### Community Partners

- **Joel Lemke**, Director of Public Utilities and Transportation, City of Stevens Point
- **Dan O'Connell**, Portage County Land & Water Conservation District
- **Amberle Schwartz**, Wild Ones Central WI
- **Susan Schuller**, Recycling Connections
- **Angie Hauer & Lesley Sheridan**, Portage County Master Gardeners
- **Chris Radford**, North Central Conservancy Trust
- **Paul Skawinski**, UWSP Lakes
- **Chris Budzinski**, Stevens Point Area School District

### Ben Franklin Planning Team

- **Joel Burgener**, Principal
- **Kelly Smith**, Teacher
- **Karla Lockman**, Parent and Boston School Forest Director
- **Denise Anderson**, Teacher
- **Cindy Solinsky**, Teacher
- **Brenna Lockman**, Student



### Supporters

This is a partnership project between the City of Stevens Point Public Utilities and Recycling Connections with the additional community partners listed here:



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