

## NORTHEAST DISTRICT FUNDING FOR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

### Project Title

A Three Sisters Garden Teaching the Concept of Community and Diversity to Children Through Gardening

### Project Contact

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### Project Collaborators

Bill Wright, Community Garden Coordinator, Brown County UW-Extension  
Ed Dorff, Principal, Howe Elementary School  
Chris Dunbar, Howe Resource Center Director  
Emily Kauth, Teacher, Howe School

### Situation Statement

The youth who enroll in the Howe School 4-H program attend a school where there is a high incidence of poverty (87%), low achievement scores (~50% proficiency), and a high concentration of minority students (70%). This group of 4-Hers meet daily during the summer to have fun while learning in a safe and stimulating environment. A primary objective for the summer 4-H program is to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, a cross-age spirit of community, and a place where kids and adults learn to work together to achieve common goals.

"The Three Sisters" of Iroquois legend are a harmonious trio of corn, pole beans and squash planted together to support and thrive off one another. The Brown County UW-Extension will partner with Howe Elementary School to demonstrate the concepts of community and support of others through the planting and care of a Three Sisters Garden. The garden will be planted in front of the school by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class and then care will be continued by the 4-H summer program.

### Project Goals & Expected Outcomes

In a Three Sisters garden, just as in life, all work together. Critters will find it harder to invade the garden by interplanting corn, beans and squash. The corn stalk serves as a pole for the beans, the beans help to add the nitrogen to the soil that the corn needs, and the squash provides a ground cover of shade that helps the soil retain moisture.

#### Goals

Demonstrate the concepts of community building and diversity through the planning and care of a Three Sisters Garden, thus ensuring that the students are exposed to these concepts at an early age.

#### Outcomes

1. Children will learn about planting and care of crops.
2. Children will be better able to see where their food comes from.
3. Children will be able to see how each of the crops (corn, beans, and squash) work together in the garden to build a better "community" for all of the plants.
4. Children will see that without the diversity of the plants, the system would not work.
5. Students will learn a small part about Native American Culture.

### Project Timeline

2004

May	Introduce concepts to the class and plant garden
June-July	Care for garden
August	Continue garden care, continue discussion of how all three crops are working together, and have a bean soup party
September	Harvest, dry and pop popcorn for students Harvest squash and prepare pies for students

## Evaluation Plan

Simple pre-post evaluation program

## Proposed Budget and Funding Request

Salaries

Bill Wright, Community Garden Coordinator*** (25 hours x \$15 per hour)	\$375.00
Supplies	\$ 25.00
Book: <u>In the Three Sisters Garden, Native American Stories and Seasonal Activities for the Curious Child</u>	<u>28.95</u>

Total requested \$ 428.95

\*\*\*\* Brown County will cover all fringe benefits to staff

\*\*\*\* This is a new proposal