

**Part B. Summary of Green School Activities:**

**Administrative Support:** Bright Futures Academy, BFA, starts with administrative support and exemplifies what it means to be a Green School. As a charter school, BFA has the flexibility it needs to implement a wide variety of innovative programs with a mission “to provide families with an educational alternative to the currently available academic programs, for students enrolling in grades K-8, in accordance with the highest professional standards and in cooperation with school families, key stakeholders and community members; in an effort to foster individualized education in a safe, nurturing environment that focuses on core academics with an emphasis on international awareness, social tolerance, and environmental conservation while educating the whole child- mind, body and character.”

**School Grounds Enhancement:** BFA demonstrates this through actions that can be seen daily on our school campuses that starts with a school culture that was created by the school founder and supported by the school community. Inspired by a trip to Cornell University’s Children’s Garden, in 2010 Kendall Artusi, Pat Rentz and Henry DiGiacinto decided to take a under-utilized, run-down soccer field and turn it into a 10,000 square foot environmental learning program. Today, the garden houses 13 chickens in a newly renovated roost; 10 bunnies in a newly renovated warren; and a 500 gallon tank full of invasive fish that were harvested from the local canal. The program is complete with an outdoor classroom and kitchen where students learn farm to table agriculture.

**School Sustainability:** In our experience there is funding for start-up gardens, but sustaining these programs requires a lot of planning and team work. BFA conducts green school fundraisers that minimally involve disposable consumerism. We use water and energy conservation techniques to include using recycled barrels as water collectors which we in turn use to water our garden. We focus on healthy lifestyles to include eating, exercising and mindfulness training. BFA requires the use of recycled materials in our classrooms and art programs; requires the use of journals to reduce reproducibles; provides shuttle service between campuses to reduce unnecessary travel and utilizes volunteers & staff for year round garden care/maintenance.

**Curriculum Integration:** BFA integrates environmental topics into all subject areas and also provides direct instruction through the electives program. Students travel around the world studying the continents and geographical/environmental features specific to each region. Students participate in the garden field program on a daily, weekly or monthly basis depending on the student’s grade. They also visit local parks and take nature based field trips regularly. Annually we host “Who Will Stand Up for the Earth” a week dedicated to environmental issues. BFA students also take part in writing books about the environment and garden that are published annual and used in the classroom for educational purposes. This year we implemented the use of nature walls in the classrooms to bring nature inside!

**Community Involvement:** BFA has developed a Green Ambassadors & Lighthouse Leaders program that enlists the help of students in grades 3-8 for recycling and other environmentally minded projects. Additionally, these students are utilized to assist in the garden with younger students, to include reading stories and taking them on educational tours. BFA partners with a number of organizations and provides support to numerous school programs. Every year we host bi-annual garden days where we provide food, art projects, educational lectures and more for free to our school families and community. We also distribute all garden food to our school families.

**Innovation:** Innovation is pervasive at BFA. It permeates the core of all that we do, from the depth of our programs to our organic campus policy; BFA is always creating new ways to engage our school community. It’s easy being green at Bright Futures Academy!