



**Green & Healthy
Schools Network**

A message from Cynthia:

Welcome to a new school year!

As students return to the classroom and outdoor educational spaces, it's a great time to think about how our school systems can become healthier, greener, and more connected places to learn and thrive.

The **Green & Healthy Schools Network (GHSN)** brings together school districts, community partners, educators, students, health professionals, and local governments to turn shared goals into practical action. Through collective impact and our three core strategies – Green Schoolyards, School Community Wellness, and K-12 Green Workforce Development – we help school systems build on what they already have, connect with the right people and resources, and create lasting district-wide change. The GHSN can help you:

- **Build Capacity**
- **Strengthen Existing Partnerships and Connect with New Partners**
- **Provide Green & Healthy Schools Training for: Developing & Supporting Outdoor Learning, Expanding Agricultural Education Career Pathways, and Amplifying District Wellness Policy to Benefit the Entire School Community**

If you are a school district leader, a partner or a city official who wants to get connected with the Green & Healthy Schools Network, read on to hear more about how GHSN can help you, and then [reach out to me](#) to get started!



With gratitude,
Cynthia Walters
Green & Healthy Schools Director



Help us build a more resilient region

GIVE A GIFT TODAY



Green & Healthy Schools Network

The Green & Healthy Schools Network is ready to equip school districts with the tools to move school systems forward with their district-wide planning for outdoor education, K-12 green career pathways, coordinated wellness initiatives, and other sustainability efforts across the district. Here are some ideas and resources to move outdoor learning to the next level.

GREEN SCHOOLYARDS

Connecting school grounds to sustainability, stewardship, and career pathways

Green Schoolyards integrate nature throughout the school campus, creating places where students and school communities can thrive. Students can help plan, design, and care for these spaces through coursework, STEM projects, service learning, clubs, and career exploration – building environmental knowledge, stewardship, and leadership skills. The challenge of maintaining these spaces can turn barriers into positive outcomes when school districts create opportunities for environmental stewardship and conservation through work-based learning.

This year, consider:

How can your district better connect its school grounds, sustainability goals, curriculum, career learning, and stewardship practices to create healthier, more resilient places for students and communities?

Explore Green Schoolyards resources:

- [Growing Teachers Throughout the Seasons Course Modules](#)
 - [Farm to School Curriculum Guide](#)
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K-12 GREEN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Connecting learning to careers and the growing green economy

K-12 Green Workforce Development connects academic learning with career exploration, Career Technical Education (CTE), and work-based learning to prepare students for college and in-demand green careers. Green & Healthy Schools focuses particularly on agricultural education pathways that connect to school gardens, food systems, wellness, and green schoolyards. Pathways can begin with garden-based learning and career exploration in elementary school and progress toward specialized Agricultural Education programs in high school.

This year, consider:

How has Career Technical Education (CTE) changed in your state? Check the Department of Education in your state to identify how changes can be leveraged to reduce barriers for students entering Agricultural Education Pathways. The Ohio Department of Education & Workforce describes the changes to CTE programs [here](#).

SCHOOL COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Creating healthy school communities through shared action

School Community Wellness brings schools and community partners together to develop and implement a Local School Wellness Policy that reflects the needs of the school community. Engaging students, families, educators, health agencies, community organizations and other partners helps districts coordinate strategies that support nutrition, physical activity, mental wellbeing, and academic success.

Each new school year brings the opportunity for school system wellness leaders to recruit a diverse group of internal and external stakeholders for the district wellness committee.

By adding strategic partners, such as health agencies to the district wellness committee, these partnerships can help a school system implement policies and measure success.

This year, consider:

If your school district participates in the National Breakfast Program (NBP) or National School Lunch Program (NSLP), think about how your school system can embed outdoor education into the district wellness policy as a way to sustain programming for all schools.

Explore School Community Wellness Resources:

For more information on how to strengthen your Local School Wellness Committee, explore our Local School Wellness Policy Tool Kit [here](#) (Spanish language version available [here](#)).



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Get in touch!

Reply to this email to reach Cynthia, or for questions regarding membership, visit [here](#) or email membership@greenumbrella.org.



Green Umbrella leads cross-sector collaboration to accelerate climate action across Greater Cincinnati.

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