

Dear Mrs Heatley,

Earlier this year my friends and I in Grade 5 started to plant some seeds at lunchtime in the school yard. Other kids from other year levels got involved and we all enjoyed watching the seeds grow and taking care of them together. We have even showed our buddies where we planted them. I was going home and telling my parents and Grandparents all about what we were doing at school. Then my Grandparents gave me an avocado seed that they had collected at home. They taught me how to water it and make sure that it gets enough sunlight. I spoke to Miss Davies and she thought that it was an incredible idea for us to try to grow it in the classroom at school. Another student has also been trying to grow apple seeds. After that my friends and I started to brain storm reasons on why a school garden would be a great idea for all the students at Karoo. Here are some of the reasons why we think that Karoo would be even better with a school garden.

Firstly, growing our own fruit and vegetables at Karoo would allow the students to see things work in nature from the beginning through to the table. We could plant seedlings and trees and then take care of them and see how they produce fruit and vegetables. We could then use these products in cooking classes at school, or even sell them to parents after school hours just like the icy pole sales. I believe that children would have a lot of fun learning about how to take care of and grow healthy food choices.

Secondly, growing plants in our school yard would help the students develop their understanding of the school values. Children will need to demonstrate kindness by not standing on the plants that somebody has worked hard for. Children will also need to demonstrate kindness by not being rude to each other and show respect to one another by being accepting that other people have taken the time to do something in the school and we all should show pride in our work. Another value that students can demonstrate is personal excellence. A way that they can do this is by challenging themselves to grow a complicated plant. I think children will also have to show tenacity as sometimes plants die and do not grow and you need to be resilient to the fact that although you did the right thing sometimes things don't go the way you want them to.

Some problems that we could encounter but are easily solved include:

- Where to put the garden?
 - o My friends and I have researched several good planting spots depending on the size of the garden. We believe that an excellent spot would be to the side of the Prep building near the footy goals. This would be a great spot to plant trees and vegies. Another spot we could have planter boxes near the Gr1 playground – there is already 1 planter box in this spot – we could expand on this.
- How to fund the Garden?
 - o I have thought about several ideas which include fundraisers - we could do a gold coin donation day where students dress up in Nature colours, students could 'buy' a plant/seedlings/seeds and then the students are allowed to

plant this in the new garden themselves – this will encourage everyone to take care of the garden because they have ownership of it.

- Eventually we could sell the food that we produce, which will allow the money raised to go back into purchasing items for the garden.
- We could get the school involved in National Tree Planting Day where we invite local community groups in to the school to help us raise money and plant the trees/plants – this would be great to get students interested in planting plants.
- How does this help the teachers teach us at school?
 - I think this would help all the teachers including classroom and the science teacher because we would be learning about sustainability, nature, life cycles, water cycle to name a few.
 - It would also be a great calm place to go if you need a brain break from inside learning.
 - We could research STEM ideas for how to make sure the plants stay healthy over the holidays.
- Ongoing commitment of students from year to year
 - I believe that it could be one of the Environmental clubs jobs to clean out the dirty soil and put in the new soil, plants and remove weeds,
 - It would be great for buddies to work together in the area

In conclusion, I believe that our school deserves a school garden because it is better for kids and challenges them to be the best they can.

From Mitchell Howard