



MASSACHUSETTS  
FARM TO SCHOOL

# Social Emotional Learning Pedagogy in the Garden

Notes from the Mel King School Garden

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# MASS. FARM TO SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Mass. Farm to School strengthens local farms and fisheries and promotes healthy communities by increasing local food purchasing and education at schools.

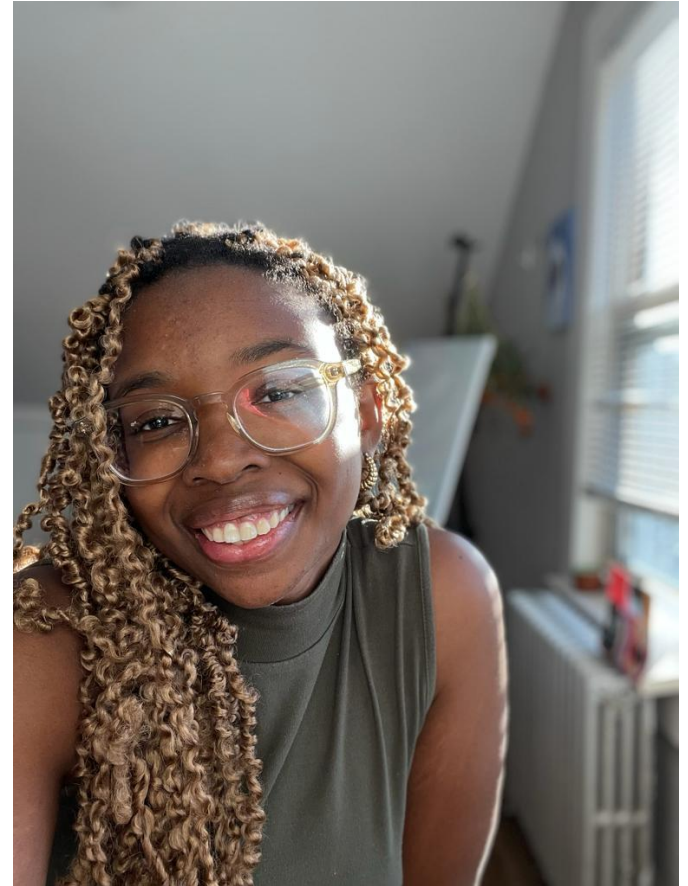
Get involved through our:

- Professional learning opportunities
- Networking
- Policy/Advocacy
- Communications



## Fatima Seck

I started working as a farmer and school gardener after working in art museums for several years. I love to bring as much culture and art to land-based work, and I'm big on heritage growing. I've worked with young people of all ages from preschool through university, and love to teach!



# Key Practices in Social Emotional Pedagogy

1. Play
2. Discovery & Mistakes
3. Opportunities for creative expression
4. Movement and emotional regulation
5. Practicing Gratitude
6. Perspective & Service
7. Acknowledging Life & Death



# The Importance of Play-based Learning



## It's not a classroom. Lean in!

- Embracing that the garden is not a classroom
- Outlet for important but classroom-inappropriate behavior
- Play and social emotional development & growth

# Deliberate Spaces for Discovery



**Having one area where there's no "doing it right."**

- Allowing for discovery
- Opportunities for youth play, communication and social organization through play
- Opportunities for conflict
- Learning without the pressure or responsibility of a 'right or wrong' way

# Outlets for Self-Expression and Creativity



## Gardens love art!

- Some students just aren't outdoorsy, but can still participate
- Creates further investment in the space
- Building confidence
- Art is an opportunity for expression
- Projects include: Making garden gnomes, painting beds, signage, dolls

# Encouraging Movement



## A garden is as good as a playground

- Movement is vital for emotional regulation
- Sports create opportunity for leadership and communication
- Diversifying garden experiences as much as possible



# Practicing Gratitude



## Finding moments to say thank you (they're everywhere!)

- Supports the skill of reframing attitude and having perspective
- Builds emotional awareness
- Creates an atmosphere of respect and appreciation

# Perspective and Service



**“It makes me feel good.”**

- Service broads perspective
- Community service creates confidence and self-value
- An understanding of the ecosystem of food and life
- Cultivates patience and the value of patience

# Acknowledging Life & Death



## Acknowledging all life and death, big and small

- Using projection as a tool
- Working with guardedness by using metaphor
- Deepening relationship to, and respect for, land and life

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Mass. Farm to School - [www.massfarmtoschool.org](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org) - Subscribe to our newsletter and stay up to date on upcoming webinars and other professional learning opportunities

# STAY IN TOUCH!



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[www.massfarmtoschool.org](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org)

Contact Information of Presenters (if applicable)

**Additional Text**