IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES THROUGH URBAN GARDENING

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It is now a trending project of the Department of Education that promotes and supports urban gardening. In schools, this is also termed as backyard gardening or gulayan sa paaralan. DepEd believes that urban gardening is not only limited to the neighborhood or the backyards, but is now also started in schools all over the country. But does this endeavor only aim for the improvement of nutritional status of the students?

There are studies that shows that urban gardening in schools has made significant contributions in improving educational outcomes. It has long been acknowledged that there is a connection between good health and well-being as related to education. One example of this situation is eating breakfast before going to school. Students who eat a healthy breakfast tend to have better concentration than students who skip breakfast altogether (Boyers, 2018). This clearly emphasizes the significance of breakfast for developing youngsters. Making the breakfast balanced is also a good way for the students to get the essential energy they basically need in order to attain or achieve a good school performance.

When urban gardening is practiced and developed in schools, it could also be integrated in other subjects aside from Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE). Example, in Science, urban gardens could provide sufficient opportunity for engaging and relevant activities that are applicable to students’ lives. This could also be done to exercise inspiring experimentation and exploratory activities, as well as problem solving. It could also encourage inquiry as students use their senses, reasoning, and communication skills in order to find answers to certain questions, or to solve a particular
problem. As a result, such experiences will help improve students’ attitude toward science. On the other hand, when math is incorporated, teachers can let the students do some estimations, measurement and computations. Evidences show how urban gardens become a powerful teaching tool in the teaching-learning process.

Beyond all these, the benefits that students can get from gardening could go farther than their own personal welfare. According to the Western Growers Foundation, students become contributors in environmental-related advocacy especially about varied agricultural practices, “Through gardening, students become responsible caretakers. They have an opportunity to engage in agricultural practices on a small scale, learning about the responsibilities and impacts of land cultivation. They explore the web of interactions among the living and nonliving players that sustain life. By doing so, they develop a greater understanding of the natural world.”

With much of these benefits, how does urban gardening appeal to you? Have you started it in your own schools?

If your answer is yes, continue and sustain. If the response is negative, well, think again. After all, the nutritious food in your plate today could be a product of your students harvest from their gulayan. And the achievement your learner made could also be a product of your own urban garden.

References:

Simmons, Ashley. The Benefits of Building an Urban Garden at Your School. May 24, 2017. populationeducation.org


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