Keynote

Place-based Education: Making School More Like a Farmer’s Market, David Sobel
The landscape of schooling has begun to look like the sprawl of America. Generic textbooks designed for the big markets of California and Texas provide the same homogenized, unhealthy diet as all those fast food places on the strip. Educational biodiversity falls prey to the bulldozers of standardization. What is nearby has become parochial and insignificant.

Place-based education is a response to the alienation of schools from community, and the decoupling of schools from historic sites, local landscapes, and farms. Instead, we need schools organized around the principles of the farmers’ market, drawing on the resources and variety of the local community.

Concurrent Sessions (Participants will attend both)

Designing Successful Gardens, Margaret Hagen
There are many elements that go into establishing a successful school garden. Many school gardens never get off the ground or quickly fail because of a lack of guidelines. This workshop will provide an overview of the necessary steps including: physical requirements (for the children as well as the garden); tying the garden to school curricula; steps to take with parents, teachers, administrators and maintenance; design planting and maintenance; and resources that can help. Come learn the basics that will lead you to success.

Growing a Generation of Healthy and Happy Eaters, Jesse Stabile Morrell
This presentation will highlight evidence-based recommendations for parents and caregivers in fostering healthy eating in young children. Jesse will also discuss recent research findings related to the impact of classroom gardens.

Workshops (Choose 2)

Garden Journaling, Amy Ashley
During this workshop participants will explore how journaling with children can enhance their garden experience. We will explore journals from our classroom and discuss the challenges and successes we have encountered. We will explore ways to encourage all children to become involved in gardening. Together we will create simple low-cost journals and review ways to introduce journals into your own curriculum.
Glad Animal Movement: Supporting a Full Range of Bodily Exploration in Childhood, David Sobel
As childhood becomes more digitized and indoors, one of the things that disappears is a full range of movement behaviors. Childhoods are becoming sedentary and constricted. One of the challenges for elementary school teachers and environmental educators is to counteract this trend and encourage a wider, fuller, healthier range of body movements in children. Creating a full repertoire of bodily movements makes students healthier and assures the development of a fuller range of neural pathways.

In this workshop, we’ll spend time outdoors creating movement adventures for each other that encourage a full range of movements with an additional emphasis of vocabulary development. The process we used will serve as a model for doing similar activities with elementary-aged children. Participants should come dressed to be outside and participate in activities.

Join us as we share our experiences as Early Childhood Educators exploring the cycle of gardening with the youngest children in our program, infant through preschool. Guided by principles of emergent curriculum, we will share our long-term investigations into worms, composting, soil, planting, harvesting, and of course tasting the foods we grow. We will examine the use of creative indoor and outdoor spaces, ideas on approaching new textures, creatures, and flavors, as well as ways to create age-appropriate provocations and experiences for young children.

Collaborative Garden Structures: Engaging children in problem solving and creative thinking, Beth Hallett
In this workshop we will spend time discussing garden structures that will capture a child’s imagination, create play spaces, as well as build social and problem solving skills. We will travel to the CSDC garden and participate in a hands-on project. Participants should be dressed to be outside.

Gardening and Composting with Young Children, Sandra ‘Sam’ Howe
We will explore environments and curriculum that will easily incorporate gardening and composting into daily routines. Whether you are a novice or an experienced gardener/composter, this is a chance to explore ideas for your indoor and outdoor play spaces that will include where your food comes from and what to do with the waste products left behind. Innovative plans from initiating new ideas to enhancing mature areas will be addressed.