

Youth Gardening School Community Partnership
Call for Collaboration Application
APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 1, 2016

Please use the following word template and work with your team to draft your application narrative. **This information must be submitted via email using this completed template to grants@kacee.org by Feb. 1, 2016.**

Lead Organizational Information and Descriptions and Letters of Support from Collaborators
(50 points)

(1) Name of Lead Organization:

Complete High School Maize (Maize School District USD 266)

Address: 745 W. Academy Ave.
Maize, KS 67101

Email: kcuster@usd266.com (Kristy Custer, Principal) Phone Number: (316) 722-4790 (School)

Website: www.usd266.com/complete

Contact Person Name: Heidi Albin

Contact Person Email: halbin@usd266.com Phone Number: (316) 208-9869 (Cell)

Our organization is:

X A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization: a school.

a. Please provide your mission statement.

“The mission of Complete High School Maize is the empowerment of all students to excel academically and to master the necessary skills to be productive and responsible citizens, ready to enter higher education and/or employment.”

b. Please provide a brief description of your organization and unique qualifications to be the lead organization.

Complete High School Maize is a program of the high schools (MHS & MSHS) for those students who have difficulty in the traditional school environment. CHSM is an alternative high school where students must meet the same curriculum requirements as all students from MHS and MSHS.

CHSM is a smaller school with a maximum of 60 students enrolled at a time. This smaller setting allows staff to better meet the students' needs with individualized instruction based on the student's learning style. Many of the activities planned for student learning are "hands-on" projects which fits this smaller setting. The CHSM Staff is composed of dedicated individuals who freely use their time outside of school to make this program excellent. Following the examples of the staff, CHSM students also become involved in projects to widen our impact on our community. The CHSM carries out various programs and has extensive experience with planning and fulfilling projects. CHSM is excited about the possibility of a school garden that this grant would make possible. The garden would be managed and supervised by the science teacher, Heidi Albin, who has broad gardening and agricultural experience. With the garden on site, our science department can ensure that it remains productive.

- c. Please describe your organization's interest in and need for youth programming connected to gardening.

CHSM has had a small gardening program for the past several years. Students have planted in a local garden, pulled weeds for volunteer work, and grown vegetable plants from seeds in the classroom to sell in the spring as a fundraiser. Last year, a group of students converted one of our flower beds into a small garden and successfully raised two tomato plants and one butternut squash plant. Unfortunately, the small garden was nearly at capacity with those three plants and despite student, parent, and community interest, our gardening program has not been able to flourish as desired due to lack of funds to construct a "real" garden.

As an alternative school, CHSM focuses heavily on life skills. Gardening is a life skill that we sincerely wish to teach to our students on a larger scale. An onsite garden will allow students to learn everything from preparing a garden, planting, caring for the garden, harvesting, preserving, cooking, and winterizing. Our high school students also work with students at Pray-Woodman Elementary School, which is located right next to our building, and the Maize Central Elementary students, who are located a short walk from our building. Our students tutor elementary students, assist teachers, work in small groups, spend lunch and recess with young children who have trouble making friends, and perform lesson-based puppet shows for the elementary school classes. We have long had the desire to bring the elementary students into our gardening program. However, a three-plant garden and small pots lining the walls and covering the counters in the science classroom are not conducive to the extensive elementary teaching we would like to do. Having a larger garden at the school would allow not only the high school students to learn life skills, but would also help to foster a love of nature and gardening in elementary students as they learn from high school students.

- d. Please describe how your organization would partner with a school to support the development, care and maintenance of a garden year-round.

Our school would like to partner with Via Christi Village on Ridge, a retirement home, for this project. Our students often feel as if they have been forgotten by society, which in turn gives them great compassion for others that our society seems to forget, namely the elderly in retirement homes. Our students currently volunteer at Via Christi Village once a month in a large group to

play bingo, once a week in a small group to paint the residents' nails, and two students volunteer there three times a week to tend to residents' needs. We have found that the opportunities for our students to interact with the wiser generations have made our students better people and we would love to expand our partnership with Via Christi Village by implementing this garden. The vision is that the CHSM students would prepare and plant the garden during the spring and then residents from Via Christi Village would travel to the school to tend to the garden during the summer months. The CHSM students would do the physically-demanding work in the spring and fall while the residents tended the garden during the summer. Many individuals, especially the elderly, find joy in gardening. This program would provide a place for the residents to enjoy the more relaxing aspects of gardening without the physical exertion required during the spring and fall. The garden design we plan to use would be handicap-accessible with raised beds high enough off the ground that residents can sit or stand comfortably while tending to the garden. Residents in wheelchairs would be able to tend to the plants with ease.

The staff at CHSM also recognize that the older generations have many skills to teach. As the generations that used to rely on gardening for a significant portion of their food pass, many of the techniques and tricks that used to be common knowledge are fading from society. The vision of this program goes beyond just making a place for retirement home residents to garden; we want to bring Via Christi residents into the classrooms where older generations can teach teenagers the lost skills of growing food. We would also like to bring together the residents and the Pray-Woodman Elementary and Maize Central Elementary students by hosting special "Gardening Days" at our school. The residents will teach skills to CHSM students, who will then teach the elementary students and help supervise them as the residents, CHSM students, and elementary students work in the garden together.

Audience Served & Estimated Impacts (25 points):

- a. Where is the garden project most likely to be located and what is the rationale for the location?
The garden will be built at Complete High School Maize. Because the CHSM students will be doing the majority of the work, this location would allow our students to tend the garden daily during the planting and harvesting seasons. A sidewalk connects the CHSM property to the elementary school next to us, making our school grounds a convenient place for the elementary school students to walk to as a class. Via Christi Village has transportation services that routinely take residents to areas outside of their campus, and because our school is only a few miles away from the retirement home, transportation of the residents to the garden would not be a problem.
- b. Please describe the audiences (early childhood, elementary, middle/high school students, adults, community members, environmental educators, etc.) that your proposed project will impact, including estimated numbers, demographics (ethnicity and socio-economic data).
Because the proposed CHSM Garden is intended to be permanent, it will impact countless numbers of individuals throughout the years. Each year, approximately 80 CHSM students can benefit from the garden by working in the garden, learning from Via Christi Village residents, teaching elementary school students, and enjoying the produce. Although the Maize School

District is in a relatively socio-economically stable area, there is a significant low-income population and a majority of our students come from homes that could be considered poverty. We estimate that at least 60 elementary school students from Pray-Woodman Elementary and Maize Central Elementary will benefit from experiencing the garden each year. Approximately 20 Via Christi Village residents are anticipated to be involved each year. So the impact is around 160 individuals every year, not counting the community members that will benefit from our produce during appreciation meals we serve each year, meals that we serve to tours that come through our building several times each year, parents, and any other school organization in the district that would be welcome to participate in the program. CHSM is founded on community service and partnership, therefore we do not view this garden as “ours,” but rather as a resource that will allow us to impact our community in multiple ways.

- c. Please describe the anticipated outcomes and impact for the identified targeted audiences through this project.

The CHSM Garden will impact individuals from our entire community, but three target audiences will be impacted the most. First, the students of Complete High School Maize. As stated earlier, the majority of our students come from low-income homes. Additionally, a large percentage of our students do not come from stable homes and have significant issues in life that have made school difficult for them, resulting in their seeking our alternative high school for help. Without the support of a functional home environment, few of our students have anyone in their lives who will teach them about gardening or preparing their own food. While the CHSM Garden will be “fun,” its purpose goes beyond that to give students experiences and knowledge that can help them live healthy, fulfilling lives. We believe that if the staff at CHSM doesn’t give our students these opportunities, most of them will simply never experience them.

The second target audience consists of the residents at Via Christi Village. Gardening is an activity that can significantly improve the well-being of anyone. As individuals age, it can become difficult for them to engage in the gardening activities that once gave them a sense of fulfillment. Via Christi Village is excellent at providing activities for their residents, however they do not at this time have a way to engage their residents in gardening. A focus of the CHSM Garden will be accessibility and ease of use for handicapped or otherwise physically impaired individuals. Not only will the CHSM Garden allow Via Christi Residents to enjoy the outdoors and the satisfaction that comes from productive gardening, but it will also provide a platform for interaction with students. Lonely residents will find this to be extremely beneficial. We believe that this garden will significantly improve the morale and well-being of participating residents.

The elementary students at Pray-Woodman Elementary and Maize Central Elementary are the third target audience. As videogames and smart phones become more popular, young children are spending less time outside. The stagnant, unhealthy lifestyles of many young children are evident in childhood obesity rates. The CHSM Garden will allow young children to experience the joy of being outdoors and the excitement of watching plants grow. These students can learn from a young age that it is possible – and satisfying – to grow one’s own food, while igniting their love for an active, outdoor lifestyle. The CHSM Garden will also allow the elementary students to interact with high school students and the Via Christi Village residents. When the young students see the

“cool” older students taking an interest in the environment, health, and gardening, they will see greater value in it. It also allows CHSM students the opportunity to be good role models. As the young students interact with the residents they will learn wisdom and have caring adults to look up to. The interaction of the CHSM students, elementary students, and Via Christi Village residents will be mutually beneficial both intellectually and emotionally.

d. Which of the following priorities is your team most interested in addressing through a school gardening project? Your project must address one or more priorities for each column.

Educational Priorities	Community Priorities
<p>X Hands-on learning Career & technical education</p> <p>X Community engagement</p> <p>X Environmental Education Teaching Skills STEM curriculum connections</p> <p>X Service learning</p> <p>X Other: Learning lost skills from previous generations.</p>	<p>X Children’s health Community food security Environmental concerns Cleaning up our communities</p> <p>X Building strong partnerships Economic development</p> <p>X Encouraging volunteerism</p> <p>X Other: Health and wellbeing of the community’s elderly population.</p>

e. Please describe how you believe these educational and community priorities will be addressed through this collaborative.

A garden is not just a garden, it is a classroom where life skills and character traits are formed. Several educational priorities will be fulfilled by the CHSM garden. Complete High School Maize is founded on hands-on learning and service learning. The majority of our students do not learn very well in a sit-and-listen lecture setting, so we make our classes as hands-on as possible. Students enjoy school and learn more when they can actively learn and see the value of their knowledge. Few things are better suited to that type of learning than a garden. Our school has become known for our service learning through our monthly “Service Days” where our entire student body goes into various organizations in the community (including Via Christi Village) to lend a hand. CHSM students ring bells for the Salvation Army, donate blood, clean and maintain a local coffee house

for special needs adults (who will also be invited to use the CHSM garden), wash machines at the YMCA, clean projectors at other schools, and many other service activities – a list far too long to include here. Our students have a heart for others and will love spending time not only with Via Christi Residents and elementary students, but engaging our community as we open our garden to anyone who wants to participate and donate surplus food to organizations. A garden is also the perfect platform for environmental education. The best way to teach students to care for the environment is to give them the opportunity to interact with and connect to nature; gardening is a perfect opportunity to do just that! Another major educational priority that the CHSM Garden project would accomplish is the passing on of knowledge from older generations to younger generations. Volumes worth of knowledge is being lost as generations who used to grow significant portions of their own food are being replaced by populations that have only ever experienced food from a restaurant or supermarket. The residents of Via Christi Village have decades of knowledge and experience that will be lost if it is not shared with younger generations. This project would provide an audience of interested young people to soak up the knowledge that the vanishing generations want to impart.

Not only would the CHSM Garden project be exponentially beneficial for the education of our high school and elementary students, but it would also bring about constructive community benefits. One such benefit is the physical health of children in our community. The natural extension of young people realizing that they can garden and developing an appreciation for growing their own food is that those young people – and their families - will begin eating the produce they grow. Giving children an outdoor activity that is satisfying and fulfilling will also help to take them off of the couch in into the sunshine where they can develop a healthy lifestyle. Strong partnerships will also emerge as a result of the CHSM Garden. CHSM already has partnerships with several community organizations, but these partnerships can be enhanced (such as in the case of Via Christi Village, Denning’s Greenhouse, and the elementary schools) and new partnerships can be created. For example, we can form a new partnership with the Sedgwick County Extension Office as we invite them to view our garden and help us with soil testing. We can enhance our partnership with the local coffee shop for special needs adults by donating produce and inviting them to experience the garden. The strong partnerships we currently have were created through volunteerism. The CHSM Garden will encourage more volunteerism from our students as they give their time both during and outside of the school day to garden with the Via Christi Village residents, teach elementary school students, and work in the garden with individuals from other organizations in the community. Students will volunteer to cultivate produce and in the meantime, they will be cultivating friendships and compassion for others. An additional benefit of the CHSM Garden will be the improved health and wellbeing of our community’s elderly population. As discussed earlier, gardening is excellent for health, mood, and morale. Via Christi

Village residents, as well as any other elderly individuals in the community that would like to take part in this project, will be able to enjoy a pastime that may otherwise be problematic.

Organizational Capacity (25 points):

- a. Please outline your rationale for how this particular group of partners is prepared and equipped for success in development and ongoing support of a school garden program.

Complete High School Maize has existing partnerships with both Via Christi Village and Denning's Greenhouse. Denning's Greenhouse is a local, community-based agriculture provider that has strong ties to the Maize School District. Denning's has provided CHSM with gardening supplies for our vegetable plant fundraiser and the owner, Jim Denning, has expressed interest in becoming more involved with CHSM. Their greenhouse is located a short distance from the school, which will make it convenient for transport of supplies and students. Last year, staff at CHSM began speaking with Denning's about setting up a volunteer opportunity in which our students would help their employees prepare for the busy season by cleaning and watering plants; we hope to begin the volunteering aspect of our relationship with Denning's this spring. Because of our preexisting relationship, staff at CHSM and at Denning's know that we work well together and have the same values for community.

CHSM students volunteer extensively at Via Christi Village and have formed relationships with a number of their residents and staff. It has been evident over the past several years that our students and their residents enjoy working with each other and investing in each other's lives. Via Christi Village residents will be able to assist in all parts of the gardening process, either through advice or by spending time in the garden. The majority of the physically-demanding work of gardening takes place in the spring during planting and in the autumn during harvest and winterization. The summer months require minimal physical work. The raised-bed garden design leaves little room for weeds and the convenient height and narrow dimensions of the beds allow wheelchair-bound residents to access all areas of the growing area from a comfortable, seated position. The garden design can also be easily converted into a greenhouse during the colder months to allow the residents an extended season of productivity.

- b. Please identify the lead person(s) for this project and describe their qualifications and experience. Send as a separate attachment a one page resume for the lead person(s) for this project.

Heidi Albin has been the science teacher at Complete High School Maize since 2009. Because of our small staff size, she is the only science teacher in the school and teaches the core content classes of Biology, Chemistry, Essentials of Physics and Chemistry, and Earth Science, as well as elective agriculture classes. Mrs. Albin also serves as the Character Education Coordinator for our

school, which received national recognition for our outstanding program. She has conceived, designed, planned, and successfully implemented several programs at CHSM that continue to be important aspects of each school year. In addition to the state-required science instruction that our students receive, Mrs. Albin has taught several agriculture-related classes, including gardening, food preservation, and animal husbandry. She even incubates chicken eggs each spring and has the students care for the chicks after doing a research project on chickens. Mr. and Mrs. Albin live on seven acres where they raise chickens and ducks, tend to over fifty fruit trees, and enjoy a massive garden that provides for a significant portion of their diet. They are both passionate about teaching students the importance of gardening and have even allowed groups of students to practice gardening skills in their home garden. Mrs. Albin has no plans to ever leave CHSM so she will be able to nurture this project for many years to come. Her future availability and her past successes with programs she has started makes Mrs. Albin a perfect lead person for the CHSM Garden project.

Please sign and date the proposal. A scanned signature is acceptable. By signing this proposal, you are certifying that to the best of your knowledge, you have the full commitment of each of the collaborative partners to participate should your proposal be selected. If sending electronically, please scan the whole document and send no later than 11:59 CST on February 1, 2016 to grants@kacee.org. When saving and sending this document, please save to a single electronic file, preferably in PDF format, although Microsoft Word files will be accepted. Please ensure that the filename includes the name of the submitting organization or agency. For example "Smith High School proposal.pdf"

Heidi Albin
Signature

Heidi Albin CHSM Science Teacher
Printed Name Title

01-27-2016
Date

Thank you for your interest in this program and your commitment to environmental education.

Appendix 1 – Collaborator Letters of Support

Schools:

Name of School: Complete High School Maize

Address: 745 W. Academy Ave
Maize, KS 67101

Email: kcuster@usd266.com (Kristy Custer, Principal)

Phone Number: (316) 722-4790

Website: www.usd266.com/complete

Contact Person Name: Heidi Albin

Contact Person Email: halbin@usd266.com

Phone Number: (316) 208-9869

Our school is a K-12 public school

- a. Please provide a brief description of your school, including grade levels, demographics, subjects taught and any prior school gardening efforts, if applicable.
- b. Please describe your school's interest in and need for a school gardening program that involves students in the establishment, maintenance, and hands-on learning opportunities of a garden on or near your school site.
- c. Please describe how your school might partner with community organizations and volunteers to support the development, care and maintenance of a garden year-round and use the garden as a learning resource for students.

Please see the attached letter of support for information pertaining to these questions.

Lead Parent Volunteer:

Name: Kristen Burwell

Address: 1240 N. 119th W. Cir.
Goddard, KS 67052

Email: burwellkristen@yahoo.com

Phone Number: (316) 990-8930

- a. Please provide a brief description of how you are related to a student or students in the above school, and any previous experience with volunteering at the school.
- b. Please describe your interest in and/or need for a school gardening program at your child's school
- c. Please describe how you might support the school garden program by helping to engage other parents and cultivate connections with community organizations and volunteers to support the development, care and maintenance of a garden year-round.

Please see the attached letter of support for information pertaining to these questions.

Additional Parent Volunteers:

Leslie Sutton

Address: 1826 N. Reca
Wichita, KS 67212

Agricultural Producer:

Name: Denning's Greenhouse & Garden Center, Inc.

Address: 10707 W. 21st St. N
Wichita, KS 67205

Email: jet5ster@hotmail.com

Phone Number: (316) 722-0123

Website: Denning's Greenhouse & Garden Center on Facebook

Contact Person Name: Jim Denning

Contact Person Email: jet5ster@hotmail.com

Phone Number: (316) 722-0123

- a. Please provide a brief description of your farming or ranching operation.
- b. Please describe your farm's interest in a school gardening program that engages students in food production.
- c. Please describe how your farm or ranch might engage with school and community partners to enhance learning opportunities that connect the school garden to real world agricultural production (such as science, economic, and career connections to farming).

Please see the attached letter of support for information pertaining to these questions.

Additional Partners:

Examples of eligible partners include but are not limited to: additional community organizations, churches, businesses, restaurants, culinary schools, farmer’s markets, food councils or food hubs, farmers unions, community meal programs, parent teacher organizations, etc.

Partner Name: Via Christi Village Ridge / Ascension Health Senior Care

Address: 3636 N. Ridge Road
Bldg 400.
Wichita, Ks 67205

Email: Rachel.Bloom@viachristi.org (Administrator)

Phone Number: (316) 462-3636

Website: <https://www.viachristi.org/locations/seniors/ridge>

Contact Person Name: Sara Noller

Contact Person Email: Sara.noller@viachristi.org

Phone Number: (316) 462-7514

Our organization is:

X A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, such as a school, nature center, museum, learning center, church or community group

- a. Please provide your mission statement.
- b. Please provide a brief description of your organization.
- c. Please describe your organization’s interest in and need for youth programming connected to gardening.
- d. Please describe how your organization might partner with a school to support the development, care and maintenance of a garden year-round.

Please see the attached letter of support for information pertaining to these questions.

Other additional partners:

Pray Woodman Elementary School

Address: 605 W. Academy Ave.
Maize, KS 67101

Maize Central Elementary School

Address: 304 W. Academy Ave.
Maize, KS 67101

