

# Sow. Grow. Know. Cultivating School Gardens in Ohio through a SG Conference

Sue Hogan, Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Franklin County, Columbus, OH

**School Garden Conference**  
 Friday, October 22, 2021  
 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 \$55 registration fee

**VOICES FROM THE FIELD**

Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center on The Ohio State University Campus

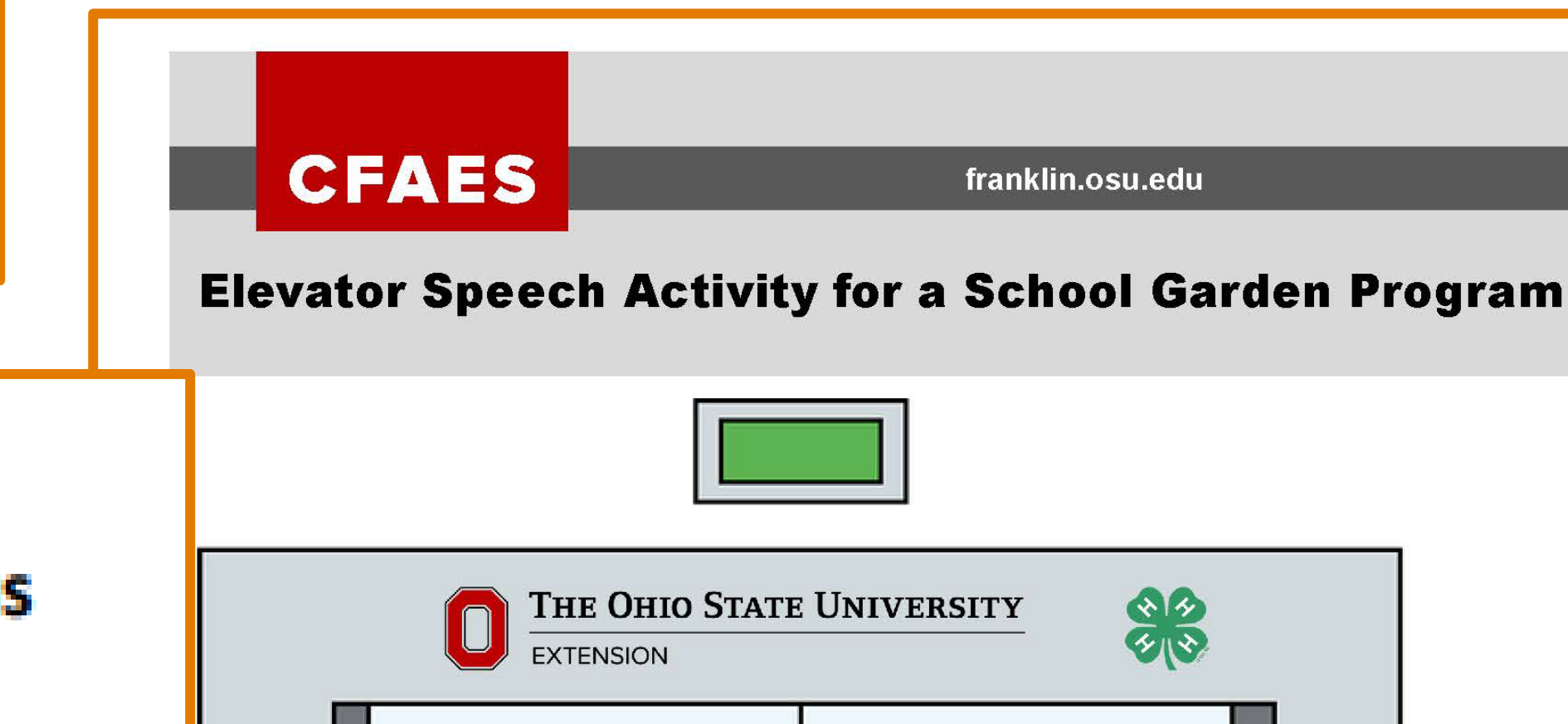
Register at:  
[go.osu.edu/sgc2021](http://go.osu.edu/sgc2021)  
[franklin.osu.edu](http://franklin.osu.edu)





Gardening with youth in the urban core can often be difficult due to time restraints and other challenges. However, youth gardening has many researched benefits including better nutritional choices, increased self-esteem, social skills such as better relationships with others and more. ([https://kidsgardening.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/KG\\_BenefitsofSchoolGardens-2016.pdf](https://kidsgardening.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/KG_BenefitsofSchoolGardens-2016.pdf)). For this reason, it is essential to train teachers and others to garden with youth. One way to do this is through a statewide school garden conference. In Franklin County, a conference has been facilitated by a 4-H Educator (Sue Hogan) since 2013. The conference also has created a network of school gardeners who can support each other, helping to increase sustainability of school gardens throughout Ohio.

Although the conference is geared towards urban, suburban and rural audiences serving pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, specific sessions are designed to address the needs of urban school gardeners taught by experts in those areas, who understand the unique nature of urban youth gardening. Often the challenges include a lack of space, especially as cities grow and land values increase. Convincing your stakeholders that a school garden is essential in this scenario requires the skillset to sell your program. At the school garden conference, an elevator speech activity was completed in table groups. Larger school systems also generate more food waste in the cafeteria and serving locally-sourced food to a large population of students can be difficult. Navigating these barriers can be eased when teachers and others have a network of school gardeners whose experience and knowledge they can tap into.



**Morning Breakout Session 2: 11:10 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**  
**Option 1: Facilitating a School Garden Program in Ohio's Largest School District**  
**Presenter: Chris Weatherholtz**

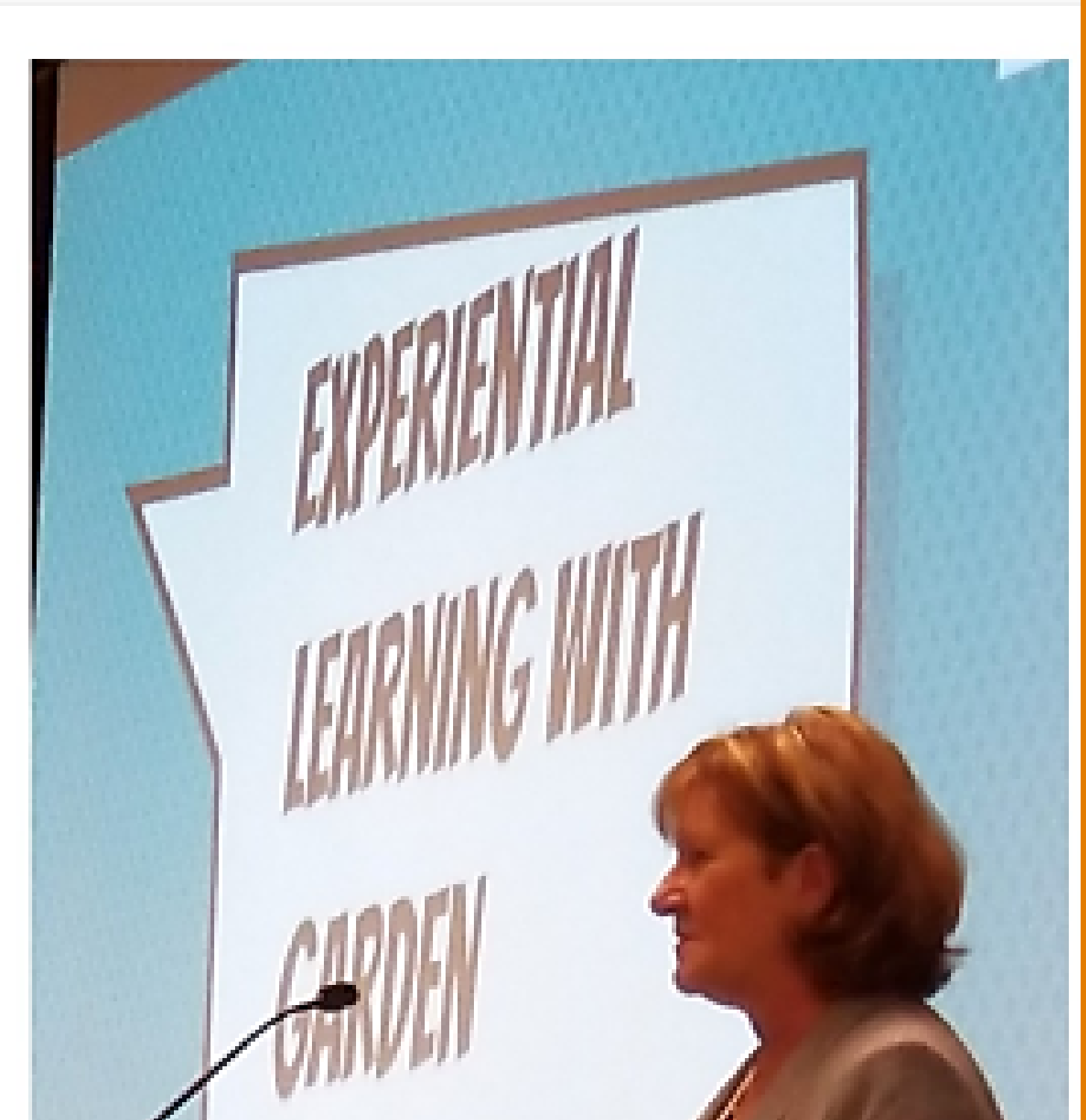
**Morning Breakout Session 1: 10:15-11:05 a.m.**  
**Option 2: Jumping Into School Gardening Feet First**  
**Presenter: Amber Keller**  
 No matter the size of your school garden dreams, intentionally planning to engage your school community in key aspects of the design, installation, maintenance and use of the garden can determine the long-term success of your space. Learn ways to get others enthusiastically on board with your dreams, and explore how students can begin learning in the garden before you even plant the first plant.

**Biography:** Amber Keller is a biologist by training with a focus on small mammals and conservation ecology. She swore she would never have anything to do with plants after a disappointing college botany class, and then went on to get the best job ever at the Botanical Research Institute of Texas teaching students and teachers about plants through hands-on experiences. While working closely with REAL School Gardens (now Out Teach) she became passionate about school gardens and has a goal of helping each elementary school her children attend install and use a school garden. Amber is a Franklin County Master Gardener and enjoys trying out all the things in her home garden. She keeps making new beds in her yard to provide as many native plants as possible for our native wildlife.



entation will focus on sustaining school gardens at a district level through connections to the garden learning labs. What does it really take to in-  
 than one teacher in a building with a personal passion for gardening?  
 we have an impact so that when that teacher leaves, the program remains

y: Chris Weatherholtz has been an educator for over 30 years. During she taught special needs students for over eight years, and grades 4-7 for She has taught undergraduate college courses for three universities, as re recently she has served as a building level reading coach, an Elementary Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator and now serves the children and Columbus City Schools as their first Nutrition/ Farm to School Curriculum or K-12 where she is e Columbus City Food Service Produc- who serve over ildren a day and live tto, "Nourish to Flour-



**Afternoon Breakout Session 2: 2:25-3:10 p.m.**  
**Option 2: Navigating the Nos While Still Having Fun in a Fabulous Garden**  
**Presenter: Ashley Dulin-Smith**



Tired of hearing the wor  
 your great garden ideas?  
 about ways to tackle this  
 what you and your stude  
 issue? I will share some  
 tunities that will fit your  
 I have a solution. Bring y  
 will figure it out! Where  
 way!

**Biography:** Ashley is a B  
 tal Sustainability and Soc  
 Jerome High School in Du  
 School Gardens of Ohio Mem

**Afternoon Breakout Session 1: 12:50-1:40 p.m.**  
**Option 2: Growing Hope in an Urban Garden**  
**Presenter: Lynne Steinhaus**



This presentation will share the trials and successes of establishing a school garden during challenging times. I will explain the process of our journey from being awarded a grant to start a garden, the setbacks due to many aspects of the pandemic and the community we have built in Columbus that supports our gardening

program. In the period of less than two years we have built and expanded to what is now a 40x110 foot garden that grows flowers, and vegetables and fruit for our families that reflects their interests and cultures. We also emphasize the importance of nutrition. We are a Project Based Learning school and all of our projects this fall re-  
 volve around the garden.

**Biography:** Lynne has dedicated her career to young children and their families for over 30 years. She has coordinated nature and gardening programs for early childhood and school age programs in Ohio and Indiana with a focus on fresh and healthy food and the joy of the outdoors for children who have little experience being outside. Infusing the arts with nature experiences as a way for children to express themselves has always been an emphasis in her programming. Multi-generational family engagement and community partnerships are also a key component in the work she has done. She currently works with Kids Care Elementary and Kids Care Academy as a Project Based Learning Coordinator.

