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Schools

Drizzle Doesn't Delay Rain Garden Project

Though rain canceled the first project installation, students were able to finish planting.

By [Eileen Oldfield](#) | [Email the author](#) | May 4, 2011

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Rainy days and spring break didn't tarnish the lessons Woods Road Elementary School students' memories of Messy Town, a demonstration on clean water they saw before break.

Instead, they remembered the farmer who didn't follow directions, the dirty water from the town's habits and how the rain garden would clean the water.

After a week away from school and rain delays, Woods Road Elementary School students saw the school's rain garden planted Monday afternoon. The installation, which the school and home association's Green Committee planned and funded, occupies a space outside one of the school's classrooms.

Students spent 20-minute intervals visiting the garden during the day. For younger students, the visit included a description of the plants and planting demonstration from Rutgers University's Water Resources program.

The appeal for the younger students is showing their rain garden knowledge and hearing about the butterflies and birds the plants attract.

"They get excited when they hear about the wildlife that comes and visits the plants," Amy Boyajian, program associate with Rutgers, said. "They (the students) like the sweet pepper bush and orange coneflower."

Water from the building room will flow into the garden from the building's downspout. It also includes a drain to prevent a water overflow.

Older students spent part of their garden tour adding plants to the garden. Armed with garden gloves, trowels and the plants, the students worked in pairs to dig holes for the plants and to prepare each for its place in the garden.

Of course, Boyajian and Program Associate Jillian Thompson and Program Coordinator Sara Mellor, instructed the students on planting procedure prior to the gardening.

"You can see they want to plant another one," Boyajian said. "They really get into it. They really like working together to dig and put the plant in the ground."

During the school year, students in the school's third and fourth grade classes can spend time caring for the plants, Boyajian, Thompson and Mellor noted. The school's Green Committee will handle garden maintenance during the summer.

"Now the students are going to want to get in there to take care of it," Boyajian said.

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