

From the desk of Mr. Adkisson

Dear Friends,

First, a big thank you for all you do to make healthy food available to our kids!

My name is Spencer Adkisson. I teach 5th grade at Sisson School. This is my 3rd year at Sisson, and I feel very fortunate and honored to be part of this fantastic school and school district. To years ago (2017) I applied for a grant through the MESF that I could secure funds to buy a greenhouse for Sisson School. The greenhouse was intended to be used by teachers and students in grades 4-8 as both an outdoor garden classroom, and a potential source of revenue for the Sisson Garden Club, as well as a source of fresh nutritious food to bolster the school lunch program.

I had been part of establishing a school greenhouse and garden club at High Desert Montessori School, where I worked in Reno, Nevada, so I knew the value that a greenhouse and thriving garden could bring to a school. That program, by the way, is still thriving. I knew that it would be challenging to have a structure built on a public school campus due to the considerable red tape. Having a second child and the substantial task of grant writing/fundraising and limited time has created a situation where this greenhouse project is languishing, and in need of a sudden injection of synergy..

There is no limit to the connections between a school garden and learning opportunities. A Greenhouse extends the growing season through the heart of winter, and also provides a perfect outdoor laboratory for myriad science, math, and reflective writing opportunities. There are just endless things that teachers can do with students in a greenhouse. When I was an 8th grade student in Durham, CA, I took a plant science class, and in our

greenhouse my classmates and myself deepened our learning of math and science by designing and maintaining a hydroponics system for strawberry plant propagation, which we later sold at the county fair as a fundraiser.

I knew that our climate here in Mt. Shasta would require a structure built to withstand strong winds, heavy snow loads, and intense UV exposure. After researching greenhouses on the internet and talking with a variety of gardeners (both private and commercial) I selected the Riga IV greenhouse. This greenhouse has a welded aluminum frame, and is perfectly designed to meet the requirements of a structure suitable for student occupation as specified by the DSA (Department of State Architects) who permit such structures on school grounds. The technical specifications of that greenhouse accompany this document as a separate PDF file.

The money for this greenhouse and an inventory of essential greenhouse-related equipment has already been awarded by the MSEF, and is sitting in an account awaiting the remaining funds needed to pay for the construction of the school grounds in accordance with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). The MSEF also generously paid a second grant to cover the cost of the architectural plans necessary to meet the ADA accessibility requirements. NMR (Nichols, Melburg and Rosetto) drew up the plans, and they are currently sitting in the Mount Shasta Union District office. The construction needed to meet the ADA requirements is approximately \$32,000.00. A detailed list of the work to be done is available upon request from Barry Barnhart at the district office.

The current plan is to raise approximately one third of the remaining cost (\$10-11k) through a school-wide fundraising effort, while also seeking additional grant funding from such partners as: the Shasta Regional Community Foundation, and the Ford Family Foundation, the McConnell Foundation, and the Pacific Power

Foundation. I see this greenhouse project as a perfect opportunity to partner with School CAFE and the Boys' and Girls' Club and make the final push to actually get the greenhouse built, revamp the school garden site (in the chain-link fenced area adjacent to the District Office), as well as rebuild the raised beds adjacent to the Sisson library building where the Boys' and Girls' Club operates, and make the school garden a year-round, permanent and prominent component of the Sisson School culture and landscape.

Thank you for your interest and consideration, and I sincerely hope that we can work collaboratively to make this project become a reality.

Best Regards,
Spencer Adkisson