Project Goals:

♦ EAS students, staff and parent volunteers will develop the identified school ground natural area site as an ecosystem based habitat garden/restoration using native plantings and certain design features to enhance use of this natural area by wildlife.
♦ Create an integrated curriculum unit for 6-8th grade students and other educational programs using the habitat garden as a core project through which students, parents and staff will learn to better understand and appreciate a Northwest native plant community and its value to wildlife and people.
♦ Create a high quality outdoor environmental learning center with trails, seating areas, wildlife viewing areas, monitoring stations and interpretive signage that may be used by other and future school groups.
♦ Assist students in the research and development of portions of the natural area in a sequential manner to include students over a long period of time and to encourage ways to continue to use the habitat garden/restoration for monitoring, evaluation and enhancement educational projects.
♦ Develop ways to empower students in the evaluation, design and development of habitat garden/ restoration projects and curriculum in a way that is meaningful and results in a high quality resource for others.

Ways to achieve these goals

♦ Seek and use expert assistance from the community to assist students in developing this as a high quality project which will be an important reflection of the EAS programs. Starflower Foundation, Washington State Dept of Fish & Wildlife, King County Dept. of Natural Resources, Washington Native Plant Society and others have resources available to assist in the implementation of this project with educational materials, planting designs, plant materials, interpretive signage and other necessary support.
♦ Use existing and created activities and educational resources to design a meaningful curriculum unit on habitat gardens/restorations in the Puget Sound region. Heidi Bohan Bennett/Starflower Foundation will help design curriculum outlines and will work with project facilitator Wayne Tannheuser to develop ways to integrate and assess student learning. Parent volunteer Sheila Dierdron and others will assist in implementing these activities. Other qualified educators will be asked to review and offer input when possible (such as EAS staff, teaching interns, Jill Reifschneider, Russell Link, Starflower staff, etc.).
♦ Curriculum activities will occur concurrent to actual physical development of the habitat garden/ restoration and will attempt to be integrated with the actual work of non native plant removal, native plantings, creation of trails, seating areas, monitoring areas, interpretive signage, maintenance and other related projects.
♦ Seek and create opportunities to train staff and volunteer parents about Habitat Garden/ Restoration projects to empower them to assist students in the long term development of this project and to include parents/community as stewards in this project. Plant identification, plant propagation, learning to identify wildlife and wildlife sign, soil testing and evaluation, monitoring activities, maintenance techniques, and others could be included.