BUILDING A RAISED BED

A. Why raised beds? About 90% of the schools use raised beds.
   1. Drainage - may be a problem in the rainy season
   2. Easy to maintain without stepping on loose soil
   3. Keeps amended soil separate from surrounding soil
   4. Pest control easier, snails, gophers and two legged critters
   5. Keeps crops separate
   6. Crop rotation records
   7. Ownership of bed is defined
   8. Physically challenged persons easy to reach.

B. Bed Size
   1. Width - 3 to 4 feet
   2. Length - any length 4, 6, 8, 10, plus feet
   3. Bed height - 8 to 12 inches
   4. For students in wheelchairs - 24 to 36 inches

C. Materials for sides 2"x8" preferred or 2-2x6 on top making bed 10" high
   1. Redwood boards - garden grade
      a. Approximate cost for a 4'x8' bed $50.00
   2. Composite boards - new material, made from recycled plastic
      a. Approximate cost for a 4'x8' bed $80.00
   3. Treated wood - some treated with arsenic, new treatments are arsenic free
      a. Approximate cost for a 4'x8' bed $35.00
   4. Yellow pine - not recommended, rots and termites, OK for 3-4 years
      a. Approximate cost for a 4'x8' bed $22.00
   5. Cement blocks
      a. 18 blocks for a 4x8 bed Approximate cost $20.00
   6. Other materials
      a. 4x4 wood posts - for the corners
      b. Bolts or nails
      c. Hardware cloth or chicken wire fence for rodent control
      d. Top cap of 2x6 boards for bed sides,
         (1). good - provides seats for children
         (2). poor - provides places for snails and insects to hide

D. Procedure
   1. Measure and mark bed location north-south orientation
   2. Allow sufficient room between beds, 3 feet minimum
   3. Install irrigation system - each bed own line with valve to turn off water
   4. Trench along bed sides to level boards
   5. Cut and place 4x4 posts at corners of beds
   6. Bolt or nail together - bolts better
   7. Place hardware cloth, 1/2" mesh on bottom of bed if gophers are problem
   8. Fill beds with amended soil

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