

## Boston Latin School YouthCAN Sage/Green Wall of Vegetation Information

The Sage vertical garden is another effort to install highly visible features that teach about sustainability. It was part of the green makeover technology we won in the Green School Makeover Competition.

The Sage Garden is maintained entirely by students under the supervision of BLS Parent ('13), Nancy Waters. YouthCAN and Freight Farm students also have responsibility for hosting tours of the Sage garden. We have introduced the system to visiting 6th Grade students from Rochester, New York, as well as student groups from Japan, Denmark, and France, and adults from the EPA and Department of Education.

Our own student body was introduced to the Sage vertical garden at our Annual Teach In on Sustainability, when teachers were invited to bring their classes to view the unit and get an introduction as to how it operates. A banner was designed to accompany the garden to further raise awareness.

How it works: The wall is made up of a series of Biotiles. Each Biotile contains a ratio of growing medium and capillary drainage layers. These layers wick water downward, while spreading it evenly. Four bricks of dense rock wool, separated by capillary strips, retain moisture and nutrients that encourage healthy roots and foliage. Neither the growing medium nor the drainage layers biodegrade, and will far outlast and outperform soil-based systems. Further, there are no harmful VOC's off-gassed, as with synthetic foam-based systems. As an experiment, we currently have several edible plants growing in the vertical garden...such as rosemary, sage, varieties of thyme, lavender, savory, parsley, cilantro, and a plant for use in potpourri.