

Sayre School Unveils New Pollinator Garden Designed by Jon Carloftis Fine Gardens

Parent gift transforms the Upper School green space into a vibrant garden for learning, gathering, and connecting with nature.

LEXINGTON, KY, UNITED STATES, September 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sayre School](#) has transformed a familiar green space on its downtown campus into a vibrant new pollinator garden designed and planted by renowned garden designer Jon Carloftis of Jon Carloftis Fine Gardens™.

Located behind Sayre's Upper School at 240 N. Limestone Street, the garden was made possible through a generous donation from current Sayre parent Jennie Garlington and her family. Their gift provided the opportunity to reimagine the space as a beautiful and purposeful garden that will enrich campus life while providing important habitat for pollinators.

The newly planted garden features a diverse collection of plants chosen to provide color and seasonal interest while supporting bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. Plantings include Acorus, Japanese Anemone, Pugster Butterfly Bush, Iris tectorum, Hosta, Solomon's seal, ferns, and other complementary varieties.

"The plants bring color, texture, and movement to the garden while providing essential food and habitat for bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects," said Jon Carloftis. "The best gardens work as beautifully as they look, creating layers of interest while supporting the pollinators that bring them to life."

For Sayre, the garden is much more than a transformation of the landscape. The School envisions the space as an extension of the classroom and a welcoming gathering place for the entire community. Students will be able to use the garden to read, enjoy lunch with friends, study the natural world, or simply spend time outdoors. The space will also provide a distinctive setting for classes, school events, and community gatherings.

[Head of School](#) Stephen Manella shared, "Gardens are similar to communities or teams or ensembles in that they don't thrive based on just one thing. They need sunlight. They need soil. And then they need the pollinators to create the magic. In many ways, it has the same elements that make our community thrive: it's a collective effort, and communities are only as strong as the way everything works together. We all help one another, and that's exactly how a garden

thrives.”

Situated in the heart of downtown Lexington, the garden demonstrates how an urban campus can create meaningful opportunities for students to connect with nature. Just steps from their classrooms, students can observe pollinators and plant life firsthand while experiencing an outdoor environment designed for exploration, reflection, and community.

“Sayre is just a very special place to a lot of people and our children,” said Jennie Garlington. “I think it shaped them into the people they are today, and it’s still shaping some of our younger children. I think this garden will enrich all the children here. I think it’s going to be a place of calm and peacefulness and a place where they can connect with nature.”

Sayre School is honored by the generosity of the Garlington family and the stunning work of Jon Carloftis. Their shared vision has transformed what was previously known simply as the Upper School “green space” into a dynamic part of campus, one that is equally suited for learning, gathering, relaxing, and play.

Whether students are participating in a lesson, reading on the benches, sharing lunch with classmates, or tossing a football, the new garden offers another place for them to feel at home on [Sayre’s campus](#).

About Sayre School

Founded in 1854, Sayre School is an independent school serving students from preschool through grade 12 in the heart of downtown Lexington, Kentucky. Sayre provides a challenging and innovative educational experience within a close-knit community where students are encouraged to explore their interests, develop their talents, and make their mark.

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