

Bee Mentor

The Bee Mentor is an experienced, local beekeeper who is engaged by the school to help care for the bees. This is a very important piece to the overall hive health and to the success of having a Honey Bee Hive as an educational tool. The Bee Cause will assist the school in selecting/finding a Bee Mentor if needed. Bee Culture magazine is a good place to start. They manage a nationwide beekeeper list online that may be helpful in finding the right Bee Mentor for your school. Please visit the website: www.beeulture.com/find-local-beekeeper



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1) Who is the Bee Mentor?

- Supports the Bee Advocate with getting their program started.
- Has an interest in bee education.
- Currently practices beekeeping.
- Is involved with a local beekeeping group.
- Encourages and educates the Bee Advocate in his/her bee journey.

2) Locate the Best Hive Site

Best Location for Indoor Observation Hive

- Consult with Bee Advocate and School Officials. Take into consideration all points listed in Bee Advocate section, safety, and the health of the bee colony when selecting a space.

Best Location for Outdoor Observation Hive

- Consult with Bee Advocate and School Officials. Take into consideration all points listed in Bee Advocate section, safety, and the health of the bee colony when selecting a space.

Lanstroth Hive

- Consult with Bee Advocate and School Officials. Take into consideration all points listed in Bee Advocate section, safety, and the health of the bee colony when selecting a space.

3) Practice Hive Safety

- Thoroughly examine the hive and troubleshoot any concerns before the hive is installed.
- Establish and follow a routine for checking the hive is functioning properly, the seals are not compromised, the bolts are tightened, etc.
- Ensure your indoor and outdoor signage are posted in a visible locations.
- Review the Installation of Honey Bees video before installing the bee colony.

4) Source and Install the Bees

- Source the honey bees for the hive.
 - Observation Hive: The honey bee colony should be carefully selected to include a small nucleus of honey bees (with a gentle disposition) and a hygienic, marked queen.
 - Traditional Lanstroth Hive: The honey bee package should be carefully selected for gentle disposition and include a hygienic, marked queen.
- Ensure you have the correct number of frames and foundation for your hive.
- Ensure hive and all equipment is in good order before installing the bees.
- A package of honey bees can be used instead of a starter colony when implementing the Langstroth Hive.
- Install the honey bees into the selected hive. See Installation of Honey Bees video for more information.

5) Inspect the Hive Periodically

- Perform seasonal hive checks for pest management, food stores, activity levels, queen health, population health, etc. (similar to traditional beekeeping, but less maintenance with Observation Hives).
- Work together with the school's Bee Advocate to create a schedule to ensure the honey bees are well cared for throughout the year.
- Be available as needed for questions and concerns of the Bee Advocate.

6) Remove the Hive as Needed

**For Observation Hives only*

- Schedule maintenance during off hours; after school or on weekends.
- Check hive for defects before removal.
- Make sure metal plates are in place to block hive entrance on both ends. Remember to remove after reinstalling the hive.
- Make sure there are 2 people to manage the weight of the hive.

7) Budget for the Bees

- While grant funds are provided to assist with incidental costs and an initial honey bee colony purchase, it is suggested that the Bee Mentor attempt to find a honey bee colony/package to be donated to the school (perhaps the local bee club would sponsor a colony, someone would donate a swarm, or someone would split his/her hive to share).
- Regardless of the source of the bees, a hygienic queen should be chosen for the hive.
- Coordinate with the Bee Advocate to create a budget for future costs of hive management. The Bee Cause provides a honey fundraiser (Pay It Forward) that can provide assistance in this area if necessary.