



Business Plan Outline

(Working Title: GTL – Cultivating Community Outdoors)

1. Executive Summary

GTL is a community-centered, nature-based education organization designed to serve homeschooling families, charter schools, and public schools across South County Santa Cruz and the Monterey Bay. Through garden education, nature connection, intergenerational learning, and holistic community support, GTL aims to heal disconnection in modern schooling by fostering community, resilience, and wellbeing for children and families.

GTL will operate as a homeschool vendor, outdoor education provider, and community hub—scaling over 3, 5, and 10 years to include forest school programming, a horticultural center, holistic health services, and an animal rescue and healing sanctuary.

2. Mission, Vision & Values

Mission Statement

To cultivate community outdoors for youth and families through nature-based education, regenerative practices, and holistic support systems.

Vision

A thriving, resilient community where children of all ages learn together outdoors, families feel supported in their educational choices, and nature is honored as both teacher and healer.

Core Values

- Intergenerational learning & community care
 - Nature connection & environmental stewardship
 - Equity, accessibility & inclusion
 - Regenerative agriculture & land-based resilience
 - Cultural humility & partnership with Indigenous communities
 - Holistic healing for individuals and families
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3. Program Overview

A. Homeschool Vendor Program

- Serves children across all ages (early childhood through adolescence)
 - Multi-age learning model to strengthen community, teamwork, and mentorship
 - Addresses harm caused by rigid age separation in traditional schooling
 - Vendor status allows charter school families to use school funds for GTL programs
 - Entry strategy:
 - Offer one-day workshops, field trips, and annual class series
 - Secure vendor status once two families from a charter school request GTL services
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B. Garden & Regenerative Agriculture Program

A foundational hands-on learning environment focused on soil health, food systems, and ecological cycles.

Initial Components

- 8–10 raised garden beds (4' x 3')
- Small field plot
- Composting system (10' x 10')
- Tool shed
- Planting table
- Harvesting station with sink
- Perimeter fencing

Future Expansion

- Small greenhouse for crop starts and curriculum expansion

- Vermicomposting systems
 - Open soil-production system
 - Outdoor classroom setup
 - Tool care and stewardship curriculum
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C. Nature Connection & Place-Based Education

- Outdoor education in local open spaces integrated with gardening curriculum
- Nature journaling class series
- Field trips and farm tours
- Marine biology programming
- Family-inclusive excursions (parents encouraged to attend)
 - Annual Surf & Stewardship Ocean Connection (S&SOC)
 - Fall Equinox Celebration

Outcomes

- Improved mental health and emotional regulation
 - Reduced nature-deficit impacts
 - Stronger sense of place and environmental responsibility
 - Health benefits supported by pediatric medical insight
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D. Community & Conservation Engagement

- Partnerships with:
 - Local Indigenous communities
 - Conservation organizations
 - Government agencies
 - Children-led conservation initiatives
 - Teen youth committees focused on land stewardship
 - Community service and restoration projects
 - Commitment to land-back values and ethical collaboration
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E. Community Center & Forest School

A dual-purpose space supporting families and learners.

Functions

- Outdoor classroom and forest school for young children
 - Indoor community center for homeschooling families
 - Reduced travel burden for families
 - Shared learning, resources, and peer support
 - Safe gathering space for education, collaboration, and community healing
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F. Holistic Health Center (Long-Term)

An integrated wellness center supporting families holistically.

Components

- Office for doula coordinator
- Chinese Medicine practitioner
- Chiropractor
- Massage therapist
- Birthworkers
- Apothecary
- Ayurvedic treatment sessions
- Treatment tables

Purpose: to support parents, caregivers, and children through the physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges of modern life and parenting.

G. Animal Rescue & Healing Sanctuary (Long-Term)

- Animal husbandry education
- Animal rescue and sanctuary
- Equine Therapy program
 - Trauma-informed, nature-based healing
 - Accessible therapeutic experiences
- Requires future land acquisition (acreage)

4. Equity, Accessibility & Inclusion

- Dedicated scholarship funding
 - Programs accessible to:
 - Indigenous communities
 - BIPOC families
 - LGBTQ+ families
 - Children with physical and mental disabilities
 - Transportation access for under-resourced communities
 - Sliding scale pricing and community-sponsored participation
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5. Execution Plan

3-Year Plan (Foundation Phase)

- Launch core classes:
 - Nature journaling
 - Garden classes
- Launch website
- Begin outdoor-only classes
- Build homeschool vendor status
- Establish insurance and fiscal sponsorship
- Partner with charter schools & private schools
- Explore public school programming (TK–2)
- Launch co-op model for parents and educators
- Hire intern
- Begin fundraising:
 - Building our Donor Base:
 - Farmers Markets
 - Door-to-door
 - Lions club & Rotary club presentations
 - Educational community events:
 - Fall Equinox

- Surf & Stewardship Ocean Connection
 - Grant applications
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5-Year Plan (Growth & Stability)

- Consistent class scheduling for homeschool, charter, and district schools
 - Expanded garden and horticulture infrastructure
 - Formalized financial calendar
 - Hire financial & volunteer manager
 - Establish scholarship fund
 - Increased volunteer engagement
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10-Year Plan (Full Ecosystem)

- Full-day forest school and homeschool programs
 - After-school care
 - Established community center
 - Holistic Health Center launch
 - Animal Rescue & Healing Sanctuary
 - Equine Therapy program
 - Outdoor kitchen and culinary education
 - Cultural foodways and land-to-table curriculum
 - Program leaders for each department
 - Sustainable, community-led governance model
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6. Funding & Sustainability

- Charter school funds via vendor status
- Grants and foundations
- Fiscal sponsorship
- Fundraising events
- Donations and sponsorships
- Sliding scale fees
- Volunteer-supported programming
- Long-term partnerships and earned program revenue

7. Organizational Structure (Future)

- Executive Director
- Program Directors & educators:
 - Education
 - Garden & Horticulture
 - Community & Conservation
 - Holistic Health
 - Animal Sanctuary
- Financial & Volunteer Manager
- Holistic Health administrator & practitioners
- Community advisory board