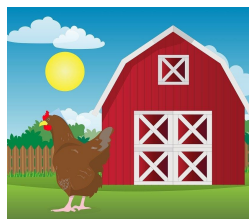




Announces:



“Growing Bethlehem”

A *Bethlehem Elementary School* co-op garden project combining outreach and education. We aim to expand the study of Agriscience, build relationships and support farm to school efforts in our community. This will be based on a partnership/in conjunction with Nonnewaug High School’s AgriScience Program. The garden will yield produce to be donated to local families in need, the food bank and our school families!

Specifically, 2 students from Nonnewaug High School will manage and maintain the garden with the guidance of Jennifer Jedd, the Department Chair of Agriscience. A garden plan has been submitted and we are applying for a \$500 grant to cover seeds and supplies- fingers crossed.

Educationally, the possibilities are endless; students can participate in planting, maintenance, harvest, business and commerce. We can integrate math by calculating crop yields - how many plants per seed, germination rates incorporating division; multiplication and weighing our harvest! Additionally, we can incorporate writing via journaling progress. Please see below for information from the *American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture* which we will draw resources from, as well as suggested books for children.

<https://www.agfoundation.org/recommended-pubs>

Also, the garden will be utilized for seasonal crop productions. We are specifically choosing plant varieties that are short seasoned and will ripen when students are still in school, incorporating planting and harvesting. We will target low maintenance veggies over the summer, fall crops for the cool season such as lettuce, kale and bush beans are on the plan. Larger varieties of squash will equal less weeding. The garden is an L shaped design that will be located at the back of our building adjacent to our water source- pictures to follow! The garden has been staked and will be tilled shortly. Full steam ahead!

Lastly, and as a wonderful bonus, the border will consist of a sensory garden, which will feature surfaces, objects and plants that stimulate our senses through touch, sight, scent, and hearing.

<https://naturalearning.org/sensory-gardens/>

In the future, the sky's the limit! Once the students can reap the benefits of their labors in the future, we envision a possible Community Harvest Dinner, a BES Farm Stand, etc.... ideas welcome!