



2021-2022

Team Reports



Contents

Bridge Boston Charter School

Brookline Public Schools

Carver Public Schools



Bridge Boston Charter School

Overview

Bridge Charter School this year weaved the current work with Gaining Ground Farm, Parent involvement with cooking demonstrations and the addition of a community garden and farmer's market. Bridge Charter School has a very strong community presence with deep parent and family involvement. Bridge's school is using that relationship to further increase their food access work in the Roxbury area with the families and the surrounding communities.

Highlights

The highlights from their programming were varied, fun and innovative. The first highlight involves the development of a farmer's market that Gaining Ground will support by bringing in more produce. Another highlight focus on more youth/students going to Gaining Ground to learn about farming, how vegetables are grown, meals that can be created and connecting art and poetry to agriculture, food access and food security.

The upcoming community garden is in progress and will provide a learning opportunity for the students and parents. The garden will be used a little different from typical school gardens. The garden will be open to the surrounding community members, parents of the students and staff members. The garden will provide some vegetables to the kitchen to be featured with vegetables the Gaining Ground sends for the Farmers Market.

Lastly, parents had an opportunity to provide trainings for families and community on cooking various traditional meals from their homes. One family demonstrated how to make a dish from Trinidad, and another participated in a baking demonstration.





Bridge Boston Charter School

Future Vision

Bridge Charter School is looking forward to the increased produce from Gaining Ground Farm and increasing the amount of culturally appropriate produce that comes from the farm and the community garden.

The Farmer's Market will be a new fixture for the summer food program. The Market will feature foods that are familiar to community members and recipes will be provided to assist families to prepare foods that are not as familiar to them.

The cooking demonstrations will continue 3 times during the year. The families will continue to participate and give demonstrations with other families on favorite meals. Lastly, the older youth will be included in the planning of the garden, participate in the demonstrations and their voices will be very prominent in development of menus with the Chef for school lunches and after care meals.



Public Schools of Brookline

Overview

Over the course of the 2021-22 school year, the Public Schools of Brookline (PBS) Farm to School team made great strides in integrating farm to school principles throughout the district. From its participation in the Massachusetts Farm to School Institute, the team divided their short-term and long-term goals into the areas of cafeteria, curriculum, and community.

Highlights

Sasha Palmer is the Food Services Director for the district, and she has spearheaded her vision to make the cafeterias of PBS the largest classrooms in the building. Her and the farm to school team have spent the past year looking for ways to improve the cafeterias. Her goal is to also serve meals to reflect the diverse population of Brookline. This year, she was successful in getting grant funding for dishwashers in all of the cafeterias in the district, giving cafeteria workers more time to spend on making nutritious meals. Next September, a composting system will be set up in all of the schools in the district.

These aren't the only things the team has completed over the year - additionally, the heads of the district are aware of this group. Two members, Roger Grande and Tim Hintz, gave a presentation about the Farm to School committee to the superintendent of the district. The committee has maintained near-monthly meetings, even in the wake of stalled contract negotiations and continued management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In terms of curriculum, Brookline High School is about to get a garden that will hopefully be incorporated in their culinary program. This summer, a stipend will be offered to an individual who is able to take care of the elementary school gardens. There will also be some work in engaging the community for this effort. A long term plan is to have a paid sustainability curriculum

coordinator for the entire district to make sure that sustainability and farm to school ideals are interwoven throughout all classrooms.

The hard work over the year culminated in a recruiting meeting for those interested in joining the Farm to School Team on June 7, 2022 to build community. The end goal was to build support and interest for the initiative among school staff and other groups like parents and community members. The Brookline Farm to School Welcome Event received coverage from the high school newspaper, and the deputy superintendent for the district was present.



Future Vision

Next year, the team plans on having sub-groups if there are enough members, in addition to adding a fundraising committee and increasing student led initiatives. They also want to develop a paid summer garden program for high school students, where they would learn about gardening and food justice.

Read the Brookline High Article here:

<https://thesagonline.com/45656/news/farm-to-school-initiative-team-looks-to-improve-food-system-sustainability/>

Carver Public Schools

Overview

The Team at Carver Public Schools have spent the year expanding and integrating existing Farm to School strengths in the cafeteria, culinary program, and environmental science program.

Highlights

A key success has been securing a source of local eggs for the cafeteria. Egg sandwiches are flying off the shelves! Lunch participation increased 5% when using these local eggs and, in addition, the egg vendor is collaborating on educational opportunities, like field trips to the farm. 'Try it Tuesdays' - a monthly tasting event - has been another success in the cafeteria.

A goal of the team has been to find opportunities for students to learn through real-world applications. The grow setup in the cafeteria is an example of this, as it produces food used in school meals and teaches many lessons, from environmental sciences to math.

Future Vision

A key goal moving forward is integrating the elementary, middle, and high school Farm to School work, and the new greenhouse will be a great place to do that. The team is excited about a grant that will fund a 650 square foot greenhouse on campus, providing numerous opportunities for education and food production.

