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Dear RSU 1 Families,

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that you enjoyed the first significant snowfall of the year. On a positive note, the number of COVID-19 cases in the district continues to decline. Let's hope this is a trend that continues. Your partnership and flexibility through these challenging times have been appreciated.

Despite the pandemic challenges, the district continues to expand and improve programs to enhance educational opportunities for students. This year, we have increased services and programming in special education, social work, gifted and talented, Advanced Placement (AP), and career and technical education. Morse is one of nine Maine schools that offers the AP Capstone Diploma project. These courses develop students' skills in research, analysis, collaboration, writing, and presentation. The district is also developing a high school internship program that will allow students to apply learning from their coursework to a relevant on-the-job experience and provide career exploration opportunities.

RSU 1 needs substitutes for teachers, educational technicians, and food service personnel. If you are interested in becoming a substitute for any of these roles, please call the central office at 443-6601. Take care, and enjoy the winter edition of the RSU 1 newsletter.

Sincerely,

Patrick Manuel
Superintendent of Schools

Online at [RSU1.org](https://rsu1.org)

 [@rsu1schools](https://www.facebook.com/rsu1schools)

Download the RSU 1 app!



Download on the
App Store



News From

MORSE HIGH SCHOOL

Home of the Shipbuilders

Morse High School Hosts Community Discussion of Climate Justice Through Literature

Classes are over for the day, but one classroom at Morse High School is still full of people: 24 staff, students, and community members, to be precise. They've gathered to discuss an important topic, climate justice, through literature.

MHS Librarian Dawn Lee worked with the Maine Humanities Council to launch the discussion group after a hosting a similar discussion group on the topic of racism in 2020. She drafted a proposal for the theme and content of the discussion and was thrilled when the Maine Humanities Council adopted her plans, pledging a facilitator and funding for books.

"I wondered, how can we bring folks together again, and not through Zoom?" Lee said. "We've been living in our bubbles, and I wanted to make an opportunity for people of different ages and backgrounds to come together for a community conversation."

The first meeting of the discussion group launched with a children's book: *The First Blade of Sweetgrass*, by Gabriel Frey and Suzanne Greenlaw. The story follows a Wabanaki grandmother teaching her granddaughter how to pick sweetgrass from the salt marsh to use in basket weaving. The granddaughter learns how to connect with nature and her ancestors to pull the right blades of grass while ensuring there will be enough left for future generations.

Maine Humanities Council Facilitator Hilary Eslinger led the group through a discussion of

stewardship and connecting to one's own landscape through one's ancestry.

"I love having the opportunity to be part of a discussion and read important books," Eslinger said. "It's only a picture book, but it has a lot to say."

The group will meet again on February 3 to discuss *Wade in the Water*, a collection of poems by Tracy K. Smith. Their final meeting will be held on April 14 to discuss *Mill Town* and meet with its author, Kerri Arsenault. *Mill Town* tells of Arsenault's own experience growing up in Mexico, Maine, and the paper mill which supported the town before ultimately contributing to its demise. All are welcome to attend – connect Dawn Lee at dlee@rsu1.org or visit the [Morse High School Library Webpage](#) for information.



Kerri Arsenault, author of *Mill Town*, will join the discussion group for their last meeting on April 14.



One Act Play: *Stigma*, by MHS Senior Linville McDonough

Stigma, a one act play by MHS Senior Linville McDonough, takes place on the upper Hudson River in the Mills Mansion in 1899. This “murder” mystery, with a twist, shows that not much has changed in the past century in regards to society’s view on the stigma of mental illness.

Performances are on Wednesday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m. (Fine Arts Night) with matinees on Thursday, March 3 and Friday, March 4 at 3:00 p.m. Admission on Fine Arts Night is free, and the matinee performances are pay what you want.

Gabe Aucoin Named One of Twelve Semifinalists for Fitzpatrick Trophy

Morse High School’s own Gabe Aucoin was named one of twelve semifinalists for the James J. Fitzpatrick Trophy, which is awarded annually to the top high school senior football player in Maine.

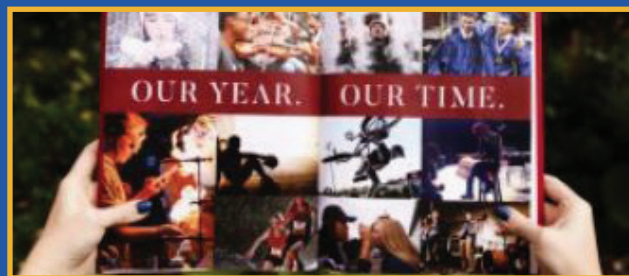
Aucoin, Morse running back/linebacker, rushed for 1,616 yards and 18 touchdowns, scored 24 touchdowns overall and also made 83 tackles with two sacks and an interception for the Shipbuilders in 2021.

“Gabe has been a tremendous athlete for us for four years, but he is an even better leader and teammate,” said Coach Jason Darling. “He deserved everything he earned during this incredible season because of his hard work and competitive desire, and we are so proud of him!”

Aucoin was also named to the 2021 Varsity Maine All-State Football Team this December, and a 2021 Campbell Conference All Star. Congratulations, Gabe!



MHS student actors at *Stigma* rehearsal



Have You Ordered Your Yearbook?

March 25, 2022, is your final chance for a guaranteed yearbook order! Orders can be placed in Room 144 with cash or check (payable to MHS Yearbook) OR online through Jostens ([Click Here](#)).



News From **BATH TECH**

Bath Regional Career & Technical Center

Bath Tech to Hold In Person Open House for Prospective Students

Bath Tech offered prospective students a chance to explore program offerings via a virtual open house in January and is following up with an in-person open house on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Attendees will have the opportunity to visit programs of interest and speak with instructors.

Bath Tech currently offers eleven programs, including automotive technology, cosmetology, early childhood education, and health science careers, with plans to add a criminal justice program this fall. Courses are available for all students attending Boothbay Region High School, Lincoln Academy, Morse High School, and Wiscasset High School, with priority given to juniors and seniors.

Thanks to increased visibility from conscious efforts to integrate Bath Tech classrooms with regular academic classrooms at Morse, the school has already seen a 25% increase in enrollment in just one year with 41% of Morse 11th and 12th graders currently attending Bath Tech programs.

“A stigma still exists around CTE schools, with the implication being that a student can’t become successful unless they go to college,” said Bath Tech Director Julie Kenny. “That’s just not the case. And, for students who do intend on continuing their education, CTE courses can give students a leg up. All of our programs can be college preparatory, and most offer the ability to earn college credits.”

Kenny said she looks forward to speaking with prospective students and their families, answering questions, and helping them learn how Bath Tech can prepare them for the future.



Spread the News About Bath Tech!

Have you had a chance to check out our 2021-22 promotional video featuring the students, staff, and programs offered at Bath Tech?

View it on our YouTube Channel ([CLICK HERE!](#))

Thank you to the MELMAC Educational Foundation for funding this project.





Ocean's Night Expo and Friendly "Shark Tank"-Style Competition at BMS

Seventh graders in Seguin House at Bath Middle School closed out 2021 with "Ocean's Night Expo," a combination open-house and student "shark tank" competition styled after ABC's popular entrepreneurial-themed reality show.

Students presented their own ocean-friendly products before a panel of five judges (two BMS teachers, two educators from the Maine Maritime Museum, and a Maine Learning Technology Initiative Ambassador from the Department of Education), their peers, and parents just before winter break. It's the second time Shark Tank has closed out Seguin House's "Sustainable Seas" unit, showcasing what students have learned about a problematic invasive species plaguing Maine's coast: green crabs.

BMS science teacher Monica Wright was instrumental in developing Sustainable Seas in 2013 when she reached out to the area's land and wildlife conservation organization, the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT), and asked if they would be willing to help her and her students study the crabs. With KELT's support, Sustainable Seas was formed, and students began studying green crab populations in the field.

Wright and English Language Arts (ELA) teacher Adelle Carter developed the idea for Shark Tank in December of 2019 and was excited for the event to return.

"I loved seeing all the 7th grade students and parents that showed up to support the finalists," Carter said. "This event is unique because it compels students to use critical thinking skills to



solve a real-world problem."

This year, students presented products which ranged from "Ocean Exhaust," a charcoal filter that fits over a boat's exhaust to filter out hazardous air pollutants and particulates, to "Eco Gear," a sports equipment line made out of recycled ocean plastic. The judges' pick for best product went to students Sadie Cosgrove and Laura Kelley for "Compostable Condiments," biodegradable condiment packets made out of seaweed.

"The judges scored each group on creativity, confidence in presenting, persuasiveness, and realistic problem-solving. Compostable Condiments scored higher than the other four finalists in realistic problem-solving with a simple yet realistically achievable product that would have the most positive impact on pollution," Carter said.

Carter commended Seguin House teachers for making Shark Tank possible by "lifting each other up, collaborating, and changing schedules for several days to make it happen." She also thanked the Maine Maritime Museum for providing free programming for students which built their background knowledge on adaptive technology and its effect on our local natural resources.

"It felt great to have parents and guardians with us in person to see the hard work their students put into their projects," said BMS Principal Brandon Ward. "I'm always impressed to see academic growth represented in their work."



News From

WOOLWICH CENTRAL SCHOOL

Relationships, Rigor and Perseverance

***I Survived* Author Lauren Tarshis Meets Woolwich Central School Students**

Lauren Tarshis, author of the New York Times Bestselling series *I Survived* paid a virtual visit to Woolwich Central School students on Wednesday. Tarshis and children's book illustrator Lisa Bronson Mezoff shared their new picture book, *Only My Dog Knows I Pick My Nose*, and answered student questions about the process of creating a book.

"This is our first virtual author visit this year," said librarian Abby Luchies. "I was very excited to get her because she's so well-known. I follow a lot of authors and illustrators on Twitter, and when she mentioned she was looking for opportunities to share her new book with students, I reached out to her right away."

Although the 2nd grade students who attended the virtual presentation were too young to have read Tarshis's *I Survived* series, Luchies prepared them with a presentation about the Connecticut author and showed them a trailer of her new book.

"I celebrate authors and illustrators as heroes. For our students to meet someone like Lauren or Lisa in person is a privilege, and helps motivate them as readers and writers," Luchies said.

Tarshis and Mezoff introduced themselves to the room of excited 2nd graders. Tarshis explained that *Only My Dog Knows I Pick My Nose* was inspired by her own children's relationship with their poodle, Roy.

"The story is based on the idea that the dog knows lots of things about the child that no one else knows," Tarshis said. "Broadly speaking, it's about having dogs or people or friends in your life who



Second graders at Woolwich Central School meet virtually with award-winning author Lauren Tarshis

love you no matter what."

During the question-and-answer period, many students were curious about what Tarshis and Mezoff do when they make mistakes. "What happens if your paper rips while you're drawing?" asked one. "What happens when you color using the wrong color?" asked another.

Mezoff and Tarshis said they have both made their share of mistakes.

"I think, sometimes, we make a mistake and it feels like failing. But we're here to tell you that it's important to try again even if you make a mistake," said Tarshis. "And sometimes you make a mistake but it leads you to something even better than what you had planned."

Luchies has a copy of *Only My Dog Knows I Pick My Nose* available in the WCS library. She said she hopes interest in Tarshis's picture book will "be a nice bridge" to chapter books as her 2nd graders hone their reading skills.



Sue Michaud's second grade class at Dike Newell Elementary School learns the basics of sequencing with Bee-Bots.

Hour of Code Introduces RSU1 Students to Computer Science

This past December, students at Dike Newell Elementary School (DNS) and Woolwich Central School (WCS) were introduced to a new language, but it wasn't French or Spanish. It was the language of computers: coding.

It's no secret that computers have become an integral part of our modern lives. Whether it's the smartphone in your pocket or the computer system running the power grid that supplies electricity to your home, we're all exposed to an increasing cyber landscape. Unsurprisingly, jobs in computer science are in high demand: the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment in computer and information technology occupations will grow 13% from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations.

Librarians Abby Luchies of WCS and Lisa Hardman of DNS enrolled their schools in the Hour of Code, an educational campaign which began as a one-hour introduction to computer science intended to demystify coding and broaden participation in

the field. Since then, Hour of Code has become a worldwide learning event which helps nurture problem-solving skills, logic, and creativity.

"[Hour of Code] a nice way to lift the veil surrounding these machines in our pockets," said Luchies. "It's also a good exercise in perseverance; you mess up a lot and have to keep trying to get your code to work."

Depending on the age of the students in their classes, Luchies and Hardman chose different exercises; some web-based, some machine-based, and some on paper. Sue Michaud's second grade class at DNS learned basic sequencing with the library's "Bee-Bots," simple robots whose motion can be controlled with directional arrows.

Hardman started the class with two picture books which introduced the concepts of coding: *Coding 1, 2, 3* by Janet Slingerland, and *How to Code a Sandcastle* by Josh Funk. Students then placed their Bee-Bots on grids and took turns programming the bots to move to specific squares.

"Using [the Bee-Bots] really gets kids excited. There's equal interest for both the boys and girls," said Hardman. "They were grant-funded by the Perloff Foundation and we've had a great experience with them."

Both Hardman and Luchies hope that the Hour of Code has shown students that anyone can learn how to code, and to pursue their interest if they enjoyed it.

"It's another way to get students to see outside the walls of our school and start thinking about their future," said Luchies. "We tell them, 'You can do it!'"



SNAP-Ed “Snack Lady” Introduces Healthy Snacks to Dike Newell School

Once a month, students at Dike Newell Elementary School are visited by Mid Coast Hospital’s Allison Messier, MPH, a nutritional educator who is introducing students to new fruits and vegetables. This month the food they’re trying is “squishy” and “orange” as the students describe it: cooked butternut squash.

On a nation-wide scale, Messier’s program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education, called “SNAP-Ed,” teaches people how to shop for and cook healthy and budget-friendly meals. One of SNAP-Ed’s classes, Pick a Better Snack, is perfect for elementary school students; lessons consists of a nutrition education lesson and a food tasting of fruits or vegetables. The curriculum introduces students to healthy foods they might not otherwise encounter and shows how fruit and vegetable consumption is important for overall health.

In Mrs. Costello’s kindergarten class, Messier starts by introducing students to the food of the month – winter squash. She talks about the variety of squashes available, how they can be prepared, and about their nutritional value. In some classes she may read a children’s book or lead an activity depending on the age of the students. When it comes to the taste test, any student who tries the food of the month gets an “I tried it!” sticker.

“I love it when I announce the food of the day and students say they aren’t going to try it but wind up liking it,” said Messier. “It’s always fun to change their perception on food. The hope is that the ‘I tried it!’ sticker will spark conversation around nutrition at home.”

Messier tries to serve fruits and vegetables in their



Mrs. Costello’s kindergarten class samples butternut squash.

raw form whenever possible. Sometimes the foods are new to the teachers, too.

“One time we tried raw sweet potato, and I think everyone was surprised how good it was. I even prefer to eat them raw now myself,” Messier said. Maine SNAP-Ed is funded by the USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program through a contract with the Maine Department of Health & Human Resources and administered by the University of New England. To qualify, a school must have 50% or more of their student body on free and reduced lunch.

“It’s extremely important that families fill out forms for free and reduced lunch so that our school can continue to benefit from programs like this,” said DNS Principal Jennifer McKay. “There is no downside to filling out the form; the more families who participate, the more support DNS receives.”

Messier hopes the SNAP-Ed program will be able to expand into other schools, regardless of free and reduced lunch rates.

“Nutrition education is important for all children. Learning how to make healthy food choices will benefit them now as students and later as adults.”



News From

FISHER MITCHELL SCHOOL

THINK. CARE. ACT.

Creativity, Community, and Cans at Fisher Mitchell School

In a unique collaboration between Fisher Mitchell Elementary School's library and art class, students learned about the intersection of creativity, community, and cans!

In the spirit of the holiday season, each classroom was challenged to collect as many cans of food as they could to support the Bath Area Food Bank. The food drive, organized by Librarian Meg Barker, turned out to be the perfect chance to introduce students to an artist known for his iconic depiction of cans, particularly Campbell's Soup: Andy Warhol.

"Warhol used the image of the soup can to bridge industrial design and fine art," explained Art Teacher George McGinty. Warhol took a familiar piece of consumer culture and repeated the image to mimic print advertising, although each image was individually hand-painted. To introduce his students to Warhol's process, McGinty taught them about drawing in three dimensions and how to draw a cylinder.

"We made our cylinders into cans, and then students drew the label based on the cans they were donating to the food drive," McGinty said. "Then they had to take their own photo of their art, put it into Google slides, copy it, and make different color variations."

McGinty noted his enjoyment of some visual puns as the students worked – for instance, a picture of Ramen Noodles by a student named Roman.

Students wound up collecting an incredible 467 cans for the food bank. Fifth graders helped Barker deliver the cans on December 6, which will



Fisher Mitchell School students deliver canned food donations to the Bath Area Food Bank



Example of a student's Andy Warhol-style art based on their canned food donation

be available to local families in need.

"The canned food drive was to give students a chance to DO something to help our community. Something where we could see the impact of our efforts as the towers of cans grew in the cafeteria," said Barker. "Their success shows how much students care and their potential to do even more in the future."

"Our students showed their creativity and community spirit this month," said Principal Ross Berkowitz. "We're very proud of them for participating in this season of giving."



Phippsburg Elementary School Participant in MMSA National Pilot Project

There's not an inch to spare on the walls of Sarah Williams's 3rd grade classroom at Phippsburg Elementary School. Every space is filled with the physical evidence of learning: sheets of paper documenting observations, facts, and questions about Williams's unit on environmental change focused on bison; a brand-new pilot project from the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance (MMSA).

MMSA, in collaboration with BSCS Science Learning, received funding in May of 2020 to launch the pilot project, called PeBLES2 (Place-Based Learning for Elementary Science at scale) from the National Science Foundation. The goal of the project is to develop and test a model to support 3rd – 5th grade teachers across the country in incorporating locally or culturally relevant place-based connections into curricular units that meet the expectations of NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards). MMSA STEM Education Specialist Kate Cook, Ed. D. is the project's principal investigator.

Williams began working with five other teachers (from schools as far away as Colorado and California) in August to learn the philosophy of PeBLES2 and launch the project in her classroom. Husband-and-wife team Leonard and Lisa Kenyon, Ed. D, are two of the MMSA staff working with the teachers, guiding their progress, and receiving feedback. Both Leonard and Lisa are STEM Education Specialists; Lisa is focused on developing the PeBLES2 curriculum and conducting research, and Leonard is William's professional learning contact.

Two units are in development as part of the PeBLES2 project.



Sarah Williams in front of her class's "Driving Questions" board.

"In developing the first unit, our team had to figure out what anchor phenomena we would choose as our focus," Lisa said. "What are kids going to wonder about? We chose a life science unit with a focus on bison for unit 1, and earth science, with a focus on weathering, erosion, and deposition for unit 2."

The bison unit began with a look at Yellowstone National Park, and the problem of bison interacting with cars at road crossings. By investigating Yellowstone's ecosystem and the other animals involved with the bison, students are working on possible solutions to the bison's plight. The difference between PeBLES2 and a normal unit? Williams isn't giving out all of the answers.

"PeBLES2 is a shift from passively learning about something to actively figuring things out," said Leonard. "The teacher isn't talking all the time. Instead, students build their own questions and do the investigative work to answer them as the unit progresses."

A long list of "Driving Questions" on sticky notes next to Williams's classroom door showcases her



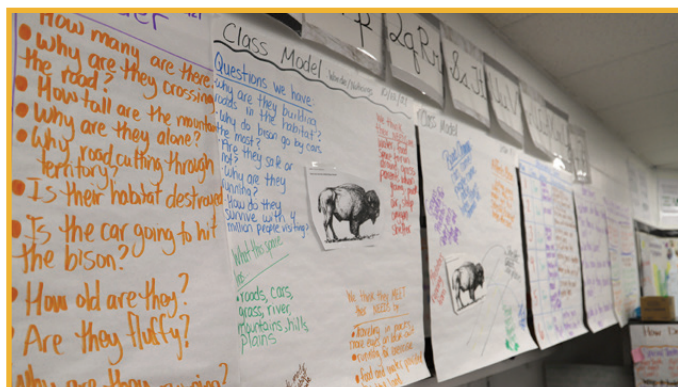
students' queries. "Why do bison travel in packs?" asks one. "Why do they stampede?"

"I've never seen this level of excitement before when it comes to science and social studies," said Williams. "One student, who is very quiet, has begun speaking up about the connections she is observing. Everyone in the building knows what we're doing, and there is already excitement from the second graders to be a part of the unit next year." As students ask their own questions and drive toward answers, they are subconsciously learning how to make generalizations; how to find patterns and identify similarities.

"Too often we teach in a silo. What Sarah is really teaching her students is how to model their understanding and apply it to other ecosystems, organisms, etc.," said Lisa.

At the end of the year, Williams's feedback will be used to update the PeBLES2 curriculum, which will be redesigned and expanded into more classrooms.

PES Principal Sandra Gorsuch-Plummer said she is proud her school can be part of the development of a nation-wide curriculum. "To see students so engaged is every teacher's dream," she said. "I look forward to watching PeBLES2 evolve and am so glad Mrs. Williams is playing a part in it."



Student observations, questions, and notes on the walls of Williams's classroom

Introducing the Blizzard of Books Reading Challenge!

Mrs. Woodbury and Mrs. Tardif have worked together to create this fun and motivating event for the whole school.

Snowflakes will be given for books and/or minutes read. Snowflakes may be given by individual student reading goal or by class goal, as determined by the classroom teacher. Mrs. Polizotto has created a bulletin board for displaying the snowflakes for all to see!

At the end of the challenge, we will celebrate with a winter movie and a snack of hot chocolate and popcorn!

Phippsburg Elementary School Harvests Greens from New Hydroponic Planter Thanks to Grant Partnership with KELT

As Phippsburg residents drive by their elementary school in the evening, curiosity is building around a classroom glowing with LED lights. The lights are part of a new addition to the school; a self-watering, self-fertilizing hydroponic planter that began supplying the cafeteria with fresh greens at the beginning of November.

Phippsburg Elementary School received the planter thanks to a partnership with the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT). KELT and PES submitted a joint application to the Whole Kids Foundation – an "edible education" grant program by Whole Foods – for support of KELT's community garden in Bath and PES's school garden.

"The opportunity to get a planter was a bonus for



organizations that received a grant,” explained KELT Acting Executive Director Becky Kolak. “I applied and we were chosen – the planter comes from a company called Lettuce Grow.”

The space age-looking planter, called “The Farmstand,” stands nearly five feet tall and is shaped like a vase; it can grow 24 plants at a time. Rings of LED glow lights (funded through KELT’s Whole Kids Foundation grant) promote 24/7 growth.

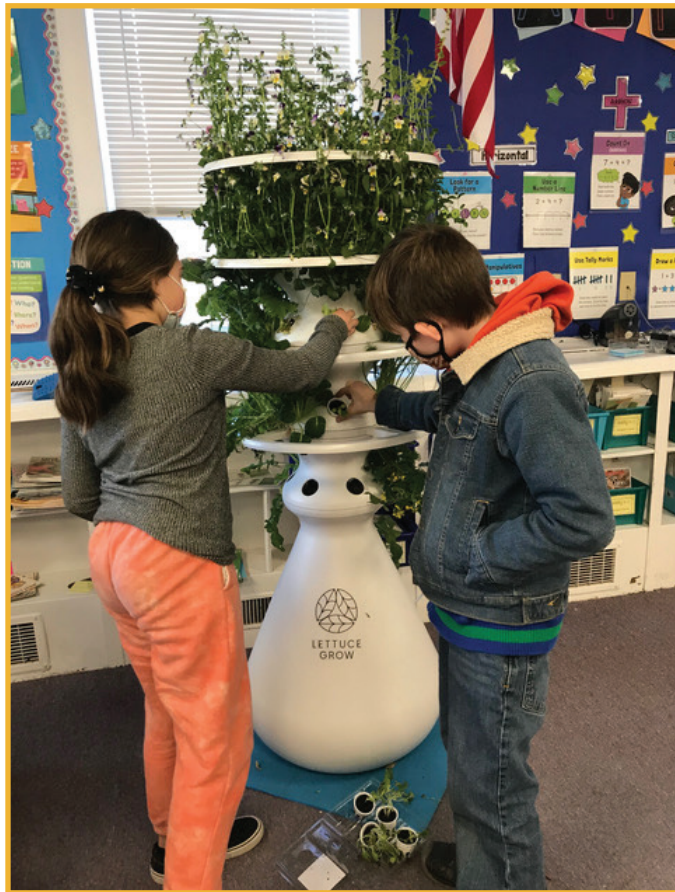
“The students are intrigued by it as many have never seen plants growing hydroponically,” said Mary McCauley, PES physical education teacher, who is overseeing care of the planter. “Right now, we’re growing cherry tomatoes, edible flowers, kale, spinach, and an enormous variety of lettuce. We tried to pick plants that we can add to the student lunch menu.”

McCauley said students are curious how the plants grow without soil; she explains that the water is given a weekly infusion of nutrients that replace what their roots would usually take from the ground. Kolak said this is KELT’s first time working with a school on a gardening grant.

“We were happy for a chance to help support our local schools and educators in a way that allows students to interact with the natural environment. There’s a lot of focus on the coast and forests in Maine, but farmland and agriculture are also a part of our landscape,” she said. “Being able to provide a tool for kids to actively engage with that type of learning is important.”

McCauley said she is excited to connect the planter with PES’s Outdoor Education and Science curriculums; students will begin formally learning about plants and photosynthesis in the spring.

“[The planter] allows the students to observe the plant’s development from seedlings to salads. We



PES students add new lettuce seedlings to the Lettuce Grow hydroponic planter

get to eat what we grow, and the students know it is a healthy choice as we link it to the 5-2-1-0 nutrition program that our school participates in.”

RSU1 Superintendent Patrick Manuel said he is impressed with the planter and the hands-on learning it provides. “We hope to work with KELT to pursue additional grant funding that will place a hydroponic planter in all of our elementary schools. They are a unique and engaging learning tool.”

IMPORTANT DATES:

MON FEB **21** - FRI FEB **25** February Break

MON FEB **28** RSU 1 School Board Meeting
Morse High School
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

FRI MAR **18** No School
Professional Development Day

THUR MAR **24** - FRI MAR **25** 1/2 Day K-12
Parent-Teacher Conference

MON MAR **28** RSU 1 School Board Meeting
Morse High School
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.



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Thank you for reading!



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