

## Green Decade School Outreach Committee – Fall 2013 Kick-off

The School Outreach Committee meets four times per year to share ideas and promote district-wide projects around resource efficiency and green classrooms and gardens. This past year the committee focused on bringing awareness to school gardens through collaborations with Newton Community Farms and Whitson's Food Service. Throughout the school year we saw exciting student led green initiatives at all grade levels. Thank you all for your input to this update ...

At the elementary level, Franklin School initiated a host of new efforts including improved recycling, composting, a new garden, and green iMovies. Jonathan Severance and Margaret Dunn

visited classrooms to educate the children about recycling and composting. They did a fabulous job! Recycling stickers were clearly placed on trash cans. Nobody really knew which one was for recycling. Recycling has significantly improved as a result. The team also installed a compost bin with teachers contributing mostly snack trash into the bin. The Gardening for



Good Project, with the help of Go Activate, Inc. (<http://www.goactivate.org>), is off to a good first year ... 10 families participating and each takes at least 1 week during the summer to water ... recycled wine crates as garden boxes and recycled milk jugs as watering cans... 100% organic seeds, soil, and fertilizer. Grant by Newton Conservators.

Mason-Rice planted a new school gardens. MR again continued to demonstrate leadership at high visibility events by composting at the teacher appreciate luncheon. The principal handed out recycled pencils for birthdays. The team also collected and repurposed books at the end of the year. For this year, MR would like to explore a shopping bag fund-raiser with getmyco.com



At Countryside, three raised beds were installed. This garden project was well coordinated as follows:

1. Now officially a Grade 5 Community Service Project with support from the parent coordinated 5th Grade Committee, providing support for this as needed.
2. Compost from the Rumford facility delivered by the DPW.
3. Seedlings of pumpkins, corn, tomatoes, marigolds, etc., which students will care for in the classroom in advance of their planting.
4. 2 planting mornings set up.
5. Involvement from Newton Community Farm. Alison Wilson will be available during our two plantings days to augment the educational component.
6. The PTO will be purchasing soaking hoses, set with a timer, to keep the garden watered throughout the summer.
7. The produce will be harvested by next year's 5th graders, and as part of the involvement with NCF, there will be a connection to Whitson's, the district's food services provider, featuring some of the produce as part of lunch. We also hope to use the produce as part of the Hunger Banquet, which 5th graders participate in during the early part of November.

At Burr, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Green Team picked up from Mason-Rice's idea and researched the life-cycle of crayons, educated the student body, planned and implemented a crazy crayon recycling program. Teachers Liz Moran and Lynette Lawton have instituted a Green Club approach to give 5<sup>th</sup> graders a chance to be leaders in the school. Here are some crazy crayons generating enthusiasm on their way to recycling 100 lbs =>



The Burr Garden is thriving once again and an integral part of the school!

At Zervas, the team plans to re-focus this year and will be contemplating projects such as Green Wednesdays, Green Team T-Shirts, composting, climate talks, fund-raisers, green supplies, textile recycling, batteries, catalog reduction and the garden. Good luck and reach out if you need help!

At the middle schools, Day has two new leaders in Becca Berwick and Kayla Rogers who will be picking up from the retirement of Sandy Chaet. Jessica Avery and I are looking forward to supporting them. At Oak Hill, the team has a very healthy looking garden in place pictured here.



Within the high-schools, we saw the green continuum in action through Students for a Greener world and their efforts at Newton South HS to bring textile recycling bins to the City of Newton. The team hit some challenges but is ready to re-initiate stakeholder discussions this fall with the district and city.

The Greengineers at Newton North continued their leadership through a Green Campus Long-term Strategic Plan, starting with a vertical vegetable garden shown in the picture.

These are just a few examples of projects that students have participated in. If you are a student, teacher, parent or community member and would like to participate in a student led green initiative at your school, please contact Eric Bobby at [ericbobby@hotmail.com](mailto:ericbobby@hotmail.com) for more information. Check us out at [greendecade.org](http://greendecade.org)