

Square Foot Garden Meeting

August 4, 2015

Present: Wendy Crowley, Bob Hamilton, Brenda Eaves

Since our last meeting community and staff volunteers worked in mid-July to prepare the ground for fencing to be erected around the outside garden to be part of the square foot gardening project. The fence will likely be completed for the back to school picnic.

We had a productive pilot project this spring with 3rd and 6th grade. We learned from working with that sized cohort and now know more of what needs to happen to support and encourage success. We also have more to learn. This project thus far has been presented to the greenhouse stewards and the school board. We think, however, it is important share our plan more broadly. One way is by making sure that both the garden and greenhouse are open so anyone can to view what remains of those projects. Another is to provide a 1-page summary of the pilot and our future plans to those who would like it at the picnic.

Hopefully some sixth graders will be able to pick their produce. Wendy will (and has been) post messages to the 6th graders on their blog. We also hope other community members will pick from the gardens as well so the vegetables don't go to waste. In time we imagine the development of a gardening club. There are certainly students who find growing fascinating - it was a real treat to see this in our classrooms. We imagine in the future this will be the group who cares for and harvests the gardens when school is out and who also begin the seeds so the fall planting is ready to go right as school starts. Presently Bob did that for us so that the kale and chard plants are ready to go for the 7th grade gardens. This needs to happen so the vegetables will be harvested while there is enough daylight and temperature for growth.

Here is a slightly updated chart of the school-wide vegetable growing project. The choices made for each grade are in consideration of likely temperatures, light and variety of growing experiences through the grades.

Fall Planting		
	Greenhouse	Garden
Kindergarten	carrots	
Grade 2	spinach and beans	
Grade 5		radishes and mescaline mix
Grade 7		kale and chard
Spring Planting		
Grade 1	mescaline mix (lettuces)	
Grade 3	kale, broccoli, endive	
Grade 4		
Grade 6		broccoli, cabbage, brussel sprouts

Pre-K		sunflowers (and other annuals as desired)
Grade 8	tomatoes in individual buckets to take home at the end of school	

Pre-K will/can plant sunflowers (or other annuals of their choice) around the border of the outside garden. This is a large space so there will likely be space for other flowers and planting there.

Much of the greenhouse will be open for grade level and classroom projects. We believe there will be ample space, but realize there is need for continued conversation so growing at NHS remains vital and interesting. There are so many options and project possibilities. When we met with Ron Christie from the Cooperative Extension he said something like "Running and using a greenhouse is all you need to provide a robust science curriculum to the students in your school. I am convinced that everything comes up in the greenhouse."

Brenda is putting together an order for supplies. There are two parts to this: one includes supplies that will be purchased initially - grow lights, germination mats, and one that includes consumable supplies - seeds, growing containers, soil.

Our next Square Foot Gardening meeting is Tuesday, September 1 at 3:00 pm in Brenda's room (or the library if it is open - it will be cooler). We know you'll be exhausted, but we know that the fall planting has to happen right away so the students can reap a harvest. We plan to meet the first Tuesday of each month because this is the week prior to the Stewards meeting so we can bring issues and information to them regarding our work in the greenhouse and garden.