

Auburn School Committee
Regular Meeting Agenda - AMENDED
November 7, 2018 **7:00 PM**

6:00 PM - WORKSHOP - Performance Evaluation/Professional Growth (PEPG)

I. Call to Order /Pledge of Allegiance

- A. Introductions
- B. Communication

II. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of Minutes for October 17, 2018

_____ Moved to approve the Consent Agenda.

_____ Seconded

_____ Motion passed/defeated _____ to _____ approve the Consent Agenda.

III. Public Participation

The School Committee asks the Public to remember our System-Wide Code of Conduct and the six core values of Respect, Honesty, Courage, Compassion, Fairness, and Responsibility while directly addressing the group. Our policy JIC states that we expect people to ‘Treat others as you would like to be treated, Use language that is appropriate and kind, and be truthful and forthright in speech and actions.’ Per our policy, BEDH - Public Participation at School Committee Meetings: Citizens may comment on any general topics related to the school system during this portion of the agenda. Comments related to specific agenda items may be held until the appropriate time. Please be succinct and speak once for less than three minutes. Other limitations may be necessary. The School Committee may respond to your concerns at a later date by answering through the administration or by placing the item on a future agenda. It is requested that comments related to specific personnel be channeled privately to the appropriate administrator.

IV. Student Information

V. Superintendent Report

- A. Business

1. Expansion of Programs at Lewiston Regional Technical Center

The Superintendent and Rob Callahan, from the Lewiston Regional Technical Center, will present information regarding an application to the Maine Department of Education for expanding the programs at Lewiston Regional Technical Center.

_____ Moved to approve applying to the Maine Department of Education for expanding the programs at Lewiston Regional Technical Center in conjunction with the new Edward Little High School.

_____ Seconded

_____ Motion passed/defeated _____ to _____ approve applying to the Maine Department of Education for expanding the programs at Lewiston Regional Technical Center in conjunction with the new Edward Little High School.

2. Lease Agreement - Community Garden

The Superintendent will present information regarding entering into a lease agreement with the City of Auburn to house a Community Garden at the property adjacent to Washburn Elementary School, 115 Whitney Street.

_____ Moved to authorize the Superintendent and Business Manager to enter into a lease agreement with the City of Auburn on behalf of the Auburn School Department for the purpose of hosting a Community Garden at 115 Whitney Street.

_____ Seconded

_____ Motion passed/defeated _____ to _____ authorize the Superintendent and Business Manager to enter into a lease agreement with the City of Auburn on behalf of the Auburn School Department for the purpose of hosting a Community Garden at 115 Whitney Street.

VI. Information / Committee Reports

STANDING COMMITTEES	
Finance Subcommittee-B. Hayes, F. Fontaine	Policy Subcommittee-T. Kendall, B. Mennealy

SUBCOMMITTEES	
City Council Update-A. Fournier	Wellness Subcommittee-F. Fontaine, J. Scrivner
Communications Subcommittee-TBD	Audit Subcommittee-B. Hayes, F. Fontaine
Curriculum Subcommittee-P. Gautier	Transportation Appeals-D. Poisson, J. Scrivner
Community Learning Center-P. Gautier	SHARECenter-P. Gautier
New ELHS Building Committee-T. Kendall	Negotiations - T. Kendall, B. Hayes

VII. Upcoming Meeting

- Regular School Committee Meeting -December 5, 7:00 PM Auburn Hall Workshop at 6:00 PM
- Regular School Committee Meeting-December 19, 7:00 PM Auburn Hall

VIII. Future Agenda Items and Request for Information

IX. Executive Session - For the purpose of preparation for teacher contract negotiations pursuant to MRSA 405 (6) D

If the School Committee makes a motion to enter executive session, the precise nature of business to be considered will be indicated in the motion. The items, which may be discussed, by law, may include one or more of the following:

1. To discuss personnel.
2. To discuss or consider the suspension or expulsion of a student.
3. To discuss or consider the condition, acquisition, or the use of real or personal property only if premature disclosure would prejudice the competitive or bargaining of the body or agency.
4. To discuss labor contracts, proposals and/or meetings related to negotiations.
5. To consult with the School Committee's attorney concerning legal rights, pending litigation, and settlement offers, when premature public knowledge would give the School Committee substantial disadvantage.
6. To discuss records made, maintained, or received by the School Committee or department, of access is prohibited by statute.

X. Adjournment

_____ Moved to adjourn at _____ P.M.

_____ Seconded

_____ Motion passed/defeated _____ to _____ adjourn at _____ P.M.

REPORT OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING OF THE AUBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP - 6:00 PM Vision 2020 reboot to Vision 2030/Graduation Policy

Auburn Hall

October 17, 2018

Members Present: Ms. Faith Fontaine Mr. Thomas Kendall
Ms. Patricia Gautier Mr. Robert Mennealy
Ms. Alfreda Fournier Mr. Daniel Poisson
Ms. Bonnie Hayes

Others Present: Katherine Grondin, Superintendent, Michelle McClellan, Assistant Superintendent, Adam Hanson, Business Manager; Olivia Roth and Kiara Fournier; Student Representatives.

I. Call To Order/Pledge Of Allegiance

A. Introductions

Mr. Kendall called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM. He led the pledge of allegiance and members introduced themselves noting the ward they represent.

B. Communications

Mr. Mennealy congratulated the ELHS student who won the cross country event.

Mr. Kendall reported that the Leverage Learning Institute has 59 participants registered, noting that these registrations will cover all the expenses. He outlined the presenters for the conference. He stated that registration is low this year.

Ms. Grondin reported that she would share the flyer that went out to other districts to announce the Institute. She noted that the Department Of Education is not providing funding to send as many teachers this year as they did last year.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of Minutes for October 3, 2018

It was moved by Ms. Fontaine, seconded by Ms. Gautier and voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda for tonight's meeting.

III. Public Participation

Ms. Laura Garcia, Skillings Corner Rd., reported that tonight's workshop was refreshing and there was a lot of information. She stated that for the first time she heard acknowledgement about the problems and concerns that had been on the radar for quite some time. She stated that it was a bit upsetting to hear this acknowledgement tonight and realize that this could have been a much more collaborative approach. She stated that she felt Mr. Kendall owed an apology to citizens, but felt that going forward we can all learn from this. She stated that she is pleased we are going with a credit based transcript; however, she does understand the value of the dual grading. She noted that she is still concerned about how this is going to work for the special needs students and encouraged management to look closer at this area. Ms. Garcia also shared her concerns about those who are gifted and talented in some areas, but struggle greatly in other areas. She noted that continuing to grade with the proficiency requirements may lead to other problems. She stated that she did not feel our students were graduating without the skills they need due to the grading system, but due to other issues such as study skills, a clear view of options, etc. She explained that there are reasons where averaging can be useful and more discussion with parents, teachers and students is needed. Ms. Garcia stated that she feels our curriculum department has done a great job of researching what colleges are looking for in transcripts. She also requested information about support for those with dyslexia. She expressed that a lot of work that has been done is great work, but there is more work

to be done to ensure we are graduating students who are successful. She noted that her vote would be to not support the legislation for the Proficiency Based Diploma.

Mr. Ryan Fairchild, Special Education Director, reported that students with special needs within the current law require accommodations and IEP Teams can determine the essential targets and accommodations necessary to meet those targets. He noted that many of the students are in regular education classrooms with supports and are meeting targets. He stated that the difficulty with some students is that there may be experiencing some other difficulties that they struggle with that may impede their learning. He noted that once we access those struggles and meet those needs, they can learn. He stated that these are things we need to plan for and be thoughtful about, but it won't change the work we are currently doing. Mr. Fairchild stated that in terms of the multiple pathways, all students should have multiple pathways to make their learning meaningful. He stated that he has been working with team leaders to ensure that members clearly understand the needs of the student and understand what accommodations can help that child achieve success.

Ms. Grondin clarified that there is a great deal of discussion during IEP meetings to determine where and how the student can meet the targets.

Ms. McClellan asked for clarification regarding the accommodations.

Mr. Fairchild responded that accommodations can be anything that can help them achieve success. He noted that these accommodations have been available to students for a very long time and will continue to be available to them.

Ms. Fournier stated that if we teach to their strengths, they will learn. She noted that from her past experiences, she feels that if the special ed students are in the mainstream classroom, they will do whatever they can to stay in that classroom. She stated that she would like to see how we can bring students back to our schools who are currently getting their education elsewhere because we are not able to meet their needs here.

Ms. Hayes stated that she would love to see these students come back into our schools as well; however, she would like to ensure that it is an affordable option.

Mr. Fairchild responded that to bring these students back requires a thoughtful, mindful approach. He noted that he will provide more detailed information about this in December.

IV. Student Information

The student representatives reported that this Friday is the last home game at Walton and the National Honor Society will host a bake sale fundraiser. They reported that \$1,000 was raised for breast cancer so far and they hope more will be added at the game on Friday.

V. Superintendent Report

A. Planning and Development

1. MSBA Proposed Resolutions

The Superintendent presented the Maine School Board Association Resolutions that will be voted on by the Delegates at the Delegate Assembly during the Fall Conference. She provided a handout of the proposed resolutions, noting that this was an opportunity for School Committee members to give feedback to Bonnie Hayes, Auburn School Committee Delegate, on the proposed resolutions.

Ms. Grondin reviewed each resolution, noting that she has been nominated to be on the committee to discuss the resolution for CDS services for 3-5 year olds to be moved to public schools. She expressed that the one concern is that there is funding for the schools to implement this programming. Ms. Grondin reported that certification could be a challenge and we would also need to hire a coordinator for the program. She noted that our current PreK Director is interested and qualified to fill that position. Members agreed that it was a valuable resolution; however, would only support this resolution contingent on state funding required to provide these services.

She reviewed the School Safety resolution, noting that this would task the Department's Facilities Office to advise, collect and disseminate best practices on keeping children safe. She reported that

we have been on the forefront of school safety and we have a safety consultant who works with us. She noted that the State Department of Education is looking at increasing funding in the School Renovation Funds to help meet this need. She noted that this would be a more coordinated effort to keep schools safe with a consistent message throughout the region.

Members agreed that this was a valuable resolution.

Ms. Grondin reviewed the Gun-Free Schools resolution, noting that the Maine School Boards Association supports the current state ban on guns, loaded or unloaded, on school property and opposes any legislative attempts to amend this prohibition.

Members agreed to support this resolution.

She reviewed the Proficiency-based Diploma resolution to continue to look at ways for students to demonstrate learning. She noted that the Proficiency-Based Diploma has merit and many feel that more work should be done on this. She noted that as a state, many feel that we cannot give up on the goal of making sure all our students are prepared for success in work, post-secondary education and life. She noted that the proficiency-based diploma system is grounded in the state's standards of Learning Results adopted in the early 1900s.

Mr. Mennealy reported that he feels the proficiency-based system should be further explored, but would not give a blank check to move forward. Ms. Fontaine and Mr. Kendall agreed that there are challenges, but they can be worked out with support. Ms. Gauthier stated that ongoing investigation of this topic should be done with local districts doing what they feel is best for their students. Mr. Poisson supported this resolution with further investigation. Ms. Fournier stated that she did not support this resolution and feels that we need to concentrate on what we are doing now.

Mr. Kendall stated that the majority supported this resolution with further investigation and local control.

Ms. Grondin reviewed the Special Education Reform resolution which supports reforms recommended by the National School Boards Association when the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is brought up for reauthorization and to fully fund the promised federal share costs. She noted that this resolution would remove barriers between special education and general education and create an integrated inclusive system.

Members supported this resolution.

Ms. Grondin reviewed the resolution recognizing the need to raise teacher starting pay to \$40,000, increase instructional time from 175 days to 180 days, and provide professional development time.

Members supported this resolution with state funding support for the increases.

Ms. Grondin reviewed the resolution for school attendance age. She noted that students in Maine are currently required to attend school at the age of 7, although most register by the age of 5. She noted that Maine School Boards supports a change to the recommended age of 5 with compulsory attendance at age 6.

Members supported this resolution.

B. Business

1. Finance Report - September 2018

Ms. Hayes presented the Finance Report for September 2018 noting that the finance subcommittee met and reviewed the numbers. She noted that there was discussions about Special Education, the RETC program, bus drivers, and various other categories. She stated that Sarah Levine, Director of the Before and After Care program, attended the meeting and shared information on the successes of that program. She noted that expenses and revenues are in line with where they should be at this time of year.

Mr. Hanson reported that there was discussion about merging the RETC and SOS programs, noting that further discussions would take place.

It was moved by Mr. Mennealy, seconded by Ms. Fournier and voted unanimously to approve the Finance Report for September 2018.

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Ms. Fournier asked what the schools were doing about celebration of Veteran’s Day. She noted that the City is looking to raise revenues and reported that there is excitement about market value housing planned in the East Auburn area. She also reported about new local businesses and encouraged members to support these businesses. She stated that many streets have been repaved but now big trucks are beginning to use these newly paved secondary roads. She encouraged members to call and report this to the Assistant City Manager if they see this taking place.

Mr. Mennealy stated that he feels it is premature for the City’s Mayor to call for zero tax increase without first giving us an opportunity to share our needs.

Ms. Grondin reported that she attended a planning board session and shared concerns with the members about enrollment numbers and new housing going up in the East Auburn area. She noted that there are ongoing discussions.

Ms. Hayes stated that she attended the Strategic Planning Committee meeting and found it very interesting. She noted that there are meetings scheduled and other subcommittees being formed with a need for more School Committee representatives. She asked members to contact Liz Allen at the City for applications and noted that she will be sending more information via email.

Ms. Gautier reported that the ShareCenter has met and developed a budget for the year. She stated that they needed to purchase a Pod for storage and through a garage sale, the director raised enough money to pay for the Pod for one year. She reported that the need for storage space is crucial and there is also a need for volunteers.

Ms. Hayes reported that the sub committees for the New ELHS met last night, developed priorities, set the date for the forum at ELHS on November 15th, and scheduled an update for January.

Ms. Hayes reported that the union negotiations have started with the teachers union and members met new representatives. She noted that there is a training for members on interest based negotiations which she and others will be attending soon.

VII. Upcoming Meeting

- Regular School Committee Meeting -November 7, 2018, 7:30 PM Auburn Hall, Workshop at 6:00 PM - Teacher Effectiveness (PDGP) and Data Reports
- Regular School Committee Meeting -November 28, 2018, 7:00 PM Auburn Hall

VIII. Future Agenda Items and Request for Information

- Special Ed Programs - December

IX. Executive Session

X. Adjournment

It was moved by Ms. Fontaine seconded by Ms. Fournier and voted unanimously to adjourn from regular session at 9:12 PM. Attest, a true record,



Katherine Grondin, Secretary
Superintendent of Schools

KG/rmw

Webster Street Community Garden

2016 End of Season Report



Contents

- Project Overview
- Scope of Work
- Coordination
- Partnership
- Community Engagement
- Key Outcomes
- Milestones
- Success Stories
- Conclusions



Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities led by the St. Mary's Nutrition Center (NC) as part of the commitment to the City of Auburn to provide planning and oversight for the creation, development and implementation of a community garden at 61 Webster Street in the Union Street neighborhood of Auburn during the project period of November 2015 through November 2016.

Included in the report is an overview of the purpose and origins of the project, the coordination and community engagement needed to implement it, as well as key outcomes and milestones.

The first year of the Webster Street Community Garden was a success, exceeding original expectations, and we are very pleased with achievements made over the course of the project period. Feedback from participating gardeners, neighbors, and community partners has been overwhelmingly positive and opportunities to continue and expand beyond this first community garden are promising.



Project Overview

Starting in late fall of 2015, the NC supported the establishment of a community garden at 61 Webster Street, known as the “Webster Street Community Garden,” in the Union Street neighborhood of the City of Auburn. This effort was a continuation of initial research, planning and assessment conducted by the NC on behalf of the City from July 1 2014- June 30 2015, investigating the viability of community gardens in neighborhoods across the City of Auburn.

The purpose of the Webster Street Community Garden was to provide community members opportunities for growing fresh healthy foods, with particular emphasis on those individuals at risk for food-insecurity. The project also served to enhance community interaction and involvement, improve the quality of life of residents, and support the beautification of the neighborhood.

Support and funding for the project was provided by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), a grant from the National Parks Service, small foundation grants and in-kind support from the St. Mary’s Nutrition Center.

The work of the NC was done in the context of the Auburn Community Garden Initiative (ACGI), *a collaborative effort including the City of Auburn, St. Mary’s Nutrition Center, the National Park Service River Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, the Androscoggin Land Trust and Auburn residents. The ACGI was created as a means to help develop, strengthen and sustain community gardens throughout Auburn.*

Scope of Work

The Scope of Work involved coordinating the construction, development and implementation of the garden in time for the 2016 growing season and included the following activities: research and design; garden installation and construction; recruitment, hiring, training and oversight of a part-time seasonal Community Garden Coordinator; outreach to and recruitment of community gardeners and volunteers; media and promotion; fundraising; and coordination and leadership development of the ACGI.

Coordination and Collaboration

The strong collaborative model of the ACGI was integral to the success of the project. All members of the ACGI provided advisory support for project design, development and implementation as well as fundraising support. Each member brought distinct strengths and assets to the Initiative and shared an organizational as well as personal commitment to the positive and transformative power of community gardens.

As Lead Coordinator of the ACGI, NC staff convened meetings, assessed priorities and coordinated member committees to achieve goals. The NC served as lead grant writer and fiscal sponsor alongside the City of Auburn. Bridgette Bartlett, ACGI member and Community Garden Educator with the St. Mary's Nutrition Center led the creation and construction of the garden helping to oversee the hiring and training of the Garden Coordinator, and supporting community outreach as well as the development of a garden program. Along with other ACGI members, she provided on-going support to the project over the course of the season.



Reine Mynahan from the Community Development Department of the City of Auburn was a strong project advocate helping to facilitate communication among City Departments, personnel and community partners as well as facilitating key logistical needs at the onset of garden construction. Following her retirement, Yvette Bouttenot has stepped in to the crucial role of coordinating with the city.

Sabrina Best and the Recreation Department facilitated program outreach and provided a mechanism for registration of community members for garden plots. The Public Services Department provided vital support in preparing the land, readying the site for infrastructure development and materials delivery.

Julie Isbill with the National Park Service River Trails and Conservation Assistance Program provided invaluable consultation services. The Parks Service also provided key staff support and partial one-time funding for the Garden Coordinator.

Deb Charest, with the Androscoggin Land Trust, helped spread awareness of the garden to the land trust's base of supporters, sharing the role that community gardens can play in conserving land and providing accessible green spaces. She played a key role getting the Webster St. Garden sign finalized and up in time for the garden's opening ribbon-cutting. Deb's successor at the Land Trust, Shelley Kruszewski, is already a dedicated and involved member of the team.

Coordination and Collaboration cont.

Lynne Holland, representing the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, brought a wealth of knowledge, sharing resources around gardening tips and examples of what other gardens across the state, or beyond, have tried. She also helped connect volunteers through the Master Gardener Program and provided extra seedlings and perennials from plant sales for gardeners.

Cheri Donahue, a Master Gardener as well as an Auburn resident and Community Gardener, joined the team as a super volunteer. She helped with on the ground garden projects, such as donating and assembling the wire for the compost bin, and was also able to share great ideas and expertise at the meetings.

Ken Estes, a resident of Auburn who lives right across the street from the newly formed garden, was instrumental in his determination to improve his neighborhood. From showing up at the city council meeting to speak in support of the garden to countless hours participating in planning meetings and routinely keeping an eye on the garden, Ken's help was integral in the success of the garden's creation and continues to be a vital and present caretaker.

The work of ACGI members was amplified by the on the ground expertise and energy provided by the Community Garden Coordinator. During the winter of 2016 the ACGI recruited and hired a part-time seasonal Garden Coordinator to support the growth and

success of the Webster Street Garden.

Charis Heisey, an Auburn resident, was integral to the creation of the Webster Community Garden, supporting materials procurement, garden construction, and gardener recruitment. Once the season began, Charis was responsible for providing administrative oversight, facilitating communication among and supporting efforts of gardeners, recruiting and overseeing volunteers and volunteer workdays, tracking participation and coordinating all activities necessary to maintain successful and resilient gardens. Charis proved to be an invaluable part of the success of the project. She was incredibly passionate, knowledgeable, attentive and supportive of the gardeners.

Having staff regularly "on the ground" is critical for the success of community garden programs and of particular importance in communities with limited resources; added stressors related to poverty can compound the ability to successfully self-organize. A consistent person helps provide continuity, structure and support even as people pass through the program and helps to ensure the gardens are being maintained. We see great potential for the Community Garden Coordinator to support coordination of additional Auburn community gardens in the future.



Partnership and Support

In addition to strong collaborative engagement through the ACGI and on the ground support from qualified and committed staff, success of the Webster Community Garden would not have been possible without valuable community partnerships. The youth-centered projects of Goodwill Northern New England's Take 2 and the Lewiston Regional Technical Center (LRTC) were responsible for the construction of the raised garden beds and garden tool shed respectively. Students from Edward Little High School helped clean up trash, paint the sheds and fill garden beds with soil. Auburn Police Activities League (PAL) Center, Tedford Housing, and Androscoggin Head Start provided outreach and education about the garden to community members and Auburn PAL offered up their facilities for outreach meetings. Whiting Farm cared for and donated a portion of the seedlings for community gardeners. Area businesses such as Blais Flowers, Reggies Sales and Service, and Jillson Farm also contributed seedling donations. Other seedlings and seeds provided by the NC came from donations from more than ten seed companies including Fedco and Pine Tree Seeds. Hammond Lumber helped support the project by giving us a discounted price on lumber for the shed and garden beds.

“What I loved about having a garden? Fresh veggies, meeting people, helping the community. Taking an empty space and making it into something beautiful, productive, and healthy.”



Community Outreach & Engagement

The success and sustainability of community gardens depend on community buy-in and support. Members of the ACGI had shared values around engaging residents of the neighborhood as early as possible in the development and creation of the garden and to forming genuine relationships with community members. As an extension of the outreach work done in the initial research phases of the project, ACGI members continued to canvass and have conversations with the community to gather input and vision.

To best capture this vision and also recruit gardeners, education and outreach meetings were held where people could come and learn about the garden, share their thoughts, and sign up for a garden plot. These meetings were held just around the corner from the Webster Street garden location and the Auburn PAL Center. Additionally, ACGI members created fliers, worked with community organizations to spread the word to clients and used the local newspaper to spread the word. As indicated above, the Recreation Department was vital in spreading the word about the garden using already existing channels to let community members know.



“My family enjoyed time [in the garden] and we definitely want to do it again. The coordinator was a great help and knowledgeable and enjoyed time with us all.”



Community Outreach & Engagement cont.

Prospective gardeners were invited to volunteer work days to help lay mulch, put soil in beds and support the completion of the garden. This engagement helped foster a greater sense of ownership over the garden. Once completed, the ACGI hosted a ribbon cutting event, attended by City officials, funders, community gardeners, Auburn residents, garden supporters and local media. It was a proud day for the ACGI and all those who worked hard to bring the Webster Street Garden to life. Once the garden season was in full swing, Charis provided regular communication and support for gardeners. She held a weekly garden night, where gardeners could come and ask questions and receive support in planting and maintaining their garden. Charis also sent out regular emails, texts and posted fliers. Input on the success and challenges of the garden season were shared with Charis through an end of season survey.



Key Outcomes

The following outcomes refer to those that were projected in the Project Proposal submitted to the City of Auburn in September of 2015 and outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the NC and the City of Auburn. In all but one indicator, the project exceeded anticipated outcomes and results were higher than typical for a first-year garden.

Goal: 15-20 households engaged as community gardeners

Outcome: 21 households and 3 organizations: Androscoggin Head Start, Tedford Housing, and Washburn Elementary School.

Goal: 85% of community gardeners successfully completed the growing season

Outcome: 90% of community gardeners successfully completed the growing season
19 out of the 21 households completed the season. One gardener moved out of town and one had a family emergency. Another moved to a nursing home, but she still stayed involved and attended the fall Harvest Potluck and enjoyed the last of her tomatoes!

The remaining three plots were used by community groups/organizations. Only one fully completed the season; this highlights the need to be clearer about expectations and developing a full-season plan with future organizations that want to have a shared garden plot.

Goals:

75% of gardeners report increase in household vegetable consumption

70% of gardeners report that they feel more connected to community and neighbors

80% of gardeners report that they have greater confidence in growing their own food

Outcomes:

Of the 15 gardeners surveyed:

67% reported increase in household vegetable consumption

67% reported an increase in physical activity

73% reported that they feel more connected to community and neighbors

80% reported that they have greater confidence in growing their own food



Key Outcomes cont.

Goal: A minimum of 10 volunteers engaged.

Outcome: Greater than 85 volunteers were engaged, including high school students, at-risk youth, gardeners and their families, neighbors, and community members.

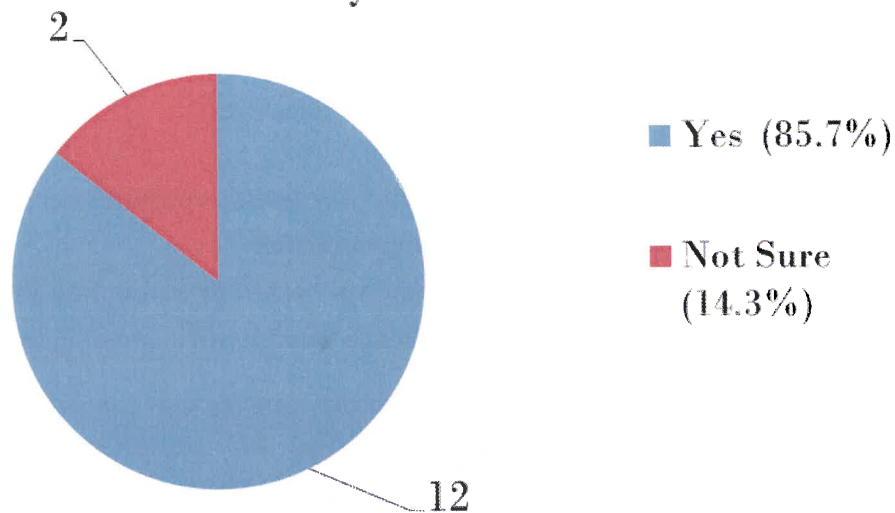
Goal: A minimum of 5 partners involved through volunteering or in-kind support.

Outcome: More than a dozen partners provided volunteer and in-kind support. Organizations involved in the Auburn Community Garden include: St. Mary's Nutrition Center; National Parks Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program; University of Maine Cooperative Extension, City of Auburn, Auburn Recreation Department; Androscoggin Land Trust; Edward Little High School; Goodwill of Northern New England Take 2; Auburn Police Activities League (PAL) Center; Lewiston Regional Technical Center; Tedford Housing; and Androscoggin Head Start.

Goal: Reach neighbors of limited income and at greater risk of food insecurity.

Outcome: A large majority of households (78%) had incomes below 80% of median income, the threshold identified by HUD.

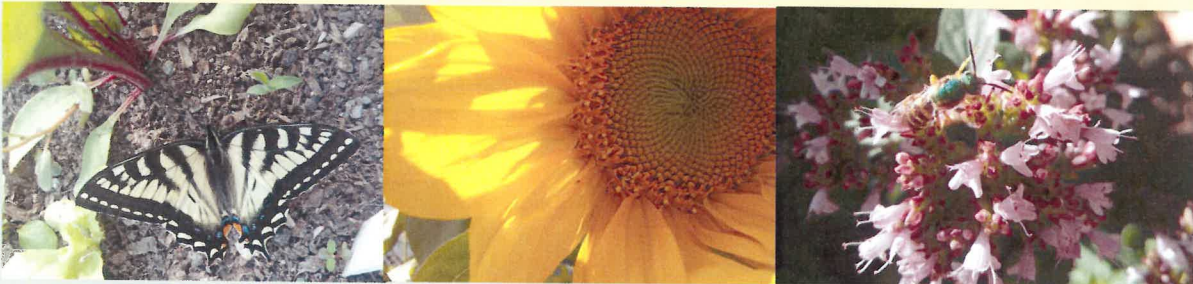
Do you think you will want a plot in the garden next year?



Milestones

Many key milestones were reached throughout the duration of the project and other significant and unexpected ones emerged aiding overall success.

- ⇒ A garden site, 61 Webster Street, was approved by the Auburn City Council and a Memorandum of Understanding committing the site for a minimum of 5 years with a 5-year extension was executed.
- ⇒ The ACGI team recruited, selected and hired a qualified individual to serve as the Garden Coordinator for the 2016 growing season. With just moderate supervision provided by the Nutrition Center, the Garden Coordinator, a downtown Auburn resident, oversaw neighborhood outreach and engagement.
- ⇒ By mid-spring, all 24 garden plots were reserved and in process of being planted; including a handicapped accessible bed at the front of the garden
- ⇒ The project was awarded a grant from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation and a Fiskars Project Orange Thumb mini-grant, one of just 30 across the country.
- ⇒ All site improvements (grading, fencing, water access, shed construction, signage, bed construction, etc.) were completed by early spring 2016, with each member of the Coordinating Team taking on responsibilities for key tasks and for engaging partners.
- ⇒ The Team held a launch and open house event to celebrate the new garden that was well attended and had good media coverage.
- ⇒ With the steady support of the Coordinator, the community gardeners had a successful first growing season.



Success Stories



"Say somebody raises broccoli and they have a whole field of it, this picture they'd think nothing of it. But me that was the first broccoli I've ever grown. To me it was a masterpiece!"



"My grandson was typically not interested in outdoor things getting him out of his comfort zone at home. [He was always] in front of video games and playing on line too much. [The garden] gave us an opportunity to share special things together that otherwise we wouldn't have done. He was inspired to grow things and it made his attitude better with his Mum. She followed up and promised to make his favorite dish with the broccoli he grew. He was proud when he shared food with his little family he wants his own plot



Continuing the Bounty

The Nutrition Center and members of the ACGI were very pleased with the outcomes of the project and excited by the level of community interest, engagement and partner support that came together for the Webster Street Community Garden. There were many successes had, challenges overcome, lessons learned and partnerships formed. We look forward to working with City Council and staff to determine the next step in supporting expansion of access to community gardens for Auburn residents and neighborhoods.

"I'm so very thankful that this opportunity was made available to the community."



