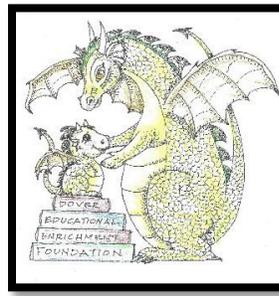


Dover Union Free School District

Second to None



DEEP Matters

A Newsletter of the
Dover Education
Enrichment Program
(DEEP)

an education enrichment fund of

Berkshire Taconic
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Dover Elementary School Community Garden

For student “farmers” of the DES Garden Club, planting, tending and enjoying the harvest of their school’s garden box planters affirms the adage of Frances Hodgson Burnett that “if you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden.”



When Ed Frederick from Hudson River Healthcare wanted to expand the successful community garden he implemented at their medical office in Amenia, he and 4th Grade DES teacher Melissa Bertsch launched the DES Garden Club. For the past two years, students have grown fresh vegetables used by the School’s Food Service Program and donated to the local Center of Compassion’s food pantry.



For some DES students, the garden has been their first experience in learning how food grows from seed or starter plant and from farm to table. Produce from the garden has included varieties of kale and lettuce, cherry tomatoes, string beans, turnips, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, cucumbers, spinach, green peppers and basil to name just a few. Approximately 30 students participated in fall and spring sessions with hands-on lessons in organic gardening and vermicomposting.

DES Student Gardeners tend the garden



Local farmers at White Pine Community Farm in Wingdale and Dover Middle and High School students helped with spring plantings and garden maintenance during the summer. DEEP grant funds helped purchase starter plants, gardening tools, fertilizer, composting bin and a worm farm kit. During the project, nutrition educators from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County presented a “Healthy Body” workshop. The capstone garden event, the “Great Green Bean Taste Test” with input from all DES students.



In practical and creative ways, from studies of plant biology, growing conditions and seasons, healthy nutrition and the natural life cycle, this project helps students cultivate subject knowledge along with critical thinking and reflection skills. Through the learning process of appreciative inquiry, we hope they may truly come to “see the whole world as a garden” — and their vital part in the hard work and dedication to bring good things to life.