

WBOE Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee

The Committee met 5 times between February and June, 2019

Committee members included: Claire Coleman (Chair), Todd Jokyl; Bob Gilbert; Hillary Drumm; Beej Ahern; Kris Hart-Rooney; Jon Gorham (Town of Woodbridge Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee); Vito Esparo, Jane Roddy; John Ebherhart. Other parents and staff participated from time to time.

A summary of the work and topics that the committee spent time on include:

- Reviewed the charge: Recommend Sustainability Projects to WBOE for 2018-19 and 2019-2020 school years. Initial focus will be on evaluating the feasibility and benefits of Beecher establishing composting in cafeteria to reduce food waste and becoming part of the Green Leaf School Program, and improving recycling efforts within the school. Working with the Town Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee, this group will identify funding options for sustainability initiatives, including use of grants and PTO.
- Reviewed May 22, 23 2018 food waste reduction pilot and results.
- Identified and discussed sustainability goals of members of Committee, including food waste reduction, donating more used furniture and items, improved recycling, incorporating the 8 Rs into Beecher's ethics (responsibility, resist, reduce, return, repair, reuse, recycle, restore, respect, and reach out), establishing healthy planet curriculum for kids and other resources in the library on sustainability, renewing bioswales work, and working more with Massaro Farm on food waste reduction and other projects.
- Reviewed other zero waste school initiatives in Connecticut, including Wilton, Weston, and West Hartford; and Jon Gorham and Michelle Cohen reported to the group on a zero waste schools faire.
- Ashley Muspratt, Center for Eco Technology (CET) participated in 2 meetings and provided information on regional food reduction efforts (with support and coordination from Pam Roach, SCRCOG). After a site visit, Ashley issued a report and recommendations (attached).
- Evaluated financial and environmental benefits of food waste program.
- Considered food share table, but rejected due to concerns raised by Stacy Katz regarding the health and safety risks of a share table
- Evaluated grant opportunities (see attached) and identified RecycleCT School Grant program, which gives preference to Green Leaf Schools participants.
- Reviewed Green Leaf Schools program and Administration submitted letter of commitment to Green Leaf Schools program.
- Created subgroup to work on Green Leaf Schools baseline assessment.
- Held Rid Litter day table with awareness on composting and sustainable practices.
- Established Beecher "Green Team" to promote sustainable practices at Beecher and plan for waste reduction rollout for Fall 2019 (Will be Co-Chaired by Kris Hart Rooney and Beej Ahern).

Recommendations:

1. Establish Beecher Food Waste Reduction Initiative that includes:
  - a. Food donation table with coordination from Haven's Harvest, New Haven non-profit that will coordinate food waste pickup.
  - b. Improved Recycling Station in cafeteria to include color coded bins, improved signage, and liquid disposal receptacle so that cartons of milk and juice can be emptied.
  - c. Take steps to "Green" cafeteria utensils (e.g. cardboard trays, eliminate individually wrapped plastic)
  - d. Establish composting Station
    - i. Recommend BOE fund composting pickup
      1. BlueEarth Compost -- \$41/week with weekly pickup
      2. All American Waste -- \$175/month with monthly pickup
      3. Long-term opportunity to coordinate with Amity once town composting truck and scale at transfer station is set up.
      4. At a minimum, composting "practice" could begin at start of school year with improved recycling station.
2. Support Beecher "Green Team" efforts to promote sustainable practices at Beecher and plan for waste reduction rollout for Fall 2019. Goals include:
  - a. Working together over summer to prepare for food waste reduction rollout (creating cafeteria sorting station, bulletin board with educational materials, preparing instructional lessons)
  - b. Partnering with PTO
  - c. Creating Green Leaf Club for kids
  - d. Conducting instructional assemblies on recycling and source separation with student volunteer monitors from Green Leaf Club.
  - e. Utilizing technical support from CET and parents for Cafeteria recycling station
  - f. Identifying additional sustainability goals and practices with Green Leaf Schools Initiative
  - g. Applying for RecycleCT Grant in the fall for intern support for Green Team