

## **MLT Education Committee End of Year Summary (2024-2025)**

### **News and Updates**

- The Education Committee has expanded our group to include Annette Brickley and Jocelyn Mitchell-Chin, who joined our existing members Wendy Copps, Mary Cabral, Diane Brown-Couture, Veronica Kenney, Ellen Flynn, Lynn Connor, Karen Browning, and Lisa Stark.
- Olivia Thompson, a junior at ORR will serve as our Student Delegate for the 2025-2026 school year
- Karen Browning volunteered to be our ORRHS teacher liaison – replacing the now retired Lynn Connor
- We centralized our Education Committee correspondence and file sharing using a google account. Our new email is [mattlandtrustededucation@gmail.com](mailto:mattlandtrustededucation@gmail.com)
- Our 2024-2025 Student Delegate Caitlin O'Donnell created a beautiful new Education Committee Brochure

### **Massachusetts Cultural Council grants**

- In October, we applied to Mattapoissett, Marion, and Rochester Cultural Councils and received a total of \$4000 in grants to apply to our programs!

### **Educator Grants**

- This year, we reformatted our process of funding school programs to align with new ORR School District rules, forming an online google form application for teachers to use to apply for grants. A Grant Review Committee was formed and two grant review periods were established – fall and spring. Tweaks were made as we learned more about the School Committee approval process, teacher notifications, and fund procurement.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, a total of 9 Educator Grants were awarded for a total of nearly \$8000. These programs reached all of our elementary school students, high school students, Transition Program students at ORRHS, and the preschool children in the ORRHS Early Education and Care program.

### **Fall Educator Grant Awards**

- Supporting the Beautification of Campus project at ORRHS which has engaged the Community Service Learning Club, Life Skills classes, and many other high schoolers. The students are not only learning about native plants and their importance in our environment but also planting seasonal flower boxes and planters around entrances

to the high school to improve the aesthetics of the school for the students, parents, and other visitors.

- Facilitating the purchase of nature and science library books by the Center School and Old Hammondtown School librarian for use by all elementary students
- Helping with the creation of an EmpowORR Garden for the Transition program at ORRHS through an inclusive, hands-on real-world learning environment by engaging the students in gardening activities. The student will not only explore science, math, and environmental studies, but will learn teamwork, responsibility, and patience.
- Enabling the purchase of 2 birdfeeders and materials for the 1st graders at Center School to learn about local birds, seasons, and bird behavior through observations, graphing of bird visits, and additional art and writing activities.

### **Spring Educator Grant Awards**

- Supporting the annual Cuttyhunk STEAM Academy field trip for the 6th graders at OHS. The students will enjoy a day of workshops on Cuttyhunk learning about the island, its history and inhabitants as well as exploring its wetlands and beach areas, and learning about oyster farming, shipwreck diving, and more!
- Funding the Center School 2<sup>nd</sup> graders field trip to Heritage Museum and Gardens in Sandwich. This field trip will help students foster curiosity, interest and respect for nature through exploration of the gardens and observation of the local flora and fauna. They will learn about topics such as seed dispersal, animal habitats, how plants and animals interact with their environment, and preservation.
- Funding the ORRHS Early Education and Care 10<sup>th</sup> grade students field trip to the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. Through the museums' wealth of exploration centers including an aquarium, archaeology, and biomimicry exhibits, this experience will provide hands-on learning opportunities to enhance students' knowledge of nature-based learning and environmental education, both of which are essential in fostering developmentally appropriate practices for preschool-aged children. The students also made up 'summer fun' bags for the preschoolers in their program which were loaded with items to engage the children outdoors this summer.
- Supporting the ORRHS students in order to create a Native Garden at the high school. Students will be learning about the importance of using native plants to create a natural and sustainable habitat. They will also be selecting native plants from local farm, and planting and maintaining them at the high school.
- Facilitating the Center School 3<sup>rd</sup> graders Sunflower Project. The students will be learning about the lifecycle of sunflowers by growing them in the classroom and

planting them at Dunseith Gardens. The program teaches the students about the parts of the flowers, how to grow them, and how environmental factors affect growth, as well as the importance of community service.

### **Non-Educator Grant Programs**

- In the fall, we supported the ongoing daffodil planting at OHS which to date has planted an estimated 500 bulbs! The students learn about the growing cycle of the daffodils and surrounding trees as well as the influences of the sun and wind.
- In February, we collaborated with Tri-Town Against Racism to commemorate Black History Month with a story walk at Munro Park. On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, we also hosted a reception for the story walk at the Mattapoissett Museum with several speakers. Marilou Newell had a nice writeup in the Wanderer and published Ellen's poem to commemorate the occasion and honor Frederick Douglas!
- In June, we hosted the Southeastern Massachusetts Education Collaborative students for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Music in the Park concert performance at Munro park.
- We also updated our Staycation events for the February and April school vacations

### **Scholarships**

- The Ed Com Scholarship Committee and the Hathaway family were pleased to award Eden Dupre with the Priscilla Hathaway Art scholarship. Eden has an extensive background in art and drama, and submitted a beautiful self-portrait with her application. She will be attending the University of New Hampshire in the fall to study Secondary Theater Education.
- The Blanche B. Perry scholarship has been awarded to Lowell Copps. Lowell has spent many hours working with the MLT blazing trails on the Sherman Preserve and Alves-Bucciarelli Preserve, helping clean up Grace Pond/Santos Farm, as well as helping with the story walks. He will be attending Case Western Reserve University in the fall to study Civil Engineering.

### **Community Service Award**

- The MLT and Education Committee honored our Student Delegate Caitlin O'Donnell with a special Community Service Award. Caitlin has been a valuable member of the committee and contributed so much to the MLT that we surprised her at ORR's Senior Awards night with this award. She will be attending the University of Michigan in the fall to study Child Psychology.

