

2024-NRMS Grant Projects

Exhibit 1

Project 1 Title: Building a Wetu at NRMS

Leader(s): Susy Remillard

Students: all grades

Cost: \$6,000

Timeline: September 2024—June 2025

Description: The purpose of building a wetu at NRMS is to honor the history of this area by connecting and working with Wampanoag elders to provide an authentic teaching space for students. Currently, the Greenhouse, Earthkeepers, and Changemakers Programs are grounded in Native American traditions of understanding and working with the land, including the history of the Wampanoag settlements adjacent to Boland Pond. We bring students outside to explore and grow in spaces that are intentionally designed to maximize learning and a feeling of connection to our shared environment. Building a wetu would bring this learning alive.

The wetu will serve as an outdoor teaching space for groups of up to 24 students, serving as an authentic classroom for lessons related to the environment, the history, and the Indigenous presence on this land, especially the area around the pond. In addition to representing traditional Wampanoag lifeways, the wetu will provide a teaching space built from natural materials in an area that was historically used by first peoples. It will provide us with greater opportunities to take our students and our teaching outdoors in all seasons. The area around the wetu is the perfect spot to teach students about native plants and Indigenous planting methods that are closely tied to sustainability, science, and storytelling.

Project 2 Title: Creating a Teaching Garden at NRMS

Leader(s): Rand Burkert

Students: Students in Greenhouse, Earthkeepers, and Changemakers Exploratory Programs (up to 400 students throughout the year)

Cost: \$6,000

Timeline: September 2024—June 2025

Description: The purpose of building a teaching garden at NRMS is to provide authentic teaching spaces for students to learn about the Indigenous Peoples of Cape Cod. Currently, the Greenhouse, Earthkeepers, and Changemakers Programs are grounded in Native American traditions of understanding and working with the land. A teaching garden would provide many opportunities for teaching about the natural systems of the Earth that provide our food and the ways that Wampanoag people have traditionally used the land. Additionally, students will be able to use the space to learn about native species and consult with local Indigenous experts to inform the lessons.

The teaching garden relates to our anticipated wetu build in that Wampanoag people would have planted the three sisters close to their dwellings. The area around a wetu is the perfect spot to teach students about native plants and Indigenous planting methods that are closely tied to sustainability, science, and storytelling. Much of the work will be done within the greenhouse program and with volunteers, including the potential addition of an AmeriCorps Cape Cod volunteer in our classrooms next year.