

# GROW PORTLAND

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## News from the Vestal Garden!



Hi Vestal families & happy Spring!

Since the winter season is coming to a close, I'm writing to y'all again to share how our winter in the garden has been so far! Although the garden feels slower this time of year, there is still plenty going on.



In January we learned about our local avian friends and how they help us take care of the garden through seed dispersal, pest management, and pollination! We took a walk around our school, and said hello to the birds that like to visit. The students put on their engineering caps to create homes for birds of all sizes, and even made sure to show their appreciation to them with bird

seed as a snack. Additionally, 4th and 5th graders emulated birds with a game of tag

called Hawks & Sparrows. It was a great way to practice teamwork, and keep warm while using our bodies.



For the month of February we took the opportunity to enjoy a winter snack in the indoor warmth (dried berries, herbal tea bags, and cauliflower popcorn), and learn about food systems and the workers who keep it going. Outdoors, in the garden, we observed the results of the precautions we took to care for the garden in the cold. The garlic and cover crop are slowly but surely growing, and the straw we spread keeps our hardy plants protected. We also made sure to visit our friends in the garden that we

met during previous lessons, like the worms and birds and chose what kind of crops we want to grow in the garden as we approach the spring, bringing anticipation for all the food we'll get to eat!



Now, in March, we welcome spring as we appreciate the beauty and diversity of seeds and plant the seeds of spring. We are really excited to sow pea, radish, lettuce seeds and more and watch the garden grow as the warmth slowly returns!

A huge thanks to the Vestal PTA for securing the funds for a permanent covered area in the garden, and to Andrew Stave for building it! Your work has definitely been appreciated by me, teachers, and students during the rainy, and even snowy, days in the garden. Thank you to the parents and

volunteers that have offered support and care to the garden during the MLK Day of Service and at the previous garden work party on March 4th!

Warmly,

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