ecomaine

Memorandum

DATE: October 30, 2025

TO: Chair and Members of the Board

FROM: Kevin H. Roche, CEO

SUBJECT: **Agenda for the Outreach & Recycling Committee Meeting**

There is an **ecomaine** Outreach & Recycling Committee scheduled for November 6, 2025 @ 4:00PM. The meeting will be held here at **ecomaine** in the 1R Community Room.

The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

1. Approval of September 11, 2025, Minutes ***(Attachment A)***
2. Amendment to By-Laws to add Chair of Outreach & Recycling to the Executive Committee
3. Monthly & FY 26 YTD Outreach & Media Metrics ***(Attachment B)***
4. Update Multi Family Recycling Initiative
5. Judging of School Waste Diversion Grants Program FY 26 ***(Attachment C)***
6. Other:

Meetings:

Executive Committee	11-20-2025 @ 4pm
Executive Committee	12-18-2025 @ 4pm
Finance & Audit Committee	01-15-2026 @ 3pm
Full Board of Directors	01-15-2026 @ 4pm
Outreach & Recycling Committee	02-12-2026 @ 3pm
Executive Committee	02-12-2026 @ 4pm
Full Board of Directors	03-19-2026 @ 4pm
Finance & Audit Budge Review	03-26-2026 @ 4pm
Outreach & Recycling Committee	04-09-2026 @ 4pm
Full Boad of Directors	04-16-2026 @ 4pm
Finance & Audit Committee	05-21-2026 @ 3pm
Executive Committee	05-21-2026 @ 4pm
Outreach & Recycling Committee	05-28-2026 @ 4pm
Annual Board of Directors Meeting	06-18-2026 @ 11am

Attachment A

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Memorandum

DATE: September 11, 2025

TO: Chair and Members of the Board

FROM: Kevin H. Roche, CEO

SUBJECT: **Minutes – Outreach & Recycling Committee Meeting**

There is an **ecomaine** Outreach & Recycling Committee scheduled for **September 11, 2025 @ 4:00PM**. The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm by Caleb Hemphill, Chair.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

Caleb Hemphill motioned to approve the minutes of May 22, 2025 ***(Attachment A)***. The motion was seconded by Troy Moon. All were in favor.

Item 2: FY25 Monthly & FYTD Outreach & Media Metrics

Lucy Sullivan (Staff) presented the updated metrics report ***(Attachment B)***. The new report format includes a breakdown of outreach by event type and metrics on percentage of ecomaine communities reached.

Manager's Report

- **School Waste Diversion Grants Program FY26:** Lucy Sullivan (Staff) confirmed that submissions opened as scheduled on August 15 and will remain open until October 15. Email messaging has been sent to education contacts and staff distributed information in person at Ruth's Reusables during teacher supply week. The committee will receive submissions to review in advance of the November meeting; winners will be selected at the meeting.
- **School/Educator Engagement efforts:** Lucy Sullivan updated the committee on new education efforts, including interactive games at tabling events to increase engagement and more effectively provide recycling information; and new Teacher Tool Kits that will launch with the new website later this fall.
- **Multi-Family Recycling Initiative Update:** Lucy Sullivan (Staff) shared the most recent monthly report from Zoe Malia ***(Attachment C)*** with the latest updates on the program's impact and expansion into new communities, including new relationships with housing authorities in Portland and Sanford. She confirmed that Zoe Malia has attempted to engage Ocean View in Falmouth but this has not yet progressed to a meeting.

Item 3: Other

- Committee requested to receive confirmation of updated FY2026 meeting dates via email.
- Committee thanks Linda Cohen for her service on the ecomaine board; she is invited to attend the annual meeting in 2026 so we can celebrate her service.

Linda Cohen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5pm. Dave Durrell seconded the motion. All in favor.

Attendees: Linda Boudreau, Lisa Belanger, Linda Cohen, Troy Moon, Caleb Hemphill, Carrye Castleman-Ross, Amber Swett, and Dave Durrell.

Staff: Lucy Sullivan

Attachment B

Outreach & Recycling Committee
Metrics: October 2025

MEDIA REPORT: OCTOBER 2025

3.2k followers (+13)
68 interactions

3.8k followers (+11)
5.6k views (+30.7%)

1.3k followers (+17)
Reactions +142%

453 views
16.5 hours watch time

RECYCLOPEDIA

3.5k material views
2k first-time visitors
#1 search: electronics

"While organizations like ecomaine were working hard to get the program to launch, most Gray residents were unaware that it was coming, and the committee would be focused on spreading awareness. [Council member Anne Gass] said Gray could gain some revenue by working with the Extended Producer Responsibility bill, which could be used to offset costs for the transfer station."

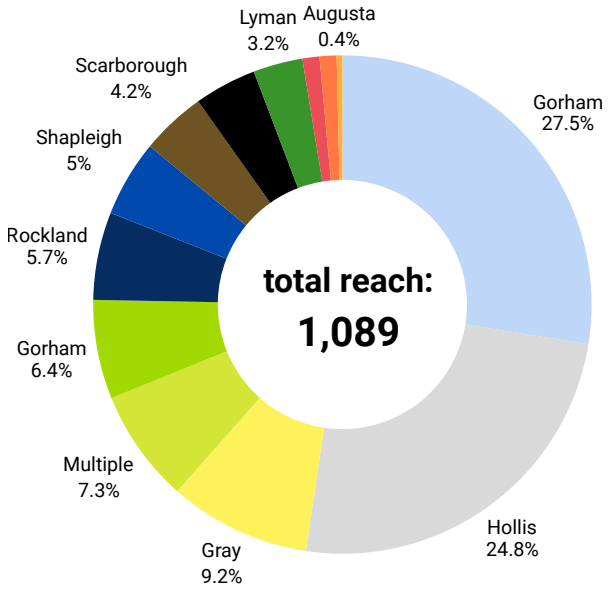

LOCAL & STATE

Gray creates committee to weigh future of transfer station

Implementation of the upcoming Extended Producer Responsibility program is a priority.

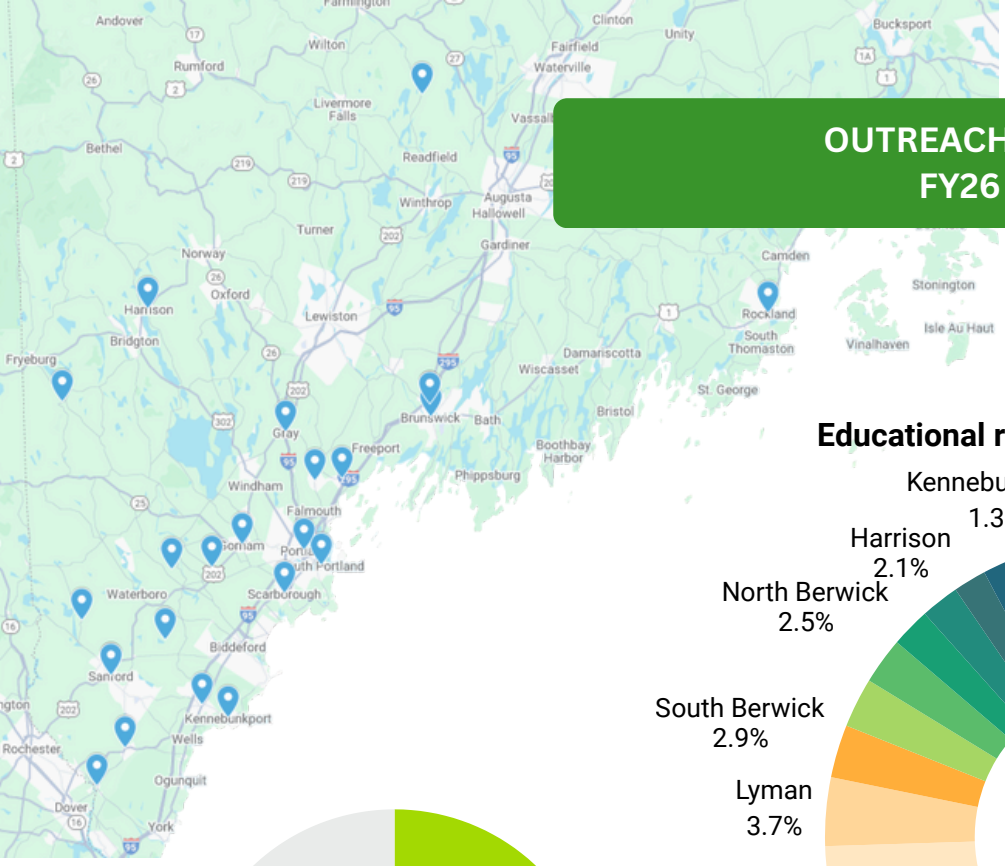
Portland Press Herald 10/17/2025

OUTREACH REPORT: OCTOBER 2025



OCTOBER	
Events completed	14
Communities reached	13+
Bins distributed	75

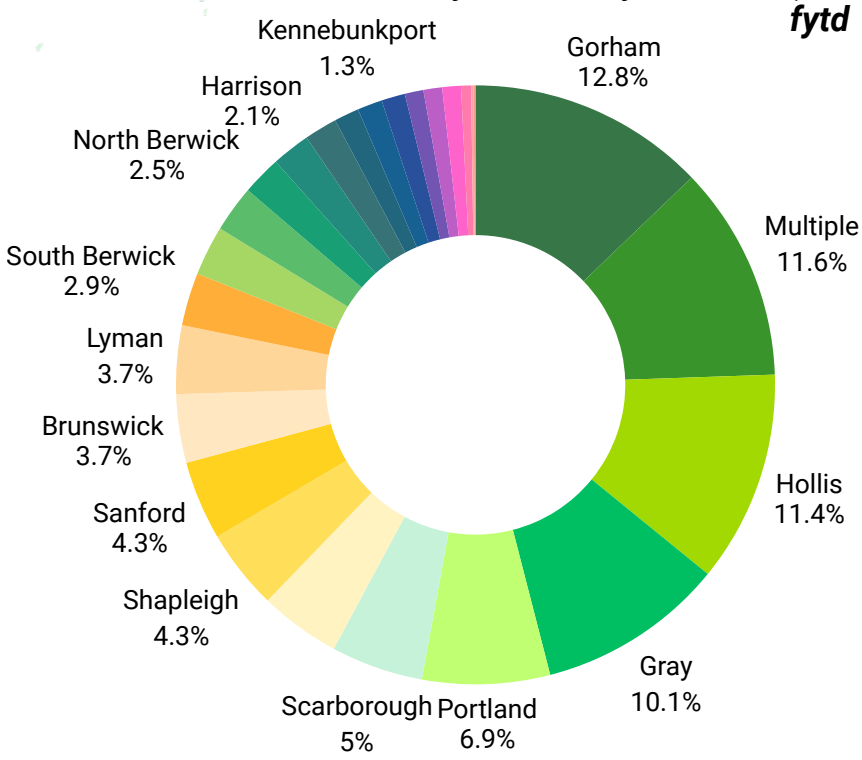
ecomaine



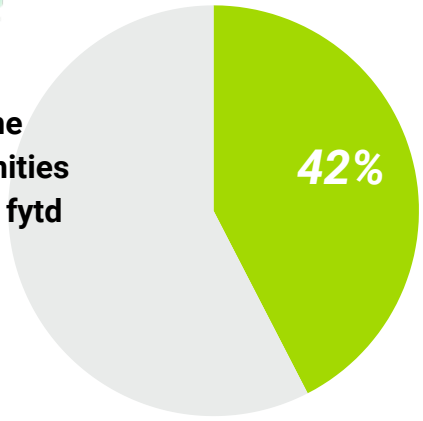
OUTREACH METRICS
FY26 YTD

Educational reach by community

2,821 fytd

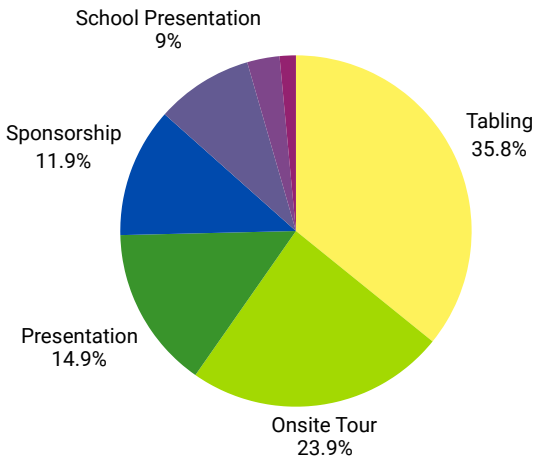


ecomaine communities reached fytd



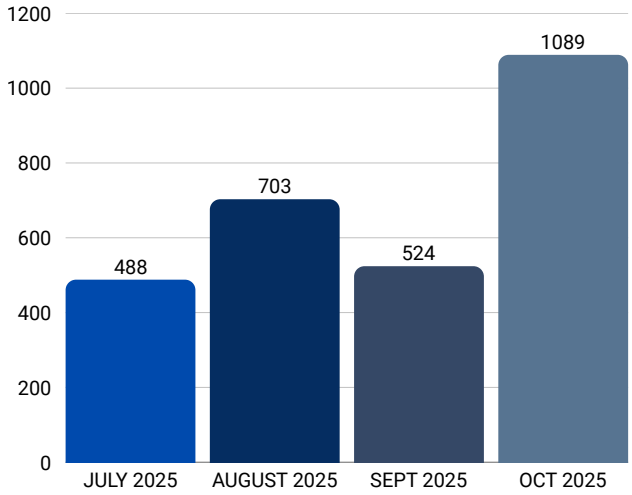
Completed Events by type

69 fytd



Educational Reach (# people)

2,821 fytd



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ATTACHMENT C

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WASTE DIVERSION

GRANT APPLICATIONS 2025

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL	COMMUNITY	PROJECT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT GRANTED
Roots Academy	Cape Elizabeth	Rain barrel improvement, reusable utensils & towels, educational signage	$ 2,835.54	
Falmouth Middle School (Community Service Club)	Falmouth	Expanded waste disposal, outdoor litter mitigation, upcycling event	$ 1,000.00	
STRIVE PSL TOPS	Portland/South Portland	Composting and raised beds	*$ 3,000.00*	
Dayton Consolidated School	Dayton	Composting and compostable plasticware	$ 3,000.00	
North Haven Community School (Green Recycling Team)	Rockland/ Vinalhaven	Comprehensive sustainability program with Green Fair	$ 5,000.00	
Appletree School	Cape Elizabeth	Refillable materials, eco-friendly classroom supplies, reusable cups	$ 630.00	
Greely Middle School	Cumberland	Hand-drying units for high-traffic adult bathrooms	*$ 5,000.00*	
Freeport High School	Freeport	Reusable utensils, cleaning supplies and storage	$ 3,500.00	
Harrison Lyseth Elementary School	Portland	Rain barrels	$ 1,000.00	
Loranger Memorial School	Old Orchard Beach	Compostable materials for the cafeteria	$ 1,500.00	
			$ 26,465.54	

School: Roots Academy

Town: Cape Elizabeth

Applicant: Bryna Latham

Previous Grant: 2024

Funds Requested: $2835.54

Summary: ***Includes improvements to their rain barrel system they installed in 2024, recycling infrastructure and signage, reusable individual utensil sets for their students, outdoor messaging board instead of flyers, and an extension to their reusable towel system from 2024.***

Describe your proposed project:

Rain Barrel Efficacy

A rain barrel set up on its own does not collect much rain and must be lifted for functional use and secured to avoid a safety hazard of it toppling and/or rolling. We would like to install gutters on our potting shed and have a stand so that it is feasible to fill water cans with our rain barrel. We would like to do this before the end of the year to be prepared for spring; if we were notified sometime in November that this was able to be funded, we feel confident we could do it then, with a backup of early April.

Recycling Program

Our building lease does not accommodate recycling, and currently we are periodically making messy piles of recyclable items and hoping a staff member will take them home. It happens sometimes, but often recyclable items go in with trash unnecessarily. I would like to have bins in each classroom, signage for what goes in them as well as an outdoor bin/shed type of place where recycling can go to allow for a scheduled monthly delivery to the transfer station. We would love to invite an ecomaine team member to visit us for a which bin education session in our classrooms!

Reusable Dishes and Flatware

We often use paper plates, bowls, and other disposable dishware for our events but would like to move to a more sustainable option. We have a dishwasher available and would like to utilize it to avoid so much waste at events. Additionally, students often forget utensils to eat their lunches and we have provided silverware, however, it seems to disappear quickly, going home with students never to be seen again and that is too costly for us to continue so we end up using plastic, I would like to avoid this by

purchasing wee sets with cases that can be labeled so students use their set at school, wash it when done and keep it at school. This would be completed as soon as funding was available and would be done before the end of 2025.

Outdoor Message Board

We are finding that we are challenged to get folks to read information on our website or through emails and often need to print flyers and notices for parents to take notice. This has created a lot of waste in both printing and paper, and we often find that we must send multiples as children misplace them or parents need additional reminders. We want to create a noticeboard that can be updated daily and can be outside as that is where our drop-offs and pick-ups occur. We will be able to post reminders as well as QR codes to forms that can be filled out online to avoid the many printed pages to be read or signed, reducing our ink and paper usage. Due to the planning time in building and installing this, we would aim for planning to be complete by February or early March, with installation taking place in April when the ground has fully thawed.

Towel Project Extension

We are thrilled to have reduced our paper towel usage due to hand towels in the bathroom. We would like to extend this to reduce waste in our cleaning practices by utilizing washable rags, napkins, towels, and dishcloths for mealtimes, messes in classrooms, and washing and drying dishes. We would like to add drying racks to reduce our use of the dryer and line dry our reusable/washable items. We will begin planning the coordination of our laundry system in January and be ready to roll with indoor drying that same month or February. Outdoor drying would begin in April or early May.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

All our project proposals are sustainable and long-term. Over time, we will have replacement costs due to normal wear and tear, but the purchase, installation and use of the items and systems we are proposing will allow us to have systems to reduce our waste now and in the future**.**

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

Our recycling program will be integrated with our middle grade class’s decomposition and composting unit. We are learning about what materials break down naturally, why we sort, and how humans can work for more effective decomposition of waste through sorting.

The rain barrel project connects with both our lessons on the water cycle (we have a fabulous song!) as well as our seed planting and garden project. Water frequently collects in a muddy puddle in the area where we want to add gutters and have the rain barrel and we look forward to the students learning how this change can change the muddle low area in our yard as well as provide water for our gardens rather than our use of the hose. It will also allow our students to more actively participate in the care of our gardens as the water barrel will now have more water, and the students are not able to manage the logistics of our hose.

Both our towel extension and dishware projects are embodiments of our values and mission. We are lovers of nature and the earth and want to model for our students and community our commitment to reducing our waste and the work it takes to make that happen. Students will participate in washing their own flatware and helping to hang our reusable cleaning items to dry. Our notice board is also part of this commitment to reducing waste and though student involvement in this project would be minimal, we will be inviting them to periodically share art, events, and success stories, particularly as they pertain to our waste reduction efforts.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

Success of the project will be measured by our reduced use and dependence on our hose for our garden, our reduced expenditure on paper plates, napkins, utensils, paper towels and sponges, paper and ink for printing notices, and a reduction (ideally elimination!) of recycling items going into our dumpster. We anticipate documenting the use of our items and systems to share with ecomaine and our community!

Budget: Linked (Attached)

Project	Reason	Item/Labor	Total
Rain Barrel Efficacy	A rain barrel set up on its own does not collect much rain and also needs to be lifted for functional use and secured to avoid a safety hazrd of it toppling and/or rolling. We would like to install gutters on our potting shed and have a stand so that it's feasible to fill water cans with our rain barrel.	Gutters	$36.00
		Gutter Ends	$30.00
		Downspout	$22.00
		Stand	$115.00
		Pavers	$17.60
		Hardware	$25.00
Recycling Program	Our building lease does not accomodate recycling and currently we are periodically making messy piles of recyclable items and hoping a staff member will take it home. It happens from time to time but often recyclable items are going in with trash unnessarily. I would like to have bins in each classroom, signage for what goes in them as well as an outdoor bin/shed type place where recycling can go to allow for a scheduled monthly delivery to the transfer station. We would love to invite an	Classroom Bins	$180.00
		Shed/bin	$500.00
		Signage	$20.00
Dishware and Flatware	We often use paper plates, bowls etc for our events but would like to move to a more sustainable option. We have a dishawasher available and would like to utilize it to avoid so much waste at events. Additionally, students often forget utensils to eat their lunches and we have provided silverware, however, it seems to dissapear quickly, going home with students never to be seen again and that is too costly for us to continue so we end up using plastic, I would like to avoid this by purchasing wee sets with cases that can be labled so students use their set at school, wash it when done	Small Sheet Pans	$240.00
		XS Sheet Pans	$144.00
		Flatware	$54.00
		Sets for Students	$60.00
		Labeling Supplies	$10.00
Outdoor Protected Message Board	We are finding that we are challenged to get folks to read information on our website or through emails and often need to print flyers and notices in order for parents to take notice. This has created a lot of waste in both printing and paper and we often find that we must send multiples as children misplace them or parents need additional reminders. We want to create a notice board that can be updated daily and can be outside as that is where our drop offs and pick ups occur. We will be able to post	Sign with Post	$675.00
		Installation	$200.00
		Hardware	$40.00
		White Board	$30.00
Towel Project Extension	We are so thrilled to have greatly reduced our paper towel usage due to the use of handtowels in the bathroom. We would like to extend this to reduce our waste in our cleaning practices by utilizing washable rags, napkins, towels and dishclothes for meal times, messes in classrooms, and washing and drying dishes. Additionally we are adding a classroom next year and with the success of our handtowels, would like to include those for the bathroom that is upstairs with thtat class room. We would like to add drying racks to reduce our use of the dryer and line dry our resuable/washable items.	Cleaning Cloths	$30.00
		Dish Clothes	$15.00
		Dish Towels	$30.00
		MS Hand Towels	$45.98
		Hooks	$35.96
		Napkins	$30.00
		Indoor Drying Rack	$80.00
		Outdoor Line	$170.00
			$2,835.54

School: Falmouth Middle School

Town: Falmouth

Applicant: Katie Coppens

Previous Grant: Unknown

Funds Requested: $1,000

Summary: ***Falmouth Middle School wants to use their funds to support increased recycling, composting and trash disposal on campus as well as run an educational campaign for the outdoor portions of campus where they notice litter piling up each year. Additional funding would be used to put on an "upcycling" social event, where they practice and teach upcycling.***

Describe your proposed project:

For eight years, Falmouth Middle School has done a fall and spring campus cleanup of litter. Every year our club talks about how we may be preventing some animals from being hurt by litter, but we are not doing anything to get to the root cause of the problem. This is why year after year there continues to be litter. We would like to use some of this money to expand recycling, compost, and trash on campus and do an educational campaign for the elementary school playground and sports fields where most of the litter is each year.

Our club would also like to host an upcycle social event at Falmouth Middle School where we promote upcycling items with tools/supplies at the event. This will also include education about what upcycling is. We would use the rest of the money to help fund this social event, which would be after school and open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

The implementation of more recycling, compost, and trash locations on campus will be permanent. Depending on how the upcycle social event goes, it may continue!

How does this project integrate with your curriculum or your organization's work?

The Falmouth Middle School Community Service Club's mission is to support people, animals, and the environment in our school and local community. We do our work with no money each year; this grant of money would allow our 25 members of the club to create change on a greater scale.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

The Falmouth Middle School Community Service Club's 25 members will discuss and decide how the money will be spent. As an advisor, I just help them with their vision. They are an extremely motivated, hard-working group. When I told them about this grant, so many ideas started flowing, but they went back to the campus to clean up that we do and how it is an opportunity to do so much more.

Budget:

Club members think a fun trashcan like this on the elementary school playground would help reduce litter: https://us.glasdon.com/trash-cans/animal-shaped-trash-cans/splash-tm-trash-can

It is tough to go beyond this because we would like the club members to choose the products/supplies. We did not want to dig in too deep until we found out if we got funding.

Splash™ Animal-Shaped Trash Can

23 Gallon Capacity

From: $697.00
excluding tax

For more information or to place an order, please contact our sales office on 1-855-USGLASDON (874-5273) or e-mail: inquiries@glasdon.com

Price excludes delivery




Feed your trash to Splash! This brightly colored animal-shaped trash can appeals to young kids and encourages them to dispose of their trash responsibly.

With his friendly smile and 23-gallon capacity, Splash is the perfect novelty trash can for playgrounds, parks, theme parks or any children's play area.

This novelty trash can is constructed from Durapol™, which means the Splash trash can will never rust or dent, is easy to clean and will never need painting.

8

Design Features

- Concealed door catches
- Zinc coated steel liner
- Trash-it symbol

Colors

Body: Dolphin Blue

Door panel: Ivory

Materials

Body: Durapol

Liner: zinc coated steel

Molded plastic liner: Polyethylene

Dimensions

Container volume: 26 gallons

Liner capacity: 23 gallons

Height: 47"

Width: 29"

Depth: 36"

Weight (with steel liner): 52 lbs

Weight (with plastic liner): 40lbs

School: STRIVE PSL TOPS

Town: South Portland

Applicant: Jessica Carter

Previous Grant: Yes

Funds Requested: $3,000

Summary: ***Composting in the classroom with Garbage to Garden subscription, using compost in school gardens. They would make the garden beds and use the produce for their school cooking groups. The students would be able to learn about the full food cycle.***

Describe your proposed project:

I want to start a composting project where we have a compost bucket in the classroom space from garbage Gardens and that we can pay for that monthly. Also, I would like to be able to receive compost from garbage to gardens to start maintaining some raised beds in front of our Location and in front of our building at STRIVE TOPS.

Using these raised beds, we could start to grow some herbs and other vegetables that we could watch and observe, as well as harvest to use in our cooking groups at our program. Also, this would be a fantastic opportunity to teach the students the full cycle of garbage or wasted food and how that becomes compost and how compost is used to grow herbs and vegetables and other plants.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

I think that in the future, we could continue to use the raised beds every year and that we would also try to raise money to allocate funds to pay for the garbage to garden subscription while the program is in session. In the future, I think this would be a fantastic opportunity for us to start a micro business involving selling seeds from Fedco seed company as a part of their grant opportunities.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

This project integrates our curriculum on many different levels. This would teach students that wasted food doesn’t have to be a part of a landfill but can result in a valuable resource to grow plants. This also can demonstrate how students can grow vegetables and herbs that they can use in their cooking groups. This will also give them an opportunity to learn how to take care of plants and weed them as well as harvest

them and use them in cooking. This project will help them understand how compost is a valuable resource that can be used as fertilizer when growing plants.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

Students will be actively involved in the entire process. Currently many students make their own lunches here and eat food. Waste is a natural part of that process. We already compost this food waste, but we do not have a subscription to garbage to Gardens so in this way, we will be able to activate this and also participate in receiving compost. Also, by purchasing or making raised beds at TOPS, we will have the opportunity to learn how to plant, grow and harvest vegetables and herbs that we can then use in our cooking opportunities.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

I will take pictures and present this information in weekly newsletters, as well as create a slideshow presentation of the entire project. I can also create a survey to give students what their interests are and what they have learned from this process.

Budget:

The garbage to garden subscription is $25 per month. Our program runs every month. So that would be $25 x 12=$300.00

The raised bed project for materials and labor would be around $500. Purchasing the seeds for the program would cost around $200. Or possibly more if we bought a lot to create more opportunities to buy bulk seeds and repackage them and sell them as a fundraising campaign to continue the program in the future. Other costs would include tools and soil, which would probably total about $300. Other costs might include advertising and printing costs to create packaging for the seeds that we could sell.

Eco Maine Grant Application Information

STRIVE TOPS Sustainability Project

Our TOPS program is dedicated to helping adults with Intellectual disabilities learn more about everyday living skills, as they transition from high school to the next chapter of their lives, preparing them for more independent living. This Eco Maine School Waste Diversion Grant could help fund some incredible projects that would allow us to teach our students some valuable sustainability skills, such as recycling, composting, gardening, art and microbusiness education. Through launching a Recycling Bin Expansion and Education Campaign at STRIVE TOPS, our students would develop education materials and learn about how to recycle and why it's important.

Main Goals:

- Participation in a Recycling Program
- Participation in a Composting Subscription
- Create educational materials (videos and posters) to display at TOPS and other places across the PSL STRIVE agency
- Create a school garden with raised beds made out of recycled materials using compost form the compost subscription
- Participate in Presentation & Tour of Eco Maine to educate students about recycling
- Participate in an art project and art show based on utilizing recycled materials
- Participate in the creation of Seed Selling Fundraising program (Fedco) promoting microbusiness skills

School: Dayton Consolidated School

Town: Dayton

Applicant: Jill Keimach

Previous Grant: No

Funds Requested: $3,000

Summary: Dayton *Consolidated School is seeking support to expand its recycling efforts by launching a composting program and transitioning to compostable plasticware. These initiatives aim to reduce the school's food and landfill waste while strengthening community involvement in sustainability.*

Describe your proposed project:

Recycling at Dayton Consolidated School / Town

Composting at Dayton Consolidated School

Compostable plasticware

Last year at Dayton Consolidated School, we started a small recycling program. This consisted of students bringing their bins (paper only) to my STEM room to be collected. One day per week, the bin is brought to the town dump to be recycled. Specifically, at our school, recycling will not happen unless an adult bridges the gap between the school and the town dump. There are parents / community members working with the town hall to bridge this gap. Additionally, our school accounts for an incredible amount of food waste. We would love to begin a composting program. Having a composting program, with perhaps an eco-Maine presenter (to come to the school) would be a wonderful way to kick off a composting program. Additionally, plasticware is used at our school; it would be wonderful to have compostable / biodegradable materials used at our school. This would reduce our school's contribution to landfills.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

Perhaps a guest speaker from EcoMaine could come each year to present to the school on the importance of composting and recycling.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

I am a STEM teacher (PreK through 5th grade). Our curriculum covers recycling and recycling. It would be a great hands-on opportunity to bring both concepts to life in school, but also the town.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

Students already bring their bins to my classroom each week. If students could bring their recycling to a large bin in their building (perhaps we can get another large bin), they would take ownership of the mindfulness that goes into recycling. Additionally, students can rotate jobs for composting. We can assign roles to students to collect composting items and bring them to the composting bin.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

There are a few ways to evaluate the success of the project:

1. Are students practicing these behaviors of recycling and composting at home? Is what they are learning at school inspiring what happens at home, too? This can be evaluated by a survey sent home to parents a few months after our project began.

2. With the educational piece of composting in mind, we can evaluate if students are actively contributing to the compost happening after lunch. STEM project: weigh the amount of waste at the beginning of the project. Compare the weight of the waste to a few months after the project started. Is there a large difference? Are kids composting? Next, weigh the compost pile to share results with the school on how much food we are saving from going into landfills.

Budget:

Large recycling bins (2) ~ $100.00 each = $200.00 total

Composting bin & kit (1) ~ $400.00

Guest speaker - I'm uncertain of the cost of a speaker coming in from EcoMaine

A way for our recycling to get to the dump or recycling center (uncertain)

Compostable / biodegradable utensils ~ $1,000.00

School: North Haven School

Town: North Haven

Applicant: Shaun Johnson

Previous Grant: 2024

Funds Requested: $5,000

Summary: ***North Haven Community School's Green Recycling Team plans to expand its current recycling efforts into a comprehensive, student-led sustainability program called "Closing the Loop: Building a Model Recycling and Sustainability Program." The project will introduce composting, upcycling, hard-to-recycle material collection, and data tracking, supported by new infrastructure and community outreach. Through audits, hands-on projects, and a culminating Green Fair, students will reduce landfill waste, deepen environmental learning, and create a model for other small island schools.***

Describe your proposed project:

North Haven Community School's Green Recycling Team has built a strong foundation for environmental stewardship through weekly recycling collection and education. However, our current efforts are limited to traditional recyclables and do not yet address food waste, hard-to-recycle materials, or sustained student leadership in waste reduction. On an island with limited disposal options and high transportation costs, every pound of diverted waste makes a meaningful difference. The challenge we face is to build a comprehensive, student-driven sustainability model that reduces landfill waste while deepening student learning and community engagement.

Our proposed project, "Closing the Loop: Building a Model Recycling and Sustainability Program," will expand the Green Team's work into a year-long initiative that adds composting, upcycling, data tracking, and community education. Grant funding will allow us to purchase new recycling and composting infrastructure, specialized bins, signage, data-collection tools, and supplies for classroom upcycling and outreach projects.

From December through January, students will conduct a baseline waste audit to measure current landfills and recycling outputs. During February and March, we will install new compost tumblers and recycling bins, initiate a TerraCycle collection for hard-to-recycle materials, and begin an on-site composting program that diverts cafeteria and garden waste. In April and early May, students will create upcycled art and design projects using collected materials, develop presentations, and analyze data trends. The program will culminate in a "North Haven Green Fair" in mid-May, where

students share their results, art installations, and composting demonstrations with families and community partners.

By integrating leadership, science, data collection, and creative design, this project will both reduce waste and strengthen our students' environmental literacy. The final student report, due in May 2026, will summarize measurable outcomes and serve as a model for other small island schools seeking sustainable systems.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

Sustainability is built into the project's structure. The Green Recycling Team will transition from a volunteer group to a standing leadership body with defined annual roles in data collection, compost management, and recycling logistics. The compost system and bin infrastructure will continue operating after the grant period, integrated into regular custodial and student routines. Compost produced from cafeteria and garden waste will be used in the school's greenhouse and garden beds, creating a visible closed loop between waste reduction and food growth.

A "Recycling and Sustainability Handbook" will document procedures, data sheets, and checklists for future student leaders. Each year's Green Team will build on the previous team's data, maintaining continuity and accountability.

Finally, our school's close relationship with the North Haven Transfer Station, Maine, and local conservation groups will ensure logistical and educational support beyond the initial funding. This model—low-cost, student-driven, and community-connected—can easily be replicated by other small schools across Maine seeking to enhance sustainability with modest resources.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

Environmental education and place-based learning are central to North Haven Community School's mission. This project will connect directly to multiple areas of the curriculum. In science, students will study ecosystems, decomposition, and energy transfer through composting. In math, they will graph and analyze waste audit data to identify trends and calculate landfill diversion rates. Art classes will use collected materials for upcycled installations and design challenges. In English and social studies, students will write persuasive pieces and informational displays for community awareness campaigns, connecting sustainability to civic responsibility.

The project also supports our schoolwide learning goals—Competence, Compassion, Challenge, and Community—by fostering hands-on learning, leadership, and service to the island community. It strengthens our greenhouse and garden programs and aligns with our broader vision of experiential and outdoor education. By embedding sustainability into multiple subjects and routines, the project becomes not a one-time event, but a lasting part of how we learn and live as a community.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

Students will lead every stage of this project. The Green Recycling Team will design and conduct the waste audit, analyze results, and present findings to staff and community members. Teams will be assigned to manage composting, monitor recycling contamination, track data, and create outreach materials. Students in art, science, and advisory periods will collaborate to repurpose materials into functional or artistic creations, showing that waste can become a resource.

Through this process, students will gain practical leadership experience, data literacy, and an understanding of ecological systems and sustainability principles. They will learn how human actions affect local and global waste streams and how small, organized efforts can lead to measurable environmental change. Most importantly, students will experience the satisfaction of contributing to their community through collective action, reinforcing the belief that young people can design real solutions to environmental challenges.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

Success will be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Green Team will track reductions in landfill waste through monthly audits, comparing pre- and post-implementation data to measure total waste diverted. Compost weight and recycling contamination rates will also be recorded. Student surveys and reflections will assess changes in knowledge, habits, and attitudes toward sustainability.

The school will produce a final “Island Sustainability Report” summarizing data, student reflections, and recommendations for next year’s improvements. Presentation of findings at the May Green Fair and publication in the school newsletter will demonstrate transparency, accountability, and community impact.

Budget:

Project Budget (Total: $5,000)

Recycling and Compost Infrastructure – $1,200

Purchase compost tumblers, labeled bin sets, liners, and educational signage for classrooms and cafeteria areas.

Hard-to-Recycle Program Partnerships – $600

TerraCycle and Trex collection boxes, shipping costs, and supplies for soft plastics and specialty recyclables.

Curriculum and Classroom Materials – $800

Supplies for upcycling and art projects, science experiments, printed displays, and sustainability posters.

Student Leadership and Training – $1,000

Student stipends, leadership workshops, and materials for data tracking, presentations, and outreach campaigns.

Data and Technology Tools – $600

Digital scale, simple sensors, or tablets for waste data collection and analysis.

Community Green Fair – $600

Event materials, printing, refreshments, and small prizes for participation and awareness activities.

Contingency and Maintenance Fund – $200

Replacement bins, compost maintenance supplies, or minor repairs to sustain the program after year one.

Total Requested: $5,000

School: Appletree School

Town: Cape Elizabeth

Applicant: Pamela Mullin

Previous Grant: 2020-2024

Funds Requested: $630

Summary: ***This project proposal seeks funding to continue sustainable practices at the school, including refilling Castile soap from Go-Go Refill, replacing broken brooms with eco-friendly wooden ones, and purchasing compostable bags to reduce plastic use. Additional requests include replacing worn whiteboards with recycled-material boards and acquiring more stainless-steel cups to support daily classroom needs.***

Describe your proposed project:

This year, we would like to continue the relationship with Go-Go Refill for our soap needs. We have found that we utilize Castile Soap most frequently, refilling dishes and hand soap containers with a diluted solution for daily needs. We approximate that we will need 4 gallons of concentration to get us through the year.

We also have found the wooden brooms to be the sturdy and ecofriendly option and would like to replace 2 cracked plastic adult brooms and add 4 more child sized wooden brooms to our classrooms.

We have asked parents to provide wet/dry bags for the frequent clothing changes that occur with toileting accidents and wet outdoor clothing changes. Even though we have asked for these reuseable bags, we end up using many small plastic bags to send home wet things. We would like to purchase a dozen boxes of compostable food waste bags.

We use whiteboards to share daily information with parents in each class at the end of each day rather than send home printed paper. Our boards are old and getting warped after time in our nature-based school, and we would like to replace 3. We will search for boards made with recycled materials.

Also, speaking of those stainless-steel cups, we always need more! So, if funding is available, we would love to purchase 2 more sets to stretch through our three classes.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

We will continue to practice the filling of our existing containers for soaps and cleaners instead of buying new plastic bottles. Our use of wooden items instead of plastic ones

will model thoughtful purchasing for the families of our school community, along with sending home compostable bags if their child has clothing changes and uses for our small bathroom waste cans as well. Parents will be greeted with notices for the day, and teachers will share end of day summaries on the notice boards instead of adding more waste going home in backpacks. The boards will last for years with proper care.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

Appletree has always had a focus on the 3R's, being stewards of the earth and reusing as much as we can.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

We have children help refill containers when needed; they use the wooden brooms to clean debris that might come inside their muddy boots. We talk about mindful cleaning by hand instead of plugging in a vacuum or just leaving a mess for someone else to clean up. A lot of our curriculum is about slowing down and noticing. Even though the concepts might seem grand for such small children, it is wonderful to see them take in what's going on around them. Noticing what we are using for a tool, about what needs attention or the impact on the earth of the product or object we are using. not just dismissing things like others' problems to fix. We can have a proactive presence with our choices no matter how small the person is.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

As in years past, we anticipate feeling the appreciation of staff and families for the earth-friendly details and just seeing the use of things like wooden brooms and steel cups by the children. Also, the appreciation of Gogo refill business is a great way to connect with our community! We tell parents about it and encourage them to visit the store and utilize their products.

Budget:

concentrated Castile Soap Gallons 4 X $60
Wooden Brooms 2 X $14, 4 X $12
Compostable bags 12 X $8
White Boards 3 X $45
Stainless Steel cups (12 pk) 2 X $24

subtotal $595 + Tax $32.73 = Total: 627.73

School: Greely Middle School

Town: Cumberland

Applicant: Jenna Kapschull

Previous Grant: Yes

Funds Requested: $2600-$5000 depending on installation cost*
ecomaine note: the school is still persuing an estimate for installation. School has been provided a deadline of 10/31/2025 for final budget.

Summary: ***Greely Middle School plans to reduce paper towel use by installing two hand-drying units in the highest-traffic adult bathrooms, aiming for a projected 7% reduction in the first year. The student "Green Team" will use the project as a pilot, conducting waste audits before and after installation to measure both environmental and financial impacts.***

Describe your proposed project:

We want to expand our school waste reduction efforts through installing two hand drying units between December 2025 and June 2026. We hope to reduce the use of paper towels at Greely Middle School. Currently our grade 4 through 8 building has 29 paper towel dispensers, and these are the only means for hand drying. The two units will be strategically installed in the 2 highest-traffic adult bathrooms in the building. Based on usage data, we project these four units alone will reduce our overall school paper towel consumption by 7% in the first year.

This project will decrease both financial costs and environmental impacts. The GMS student "Green Team" will use the grant funding project as a pilot program. We will perform a waste audit in our school building both before December 2025 and in May/June 2026.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

The project can be sustained through evidence of waste reduction to advocate for installing hand dryers throughout the building during the budget process. The Green team will use the data collected in the waste audit to develop a presentation for our administration. The presentation will be intended to advocate for full-scale installation of hand drying units in the remaining 27 bathrooms.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

The MSAD 51 mission is to “Engage, Inspire, and Empower” students. The Greely Middle School “Green Team” is a club intended to provide students with an opportunity to explore learning opportunities and advocacy in environmentally responsible stewardship. The waste audit before and after the installation of hand drying units in four bathrooms provides students the opportunity to practice math and science skills and apply them to a real-world issue. The grant funded installation of hand dryers integrates into both the district mission statement and the “Green Team” club charge through involving students in a waste audit and promotion of waste reduction strategies.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

The project engages students in research (waste-audit), inspires students to be agents of change in material use, thereby empowering them as environmental advocates in our school.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

We will perform a waste audit in our school building both before December 2025 and in May/June 2026. We will also gather anecdotal evidence through surveys of staff that use hand dryers and custodial staff.

Budget:

Xlerator® Hand Dryers with HEPA, 2 units, $800 per unit=$1600

*Installation cost varies. If considered for this grant, we will pursue a formal estimate.

School: Freeport High School

Town: Freeport

Applicant: Claire Carter

Previous Grant: Unknown

Funds Requested: $3,500

Summary: ***Freeport High School plans to replace single-use plastic utensils in its cafeteria with durable metal cutlery, aiming to reduce plastic waste and model sustainable practices for the community. The project will purchase utensils, storage bins, and cleaning supplies, implement a student-run sorting and cleaning system, and evaluate its success through feedback and waste tracking from December 2025 to May 2026.***

Describe your proposed project:

-Our project aims to eliminate single-use plastic utensils in the Freeport High School cafeteria and replace them with sustainable, metal cutlery. As students, we noticed that our cafeteria and lunch system heavily relies on single-use plastic items - whether it be utensils, cups, or containers. This contributes heavily to our schools' plastic waste and thus, our community. Metal utensils have a long lifespan and, with a system in place, will be easy to adopt in our school cafeteria. Our hope with this project is that it will not only reduce our waste but also model sustainable practices and urgency to make more changes in our community to become more earth friendly. By tackling the plastic utensils first, it allows us to segway into hopefully eliminating all single-use plastics in our cafeteria.

-Timeline: December 2025 - January 2026: With the grant funds, we would purchase stainless steel metal utensils (forks, knives, spoons) as well as the storage bins and cleaning products needed to implement the system. This entails three Rubbermaid bins and a rolling cart for them to sit on, as well as sanitation solutions. Students would sort each type of utensil into each corresponding bin after they used them, and then they would be cleaned and sorted into the bins for the next cycle of students/day. We would work with the cafeteria staff to set up the system and run trials during one of the lunches. February -March: Implementation of the system throughout all lunches. April-May: Gathering feedback from students and cafeteria staff on the switch to metal utensils, as well as the system used for cleaning and sorting. Then, we would analyze the overall success of the project, including the school's waste pre- and post-implementation, and the durability of the metal utensils.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

After our project's initial grant term and implementation, this system will be easily sustained and replicable in other schools. Since metal utensils are durable and long-lasting, there is ideally no extra maintenance cost or annual purchases. This makes it easy for the school to sustain once the upfront costs are covered. Secondly, after we set the system in place during this initial term and see any flaws or strengths, we can further develop the system, making a blueprint for other schools. This makes the switch to metal utensils much easier for other schools to replicate, once we have figured out what works and what doesn't.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

This project integrates with our club's curriculum because it outlines a goal that helps create a greener school. The constant use of plastic kitchenware in our school is a cycle that we now hope to break. The overarching goals of this club have always been to create a better environment in the future and to take action inside our school to make a greener community. So, since the hope for this project is to reduce the amount of single-use plastic that is used daily in our schools, it clearly aligns with our work towards a sustainable school and taking action in our community wherever we can.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

Students will play an active role in this project because we need the cooperation of all grade levels involved to have an effective and efficient system. The switch from single-use, plastic cutlery to reusable means that there will be a fundamental change in the processes that occur in the cafeteria. Students will have to adapt to the change in the lunchroom and help the project's success by sorting the utensils into the correct bins when they are done with lunch and treating the utensils with respect. With good student participation, the system will run much smoother. So, though this project is run by the student body of the Earth Club, it relies on the participation of the rest of the school. I think that we expect people to learn about the importance of taking action and making changes, as well as adapting to new systems for the better. Though it may be one extra step in their lunch to clean up, we hope they learn that the extra second to sort is a huge step in the right direction for our environment. We hope that our program will be a role model for more changes within the school and within the community, inspiring the students to take part in a change for the future of the environment.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

The success of this project will be measured first by the number of utensils that remain after this term. One of the biggest fears of our group is that people will throw away, break, or mistreat the cutlery. So, as time goes on, we will need to take note of the changes in the number of utensils to see if the project is viable in the long term. If the number of utensils seems to be stable over a long period of time, we will be able to imply that this is a step in the right direction and that the student body is participating well. If the numbers drop rapidly, we might need to go back to the drawing board and find ways to solve the problem that fits the community.

Budget:

-Metal utensils (1,000 of each fork, knives and spoons) estimated to be about $3000. -Utility carts for sorting purposes; about $250 -Bins for sanitation, organization; about $100 -Sanitation solutions; about $100

School: Lyseth Elementary School

Town: Portland

Applicant: Leigh Quigley

Previous Grant: No

Funds Requested: $1,000

Summary: ***Lyseth Elementary School aims to reduce water use and support sustainable gardening by installing a pilot system of three rain barrels to collect and reuse rainwater for their gardens and orchards. The project will provide chemical-free water, reduce reliance on public water, decrease stormwater runoff, and involve students and volunteers in assembly and maintenance*****.***

Describe your proposed project:

Water levels in Maine have reached all-time lows after a historically dry summer and ongoing drought. This is evident throughout the state and at the Lyseth Elementary School Garden, where annual and perennial crops as well as our school orchard continue to suffer through dry spells. In order to reduce water use and encourage more sustainability in how we care for our school gardens, we aim to develop a rain barrel watering system. This will help alleviate reliance upon public water use by reusing/recycling rainwater.

Our plan is to pilot a small (3) rain barrel collection system to put in use this spring. If the grant is approved, we will order the components in early 2026 with the goal of having them in place and ready to go during the spring planting season. With student and volunteer help we will assemble the materials and place the rain barrels in 3 areas where watering is more challenging due to lack of plumbed water access: 1) interior SW alcove garden; 2) NE corner garden/orchard; 3) island garden. For ease of use, hoses will be attached to the rain barrels, and rain barrels will be placed on stands to increase water pressure and output.

In addition to providing our gardens with chemical-free, soft water for healthier growth, rain barrels help the environment by reducing stormwater runoff. This in turn decreases water pollution in local waterways, and conserves water by providing a free source of water for outdoor use. This lowers demand for municipal and groundwater supplies.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

To sustain the school gardens and rain barrel system we will need to have a plan that includes securing new funding when needed, establishing a volunteer committee, and

creating a long-term maintenance plan. Within the volunteer committee, there will be a "rain barrel caretaker" team. These members will oversee the system year-round. They will be responsible for tasks like checking for broken or missing parts, identifying and fixing leaks, clearing debris from screens, start and end of season maintenance, and making sure other components are in working order. In terms of funding for maintenance/replacement parts/labor, we currently run annual seedling, seed and fall bulb sales. Student and volunteer participation is integral to these fundraising projects. Some of the funds raised could be allocated specifically for rain barrel maintenance, repair, or replacement.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

Through our district's Wabanaki Studies curriculum, students are exposed to the foundational cultural principles centered on Relationship, Respect, Responsibility, and Reciprocity. These values are introduced to students in the early grades, beginning with Pre-K, and carry through all the grades of their student career at Portland Public Schools. The indigenous viewpoint emphasizes a deep interconnection between all people and things, especially in terms of the natural world. In my role as environmental educator, by teaching students these principles, and inviting them to make deeper connections with the natural world around them, I aim to impart the importance of their role in caring for, protecting and maintaining that world, whether it's within the schoolyard, their backyards, their neighborhood, or beyond.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

*As part of our garden curriculum, students share responsibility in caring for the gardens. This includes weeding, watering, planting, harvesting, and more. Since last school year, they have been instrumental in helping transform garden spaces that have been uncared for since the COVID epidemic. From finding and removing invasive plants to helping design and layout garden pathways, students have committed stewards of our garden areas. I have no doubt they will embrace the new rain barrel system and assume whatever responsibility they can for its upkeep. In my Environmental Literacy classroom, I can incorporate lessons on water conservation, ecology, and the plants/animals in our schoolyard ecosystem. We can also use the rain barrel system for hands-on projects. Students can conduct experiments on water quality, measure rainfall, or calculate the system's overall water savings. They can also investigate what type of fauna might be attracted to a water-centric area of the garden.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

The success of this project will be measured in many ways. Most important are the learning opportunities students will have via the investigation and planning of the rain barrel system, their help in putting together the components, their utilization of the system, and their efforts in maintaining the system. Having students involved at so many levels makes the project much more meaningful for them. The system will also open up other learning opportunities as noted above and teach them about responsible use of resources and sustainability practices. This knowledge, skillset and awareness can be carried with them lifelong and shared with others.

Budget:

3 x FCMP Outdoor Rain catcher 4000, Flat-Back Rainwater Barrel, 50-Gallon = 360

3 x Flexzilla Colors Swivel Grip Garden Hose 5/8 in. x 50 ft = 110

3 x Heavy Duty Hose Nozzles = 45

3 x Gutter Downspout Extensions = 80

3 x Rain Barrel Stand Heavy-Duty = 210

+ Misc. costs (equipment maintenance and replacement parts, fittings, hose connectors, O-rings, etc. as well as unforeseen costs/price changes). = $1000 in total.

School: Loranger Middle School

Town: Old Orchard Beach

Applicant: Cynthia Nye

Previous Grant: No

Funds Requested: $2,700 (adjusted to $1,500 updated quote attached)

Summary:

The school's cafeteria composting program, started in fall 2024, has already diverted 6 tons of food waste. The project seeks funding to replace non-compostable serving items—such as small trays, soup boxes, and clamshell containers—with compostable alternatives to further reduce waste and support the cafeteria's sustainability efforts.

Describe your proposed project:

We started a composting program in our school cafeteria in fall 2024 to reduce food waste. As of June 2024, we had composted 6 tons of food waste. We use compostable bowls for Shepherd's pie and similar entrees, compostable lids for soup, and compostable trays for lunch groups and in situations when we cannot use our washable trays. We have other serving items that are not compostable, specifically small food trays or 'boats,' soup boxes, and plastic clamshell containers used for salads. I think that if we can replace these items with compostable serve, we will further reduce waste and increase composting. Our brand-new food services director is on board, as well as our cafeteria staff.

How might this project be replicated or sustainable:

I think we will be able to justify buying more of these compostable items once we prove that they will help us reduce trash and increase composting. Our food service staff have already made the decision to buy some compostable items. I think students and staff will advocate for continuing to purchase the new compostable item types once we have seen the benefits.

How does this project integrate with your curriculum, or your organization's work as a whole?

We started composting last year with a grant from the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. We partnered with Scott Guzman of Diggers Cooperative and a member of our town's Conservation Commission, Mary Pat Donnellon. Several of our teachers do community

science with students, and composting is a community science effort. We used the soil made from our food waste to replenish the soil in our school gardens. Scott did presentations and soil science lessons. I have collected curriculum resources and one of my goals this year is to try lessons with my students and then share them with colleagues.

How will students play an active role in this project, and what do you expect them to learn from this experience?

All our students are learning about food waste and the value of composting, even those who do not compost. I'm in the cafeteria almost every day to help students compost. Students encourage peers to compost. One of our teachers started a Green Team last year and plans to continue this year. Twenty-plus students participated once a week during their lunchtime. They learned about recycling and composting and made posters they hung in the cafeteria. My students help me evaluate and improve the lunchroom process.

How will you evaluate the success of this project?

I'll evaluate the project by watching students get better at reducing food waste. Our composting company will tell us how much we've composted by the end of the year. If we generate less trash because we compost more food and serve ware, spending more on compostable items will have a financial benefit as well as being better for the earth. Other signs of success will be continued support from food service staff and custodians.

Budget:

ecoproducts 2 lb. paper food trays FSC - approximately $1,000 ($221.10 per 1,000)

World centric No Tree 8 oz bowls - approximately $620 ($130 per 1,000)

lids for bowls - approximately $490 ($55 per 500, if current lids don't fit)

compostable clamshell boxes approximately $520 ($52 per 200)

See below for updated Budget

Supporting Information:
Here is specific information about compostable items from Leah Botko, our new Food and Nutrition Services Director. Her email address is lbotko@rsu23.org. The prices she quotes are less than the prices I found for the application, reducing the amount we're

requesting to $1,500. Thank you for the opportunity to apply for funding to improve composting in our cafeteria!
Salad bowls- https://www.wbmason.com/pd/WORBOSCU24LFP?uom=CT&COID=RZ1 $73.99 for 1,000
Salad bowl lids- https://www.wbmason.com/pd/WORBOLCS24?ItemDesc=World-Centric-Bowl-Lid-Fiber-Round-7-12-Dia-Clear-300Carton&uom=CT&COID=&srq=q=compostable+bowl&ii=15 $51.63 for 300
Soup cups- https://www.wbmason.com/pd/WORBOPA8?ItemDesc=World-Centric-Bowls-Paper-Round-8-oz-3-12-Dia-White-1000Carton&uom=CT&COID=&srq=q=compostable%26CategoryName=%26HiddenCategoryId=%26page=10&ii=434 $102.19 for 1,000
Soup lids- https://www.wbmason.com/pd/WORBOLPA8K?uom=CT&COID=RZ1 $55.79 for 500
PFAS Free boats- https://www.wbmason.com/pd/CSIPFT100K?uom=CS&COID=RZ9 $30.46 for 1,000

	Cost	**Amount**	**Estimated Usage**	**Total per Item**
Salad Bowl	73.99	1000	5	369.95
Salad lids	51.63	300	10	516.3
Soup cups	102.19	1000	2	204.38
Soup lids	55.79	500	4	223.16
PFAS free Boats	30.46	1000	6	182.76
			Total	**1496.55**