

For 23 years, former volunteer coordinator Gail Schmader developed, supported, and reported on the volunteer program in Cape Elizabeth Schools. Following Gail's retirement, I assumed the dual role of volunteer and extended learning opportunities coordinator for Cape Elizabeth Schools in September 2015. My intention in year one has been to understand where the volunteer program is and to consider how it might evolve in the future. I'm pleased to say that I inherited a solid program with efficient systems that have allowed for a smooth transition. As a result, I look forward to the continual and inevitable work of improving and expanding on volunteer programming where and when that is most appropriate. Thanks Gail, I'm honored to follow in your footsteps!

On a daily basis in all three schools I see students, parents, and community members (those with no children currently in the system) volunteering their time in the service of others. Our school community, and the larger community around us is made stronger by the time and resources donated to the common good. This report will make note of major initiatives that fall directly under my direction, specifically the certification of volunteers, high school mentors, and material goods requests, and will also provide notes from collaborative efforts and/or initiatives that I am aware of. It is my hope that this report will serve as a recognition and celebration of the volunteer effort in Cape Schools.

****This report does not include information related to athletics****

Numbers at a Glance (a sample of volunteering in Cape Elizabeth Schools):

- 6** Professionals at Career Day who are CEHS graduates
- 13** Professional mentors who provided guidance for the Student Driven Learning Program
- 14** Volunteer orientations offered to the community
- 23** Professionals who were first time Career Day presenters
- 29** Professionals who shared their experiences at the 19th annual CEMS Career Day
- 30** CEHS students trained by Day One to serve as Natural Helpers for their peers
- 36** CEHS students serve in the CEHS mentor program
- 42** CEHS students who serve as Peer Tutors in the Achievement Center and in classes
- 60** Students on the Pond Cove E-Team
- 84** Adults who attended orientations for new volunteers
- 98** Students on the Interact/Volunteer Club email list
- 130** CEHS seniors volunteering in the Senior to Senior program
- 130** Hours dedicated to organizing and facilitating the PC/MS CLYNK Fundraiser
- 390** Hours logged by CEHS senior volunteers in the Senior to Senior program
- 1000+** Parents/Community Members certified to volunteer in our schools this year
- 10,000** (Approximate) dollars raised annually by the PC/MS CLYNK Fundraiser
- 60,000** (Approximate) dollars raised by the Pond Cove Parents Association in 2015-16

VOLUNTEER CERTIFICATION

All parents and community members wishing to volunteer in Cape Elizabeth Schools are vetted through a registration and certification process that includes a criminal background check, an agreement to the volunteer philosophy statement, and a volunteer orientation led by the district volunteer coordinator. The volunteer orientation includes information related to confidentiality,

student and volunteer safety, expectations, and conduct within our schools. Volunteers are recertified by the volunteer coordinator on an annual basis.

High school students who participate in the mentor program are vetted through a process that includes an application, reference checks, affirmation of the volunteer philosophy statement, and an orientation similar to that noted above.

High School students who participate in other volunteer initiatives are vetted and oriented through program specific procedures.

CEHS STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

CEHS students are active volunteers at all three schools and in the larger community. Opportunities to volunteer include, but are not limited to: The Interact and Volunteer Club, Senior to Senior, Natural Helpers, Peer Tutors, and Fresh Links. This report will highlight the High School Mentor program that falls under my direction as well as make note of several student led initiatives volunteer initiatives that I am aware of.

CEHS Mentor Program

36 CEHS students participated in the High School Mentor program this year volunteering one hour (one study hall) of their time each week to meet the needs of students and teachers at Pond Cove and the Middle School. Mentors were placed in positions based on teacher requests, schedules, and interests and they served in 1:1, classroom, and recess settings.

To witness our mentors in action is to recognize that each meeting and each partnership is a meaningful experience for those involved. The following are examples of unique mentor partnerships that developed this year in response to need.

Home School Mentoring: After being matched with a mentor while at Pond Cove, the family of a fourth grade student made the decision to finish the year through home schooling. The partnership continued to thrive and the student visited the high school each week to work with his mentor on writing, story construction, and playing games.

Learning English at Recess: It's often said that volunteers receive as much as they give. While this is most likely true of all of our volunteers, it's especially true for two high school mentors who are learning English as a new language. These students have been active recess mentors at Pond Cove, sharing their skills and love of soccer as they hone their use of the English language in a low pressure and fun environment.

“I am writing to let you know how exciting it was to see your sons [mentors] at Pond Cove yesterday playing soccer with the third and fourth grade students! They exhibited excellent leadership skills, encouraged the younger students to join in, and authentically spoke to their mentees with confidence and enthusiasm. Additionally, I have never seen them laugh and smile so much!”

-Joni Hewitt, ELL teacher in an email to parents of mentors

Participant Comments

When asked in an online poll to comment on the mentor program, the following responses were submitted by participants:

CEHS mentors said:

“I like seeing the kids in the art room every week and being able to put a smile on their face!”

“Getting to work with and help a young kid. Building a relationship with the kid who may need help. Seeing the kid be happy about seeing you each week.”

“I love working with the kids, watching them grow, and feeling like I am making a difference.”

Mentees said:

"I enjoy leaving the lunchroom with him. He is really cool and nice to me."

"I enjoy playing games with her. She is not really competitive so it is really fun to help her out."

"She always says the right thing at the right time. She cares about me"

Teachers said:

“Mentors have made a significant difference among my students’ social/emotional well being this year. Having someone to eat lunch with- play a games with- and just hang out with every week or so makes them so excited.”

“Students look up to mentors- they get to have a time to talk- laugh and socialize with an age group/gender that they may not always get a chance too.”

“I am so grateful to have students who were once in my class-- now back to volunteer with current students. That connection has be rewarding to me- my prior students- mentors- and my current students. win-win-win”

CEHS Student Led Volunteer Initiatives

The following projects and programs are highlighted as examples of volunteer efforts initiated and led by CEHS students.

Ft. Williams Media Project

Several students are using their media skills to serve the needs of the Ft. Williams Foundation. Students have contributed stock photographic images of seasonal changes at the park and are currently editing interview footage into short documentary films about the life and times of Veterans who served at Ft. Williams when it was an active military base.

Make It Happen

A group of CEHS students made weekly trips to Presumpscot Elementary School in Portland to volunteer in the Make it Happen program. CEHS students helped elementary students with homework and language acquisition. These students have begun to offer similar programming for Cape Elizabeth English Language Learners in an after school program.

PeaceJam Bullying Prevention Program

Using a curriculum created by the National Peace Jam organization, a team of 15 students facilitate workshops for 7th and 8th grade advisories that use discussion based models to explore issues of bullying and prevention.

National Honor Society Tutoring: Initially working with the volunteer coordinator to establish connections, students from the NHS worked with teachers to develop a mentoring/tutoring program for the 5th grade team.

Sexual Assault Awareness for Everyone (SAAFE)

A team of six students organized and hosted a day long event for all CEHS juniors and seniors to explore topics related to an awareness of sexual assault and to give students the tools and knowledge to prevent sexual assault from occurring.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

Parent and Community Volunteers are an invaluable resource to our community and active participants in the daily operations of all three schools. School day volunteering includes but is not limited to 1:1 and small group tutoring, project help, field trip supervision, material production, copying, and sharing of professional skills and knowledge.

In the 2015-2016 school year over 1000 parents and community members' were recertified to volunteer in Cape schools. Recertification entails a reaffirmation of the volunteer statement, and questions related to criminal offenses. All volunteers are subjected to criminal background checks annually. A total of 84 new volunteers were certified for the first time with 44 being either new to town or having a kindergartener entering the system.

Parent Associations

Volunteer members of the three school based parents associations contribute countless hours to plan and facilitate events that build community, educate, entertain, and raise and distribute funds that support innovative teaching and learning. The list below is a sample of the events sponsored and run by our three parent associations:

CLYNK Returnables	Teacher Grants
Hannaford Dollars	Harvest Fest
Arts Day	Teacher Appreciation
Movie Night	Fruit Sale
Cape Challenge	Festival of Curiosity
Scholastic Book Fair	Flashchat

Projects and Partnerships

In addition to the events noted above and the everyday support that volunteers provide to our teachers and students, the following are examples of unique partnerships and skills based volunteering that occurred this year. This list is far from exhaustive, and is intended solely to provide examples.

Ft. Williams

Local historian Jim Rowe volunteered to lead groups of 2nd grade students on historical walking tours of Ft. Williams. The tours were part of a cross curricular learning experience that included photography, poetry, and printmaking.

Unwritten Roads

Members of the Portland based writing group Unwritten Roads donated numerous afternoons dedicated to writing instruction. Unwritten Roads designed and led writing workshops for middle school students during enrichment periods.

Islandport Press

Melissa Kim of Islandport Press volunteered her time to teach design and layout skills to students in the CEMS Writing Initiative. The resulting collection of student writing, *A Written World*, was published and students are now selling copies to fund future writing adventures.

The Art Department

Members of the Portland based organization The Art Department donated a residency at the middle school to facilitate the creation of material for a collaborative newspaper. The newest edition of *Sunny All Day News* was released on June 3rd at Portland's First Friday Art Walk.

Student Driven Learning

Numerous community members volunteered their time to mentor students and staff involved with the new Student Driven Learning independent studies program at CEHS. These professionals shared their expertise related to neuroscience, data science, education, fundraising, web design, social media, project design and engineering.

Graphic Design

Graphic designer Sara Lennon volunteered her experience to work with the journalism class at CEHS to design and lay out the student newspaper. *The Cape Insight* was released in May 2016.

Shout Outs

Teachers in all three schools were asked in an on line poll if they knew of any super volunteers who deserved an extra shout out. This is how they responded:

“**Bill Gross** has been working with Honors Physics (and me) for about 7 - 8 years as a volunteer tutor. He has become an essential element to our 9th grade program. He comes in 3 out of every 4 days in our rotation and probably has worked with 20 to 30 students over the course of the year. The difference Bill has made to some of these students is dramatic -- grades rising from D's to B's.”

“**Deb Glidden** has helped for years, always goes above and beyond to get everything right.”

“**Ann Waecker** has been supporting me and my students for 20 years! She and her husband, **Tom** are very generous community supporters.”

“**Mary Steidl** and **Valerie Deveraux** served as volunteer responders at Speech Team practices, at all Tuesday night meetings, September through January. They were invaluable in helping our speakers develop their material.”

“**Melissa Kim** made a dream come true for a 7th and 8th grade writing group, the CEMS Writing Initiative. Melissa is embedded in the local writing scene and she was able to share real parts of the publishing process with middle school writers. She then spent hours laying out a collection of middle school short stories and poems in preparation for publication. Because of Melissa's efforts, the CEMS Writing Initiative has a published book. Thank you, Melissa!!”

MATERIAL GOODS

Members of our community often donate material goods when a request is made through the Cape Courier, Cape TV, or parent newsletters or after contacting staff to ask if something they have might be useful to students and teachers in our schools. Donations often, but not always, flow through the office of the volunteer coordinator who acts as a connecting point for the school and larger community. Like other sections of this report, this list is intended to provide an example of the generosity of our community. Listed or not, we thank you for your contributions.

Working Typewriters for the new CEMS Publication Studio
Antique Typewriters and Adding Machines for the CEMS Breaker Space
Vintage Letter Press and Type Sets for the CEMS Maker Space
A Grand Piano for the High School Music program
A Trampoline for the Special Education Department
Games for the High School Mentor program
Life Magazines for teachers at all three schools
Books for Pond Cove
Tennis Balls for chair and table legs at Pond Cove and the Middle School

CONCLUSION

After nearly one school year in the role of volunteer and extended learning opportunities coordinator it has become clear that our schools, and the community at large would not be what they are without the dedication of volunteers who donate their time, skills, and resources. The preparation of this report has provided an opportunity to reflect on the important role that volunteers play and I'm honored to offer it as a public the record of the impact of their service. I look forward to year two and beyond and to continuing to promote, facilitate, and celebrate the work of volunteers in and around Cape Elizabeth Schools.

Submitted by John Holdridge
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