

Seed to Feed kicks off

By Jake Storey

Maynooth Public School hosted a community gardens potluck dinner in the gym in support of the school's Seed to Feed program. The purpose of the project is to show kids the importance of growing their own food. The staff and volunteers plan to walk the children through the process of planting the seeds and caring for them. Later the harvest the food and the children are encouraged to take it home with them. The goal is to build and maintain 10 raised flowerbeds.

The children in Grades 5 and 6 are working on the layout for the gardens and those in Grades 1 to 4 are developing butterfly gardens. The school has ordered 35 butterfly chrysalises that the students will watch grow and eventually release into the gardens. The community came out to the event and brought an enormous array of food with them. Cookies, brownies, cakes, meatballs, pasta, pizza, coleslaw, pies, beans and more completely filled two tables and many, many plates around the gym. The potluck was described as student led. The children came up with the plans, set up the tables and did all the logistics. They also prepared a small presentation that was shown after the event.

It was a small room, as far as school gymnasiums go, but was packed nearly wall to wall with supportive members of the community.

"I did not expect this many people," said Lisa Resmer, principal of Maynooth Public School and an organizer behind the program.

"To be honest with you, we ran out of tables and chairs. I was blown away by how many people turned out for this."

According to Resmer, the goal of the evening was to bring the community together and look at ways it can support Seed to Feed.

"We really feel like this is an opportunity for everyone to get together to not only support the learning of our students, but also to create something that will give back to the entire community," said Resmer.

The program is currently planning to receive funding from the Ministry of Education and the Municipality of Hastings Highlands. What it needs now is hands that can work with hammers, nails and soil, as well as people who are willing to help the children plant and look after the gardens.

Christine Hass, whose home is located next to the school, has donated some of her property to host the gardens. She will also be devoting her time to assist the children throughout the project.