



HOPEWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | 35 Princeton Avenue | Hopewell, New Jersey 08525

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Princeton University's Vertical Farming Project Partners with Local Elementary School

**New Vertical Farming Initiative will Provide Cutting Edge Scientific
Educational Opportunities for Elementary Students and Enhance
School Farm to Cafeteria Program**

**As Spring weather FINALLY arrives on the East Coast and gardeners and farmers
eagerly await the planting season, Hopewell Elementary School Students in New
Jersey have been enjoying fresh, organic produce they grow indoor all year**

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University's Vertical Farming Project announced they will partner with Hopewell Elementary School in Hopewell, New Jersey to develop their vertical farm-to-cafeteria program.

Fifth grade teacher at Hopewell Elementary, Helen Corveleyn oversees the school's outdoor garden beds, six indoor vertical hydroponics towers and has been instrumental in their new vertical farming initiative partnership with Princeton. Corveleyn will work closely with Princeton University's Dr. Paul Gauthier, founder and director of the Princeton Vertical Farming Project to develop the program at the elementary school. The on-site, indoor classroom will be fully functioning in September 2018 and will allow preschool through fifth

grade kids to mirror Princeton's program while providing kids with fresh, organic produce for lunch and an invaluable introduction to hands on, cutting edge scientific development.

The Princeton Vertical Farming Project focuses on the sustainability and energy efficiency of vertical farming as they study production rates of hydroponic engineering systems along with marketing and economic feasibility. Gauthier says, "Two of the main challenges that vertical farms are facing revolve around awareness and data sharing. Through establishing a resonant collaboration with the Hopewell Elementary School, the Princeton Vertical Farming Project hopes to educate new generations about the benefits of vertical farming, and to inspire them to expand their knowledge through the application of new, groundbreaking research and technologies, which the farm has been producing. Furthermore, this collaboration will create citizen science datasets, which will contribute to the improvement of the vertical farming field as a whole. By inspiring students today, we hope to shape the future of farming and reduce human impacts on the environment."

Room to Grow--Princeton Vertical Farming Project Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=80&v=zzXkrluzsIY

Elementary students and teachers have embraced the homemade, nutritious lunch options infused with organic ingredients served in Hopewell Elementary's cafeteria. Their community is excited for the new vertical farming initiative with the goal of featuring 100% of the lettuce in the cafeteria grown at the school. Additional vegetables and herbs will be grown, harvested and featured as well. Principal David Friedrich's passion for locally sourced, homemade, organic food for his students is evident in the Organic Menu offered at Hopewell. The menu is now in its third year and has seen a 50% increase in participation from the start. Principal Friedrich says, "At Hopewell Elementary School, we are thrilled to expand the vertical farming initiative which reinforces our commitment to sustainability. As the first public school in New Jersey to offer an organic menu featuring homemade entrees, we will now be able to prepare more nutritious meals infused with our own vegetables and herbs grown and harvested by students. The project also supports hands-on, relevant and high-quality science instruction aligned to Next Generation Science Standards."

Dr. Thomas Smith, Superintendent of Schools, remarked, "Lead by Mrs. Corveleyn and Principal David Friedrich, the Hopewell Elementary School has been a driving force in our district-wide sustainability efforts. The vertical farming project has captivated the interest of students and staff. By bridging the gap between science and nature, students can observe the real-life connection between farming and food by seeing what is necessary to grow and produce the food we eat. An important part of this project is that virtually all of the food grown in the vertical farm will be used in our school lunches."

Children respond to living organisms in the classroom with excitement and passion. Typically in an elementary setting, animals and insects are a wonderful way to promote living organism studies, but at Hopewell Elementary School, they have captured a unique Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)--aligned curriculum that is plant-based and integrates both life science and chemistry. Corveleyn remarks, "No child is too young to understand hydroponics. The bottom line is, kids love planting something they know they can eat! Creating an opportunity for sustainable gardening for the future at a young age makes hydroponics not just a buzzword, but a way of life."

Hopewell Elementary secured several grants to sustain the vertical farming project:

Sustainable Jersey / New Jersey Education Association (\$10,000)

BASF Corporation (\$5,000)

Hopewell Valley Education Foundation (\$4,400)

Hopewell Elementary School PTO (\$7,000)

Photo credit, David Friedrich. Additional photos available upon request.

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For more information, to take a tour, or to interview Hopewell Elementary Principal David Friedrich, Hopewell STEM/Sustainability Coordinator Helen Corveleyn, or Princeton University's Dr. Paul Gauthier, please contact: Stephanie Marshall stephanie@mnspublicity.com

Hopewell Elementary School - <https://twitter.com/HopewellES>

Hopewell Elementary School Vertical Farm - <https://twitter.com/HESVerticalFarm>

David Friedrich - http://www.twitter.com/HES_Principal

Helen Corveleyn - <https://twitter.com/DrHydrogenHC>

Dr. Paul Gauthier - <https://twitter.com/LabGauthier>

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