

## **Dear Lapham-Marquette Families and Staff,**

Wow, what an incredible 2015 in Lapham's Outdoor Classroom & Community Garden! 22 classrooms visited at least once, many up to three times. We had 121 total classroom visits including Early Childhood, 4K and K-2. And for the second year in a row, Mrs. Kimberly Wilson, Lapham's art teacher, brought out students to "draw what they saw". Red Caboose also enjoyed our Outdoor Classroom during after school and summer school programming in record levels. We had more than 152 school and community volunteers including 13 families who adopted Lapham Outdoor Classroom & Community Garden during the summer.

Speaking of summer, Lapham's Outdoor Classroom & Community Garden donated 82.43lbs. of food, harvested largely by community volunteer Karen Klekamp, to the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Community Center's food bank. This food has a big impact on our neighbors who struggle with food security, as explained in this thoughtful thank you note from Wil-Mar's staff:

*"Thank you for growing delicious, fresh veggies for the Wil-Mar food pantry throughout this summer and fall. Every week your donation made its way to the families and individuals who would otherwise have very limited ability to access fresh produce. For many, they must choose between food and diapers, gas, medicine, or other essentials. You have made this summer and fall brighter and healthier for these folks! As the staff of Wil-Mar, we deeply appreciate the planning, endless weeding and care that went into the Lapham Garden's harvest!"*

We hope you will take the time to read our [2015 Year-end Report](#) to fully appreciate the enormous impact that Lapham Outdoor Classroom & Community Garden has on our students, families, staff and our greater community. PTG funding, along with Community GroundWorks' program oversight and many volunteers makes our Gardener-in-Residence Program possible. And Lapham Green Team is excited to pursue innovative approaches in funding in 2016, so all you garden supporters, please stay tuned!

**For more information about our unique Gardener-in-Residence program and to learn about the benefits of garden-based learning:**

[Home Grown School Gardens in Wisconsin \(Wisconsin DPI\)](#) – includes informative materials developed by [Community GroundWorks](#)

[GROW/Digging In Report](#) – we were so proud to be a part of this amazing learning experience that lead to the incredible transformation of our school garden into a true outdoor classroom during these last couple years! And the [GROW/Digging In Appendix, which offers a wonderful three-page profile](#) on our history and current program, starting on page 34.

[Lapham Outdoor Classroom Webpage](#) and [Lapham Garden & Green Team Facebook Page](#)

Warmly,

Lapham Green Team