



## Farm to School Institute 2022 Mid-year Gathering Transcript

### Video Transcript

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**Aubree** [00:00:00] Welcome, everyone. Happy New Year. What a fun way to sort of kick off the New Year by reconnecting and learning about what you've been up to for the past few months. I'm really excited to get an update. All right. We're doing our mid-year gathering, so we're coming together to share and learn from one another. Just wanted to, before we get started, give a shout out to our awesome advisory team and partners who have made the Institute program possible as well as our funder. So we have only a quick hour today for this gathering. And so here is the agenda and we'll just do a couple welcome things which we're doing right now. Then I'll jump right into the school team. UPDATE So whoever on your team or if you have multiple people who are giving your update, you can be ready for that. And then we'll go into our local procurement more of a discussion rather than a training given the limited time and such. And then I'll wrap up with just some logistics and to ground us and what is next. With no further ado, let's jump into school team updates. St Ignatius.

**Tim Marchant** [00:01:23] This started about two years ago. We got to a Tribal housing site leased from the Confederated Salish and Gortney tribes. That meant meeting with them in their chambers and asking for permission to use this. They did this a ten year lease with the option to an opportunity to renew it. We pay a dollar a year for that. Of course we can do that. The approval of the Sandinistas, Board of trustees, and amongst other types of support, they have given us a bit of the issue or two in this or three grants. We ended up with a little over \$81,000 for the school community garden. So we had two things that normally don't happen. We had a place to do it and money to do it with. So this is the site. You're looking east towards the mountains and city nations. You can see our school across the street. This was for years an empty lot. Like I say, a tribal home site just here on the left side of the screen would be our schools, newer steam or steam building. So the Garden State hooks up with that. Site. I went over and cleaned it up. And so this is the same site we're looking over at the school. Couple of weeks of hauling out garbage and brush. And I mean, there was a house there right in the same side. Of course, we're not trying to grow grass, but just wanted to see what was there to get going. The first thing we had to do was find water. And after hooking up with the city manager, we didn't know where it was. He literally came out and switched the will, which to the curb stop. We finally

found that we dug it up. It was galvanized pipe that had to be replaced. And you can see that happening here again, looking over at the school. So not only do we have to find the water, but we had to replace the pipe that was in there. There were some problems because we found building foundation where we didn't know it was, but we eventually got water in. We have now on the site and you can see that it's been excavated, The lawn is gone. Of course, we're not trying to grow a lawn. We want to grow. Other stuff, say the scrutiny College had their highway department come down in Holloway the topsoil and some other garbage for me that I couldn't take care of anyway, we got to press free hydrants. This is a standard city lot. It's 150 feet long by 50 feet wide. It's not huge, but it's probably adequate to do what we want. We also dug a trust free line to the greenhouse putting shed that we put in. I'll show you that in a second. All right. So amongst other things that we want to have is a outdoor classroom. So we laid cement for that. This is looking east away from the school. This site right here will eventually be. An outdoor classroom and I'll have some say. You know, I we haven't quite come up with the design yet, but at some point it'll be in the Adirondack style, that is to say, a roof without, you know, fairly. Open structure for students. Teachers to use had wet cement. So I went over and saw my wife is the elementary secretary and told her I needed a kindergartner. She found a close one and I brought her over and put her handprint in there. This is Sophie Dillard, and we put her name and date in there. So eventually, when this happens, Sophie will be the first kindergartner to. Participate in this project. Let me had a potting shed slash greenhouse delivered. We're going to tell you that that ran about. \$11,000. It came from Miller Barns, which is an Amish construction company in our community. It had to be slightly modified because they don't come ADAS. Specifically designed. So we added a few things like the wider door stuff we had to do that slid onto the greenhouse pad, which is got a drain in it. And over the water spigot that you saw Sophie standing next to. Then we had an electrician. One of the landscapers wisely ran a conduit and some wire from our stem building. So when it came time to put electricity into that potting shed. We had, we could run it off of our schools system building. You can see that we had in every case in the case of cement, in the case of electricity, in every case, we have professionals do this because they have to be workman's comp. Certified, right? Anyway, he had electricity. We had gutters put on again and professionally done jobs. Gutters are put on the greenhouse and we also have a rain barrel water collection. It's coming off of these gutters that. One of the problems you saw in the previous slides, it was pretty messy out there. And so we had in addition to the greenhouse bed, in the outdoor classroom bed, we had new sidewalk put in. You can see the steam building there. That's a relatively new building, probably three or four years old. Primarily directed at elementary kids. You can see our little potting shed next to it. So we had that 50 foot of cement put in with the pads and then we had shadow asphalt, a local Missoula business put in. As felt. They're not critical to the garden, but critical to the appearance. You know, first impressions, right. So we put that as well. And I will tell you that that's about 50 feet by 20 feet came in right about \$7,000. To get that. I added aftermarket fans. To the to the putting should, you know, got hot this summer. And while I was working in there it's pretty pretty warm. So we've added some aftermarket fans they're working okay they're not thermostat controlled. I'll get into that a little bit. But but it does help to cool it off a little bit. You can it's tolerable when you're in there. There's some shade also. Well, again, we're looking west towards our school. I've recently purchased a. Another barn from Miller Barns, the Amish Construction. This is not. The barn we bought, but it's just like the only barn. It'll be painted the same color as this is the greenhouse blue and white for our schools. And we just need a place to. Put gear, we can store it in the putting shed. So that's waiting for a cement pad to go in. As soon as it's here, will, will, it'll be delivered and we'll have a place to store gear already. So we're doing grant applications. We've got a Karen Cox, you might be familiar with that SJC gardening grant. There's another grant for a radium heater groomer Good Classroom grants 500 to 1500

dollars. And then there's a lower Flatted Valley Community Foundation grant that we're applying for. This is an addition over and above our Esser Grants. And one last line. This is what we're looking at right now. I need cement. For the rest of the greenhouse. I'd like to put a chain link fence around the whole thing. We need to purchase the greenhouse and have it installed. It is a propane heated greenhouse. We also need electric service. The line we're running off the steam building isn't going to cover that. Those are my estimated costs. It comes to \$56,000. You can see my current balance in the Esser grant is about 38, so I've got a little problem. So we're applying for grants to supplement those pieces of equipment that we need. That is my presentation.

**Speaker 3** [00:10:03] All right. So just quickly, we had goals in the classroom. We wanted to do the snap and nutrition classes and healthy minds and bodies and a chicken program in the cafeteria. Our goals were the salad bar, harvest of the month and local procurement. And in the garden we were looking at greenhouse and garden beds, outdoor classroom space and a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club were our original goals. So how it's going classroom? I just finished up six and eight week series of nutrition education in elementary, middle and high school, so that was my part of it this last semester. And then healthy minds and Bodies will be in kindergarten in second and fourth grade this coming semester. And that's going to be Ryan, our school nurse, is going to do that. And she was at the institute. She there are some issues at the school today that made it so she couldn't show up right now, but she was going to present and hand it over to me at the last minute. And then egg to chicken is through the extension office. And hopefully that will happen this spring as well in the cafeteria. And this is what I really wanted to present about. We're so excited. Wendy has just done a fantastic job of getting our cafeteria kind of going full force with farm to school. It's so fun. She's gotten the salad bar up and running. It's a huge success and we've seen a huge influx, especially of the middle and high school students who have some more choice about where they eat lunch. And a lot of those and a lot of teachers are coming to the cafeteria to get the salad bar. So that's really exciting to see. We need some more community support that that I'll get to in a little bit that will support lower elementary students being able to use the salad bar right now. There's a little bit of process of training them how to use the salad bar. So we're getting into that. You can see a picture of the salad bar there and some of the kids doing Harvest of the Month. They have started doing Harvest of the Month in the pre-kindergarten classes. And that's just been a great success. And you see the kids there doing crunch time. So that's super fun. And then the local procurement has been a little bit harder to get into and Wendy has just kept going with it and kept making it happen. So the preliminary setup is complete and a little bit of a difficulty is that they deliver on Thursdays and then it's hard for the fruits and veggies to stay good over the weekend and then be ready to get. So that model works well from western Montana Growers Co-op for restaurants, not as well for schools. So we've had a little bit of a struggle with that. And we had a kickoff meeting and we had about four families came and they all signed up to do all of the things. So the next step is to get them plugged in and we want to get them plugged in and working with the garden stuff, once that initial set up and installing is complete, then we'd love to put people to work there. We want to plug parents in to help with training the little kids, how to eat off the salad bar, and then also doing a lot about social media and marketing and like telling the community about what we're doing. So that's what we have planned for that. And I think our struggles have been mostly in communication with the team and connecting. That's really hard to get everybody at the same place at the same time. And then that communication and delivery schedule with producers and then Tim already talked about the infrastructure in the garden and some of the struggles that he's had there and the steps that still need to happen there. So those that's our nutshell. Thanks for letting us talk to. I really appreciate it. Hearing from

Tim too, about what the garden stuff has been doing. Some of those things I haven't heard yet, so that's exciting.

**Aubree** [00:13:29] Great job. St Ignatius team for so much like infrastructure work. That's going to go a long way for your programming. We have just a minute for questions if anyone has any questions for the St Ignatius team.

**Tim Marchant** [00:13:45] I will just say this. If you have any questions and probably you already know this, it's taken longer and been a lot more expensive than I thought it was going to be. But it is moving forward and it's going to happen. It just taking some effort.

**Aubree** [00:13:59] I feel like that's my realization for most projects takes longer and is more effort. Okay, let's go to Hamilton.

**Drew** [00:14:09] Good afternoon, everybody. Drew Blankenbaker. Hamilton School Board member. And it looks like we got a lot of our team members on here. That was great to hear your progress, Tim. We you know, we also took an opportunity to look back at our action plan that came out of the institute. And it's been fun to see all the stuff that we've accomplished in the last few months. I kind of have it broken down into those same kind of categories. I'll talk about the successes and then I'll hand it over to Amy Harvey to talk about maybe some of the challenges we've faced. So first up was procurement. And we have been able to really increase the amount and regularity of the local food that we purchase. I think we're sitting around 5 to 10% a month. That's going from basically zero. So we're pretty happy about that. We have our regular salad bars now and our middle school and high schools and Nick, our food services director. If you're out there, Nick, shout out to you for trying all the new products and supporting lots of Montana farms. So we've also put a lot of effort into redoing our meal calendars. And you know, we are using the harvest of the month and some of our own branding that we came up with. And the menu likes to highlight when we're using local items or some of Nick's better famous recipes. But we've found out that the menu calendars are the most downloaded item on all of our school districts website. So we're reaching lots of families and students that way. Without really trying too hard there, which is awesome. On education, you know, we've been doing this isn't quite my department, but the Harvest of the month lesson plans in the classrooms we've had. Quite a few farmer visits to the classrooms, field trips out to the farm. Feel free to jump in, guys. But we also participated in crunch time and lots of student faculty were able to participate in that. And we have a bulletin board up in our cafeteria. And just a couple of weeks ago, we actually took a tour of the cafeteria just so we could all see it for ourselves and look forward to working on that kind of that aspect of it in the coming months. The garden, thanks to Jason, came out, did a site visit, or our existing garden space that's been sort of in disrepair or underutilized. But we were able to organize a full work day just before winter hit and got the site all cleaned up and ready for some pre constructed raised beds to go in the spring. So we'll be spending the next couple of months getting ready, thinking about what that might look like so we can actually get students out there in the garden. And as far as staying power goes, we've got a website going. Feel free to check it out. It's Montana food for Montana Kids dot com and eventually will migrate. I think we're maybe going live on that integrating that into the school district's website but we just wanted to get something out there so people could start checking out what we're doing. You'll see our official merchandise on there and social media stuff just to get people stoked about it. We been able to do regular monthly school board reports and a great article in our local newspaper, The Rebel Republic, and building on community awareness of what we're up to. It's coming up in our future bond and levy discussions too,

and we've all been able to meet on a regular basis. Our committee is still strong and we're we're looking to add to that. Amy if you want to take over challenges.

**Amy** [00:18:10] Yeah. So as far as procurement goes, Nick has struggled a little bit with winter availability and kind of what options he can explore in the winter. You know, he's new to his position, so he's kind of gone for the low hanging fruit first, which is really easy in the fall. But I think he's having a little bit of a hard time in the winter, but he's rocking it for sure. For education comes down to funding for field trips is one thing we're kind of struggling with of just where to get that on a regular basis. And we're kind of half funded for spring field trips, but still working on that funding for bussing and then also just that time to connect with teachers. We've had a hard time with like Winter actually have those important conversations with each grade level team about what they want from the garden and for from farm to school. So that's definitely something that we need to work on as we get our garden plan more solidified. And we're still working on that and that's our goal for the end of January is really having that for the garden. We are still working on that vision of what that's going to look like, but also just funding for that. We're starting to work on some grants and try to get that buy in. And then in the fall we just kind of ran into the work day and the weather cycle hitting and kind of stopping our progress in the fall. But we're excited to get restarted in the spring time. And then, as Drew said, like our core committee is pretty strong, but we haven't really had the option yet of like expanding that as we kind of get things rolling. So that's kind of a future goal for us. Yeah, that's those are the highlights for us.

**Aubree** [00:20:06] Wonderful. Awesome. Any questions for the Hamilton team? It sounds like you've been up to a lot and I encourage you all to check out their Instagram and their website. I also got to see some pictures in that Google Drive folder today. That was fun.

**Amy** [00:20:23] Good. I'm glad you found it.

**Aubree** [00:20:29] Any question.

**Tim Marchant** [00:20:30] Can I can I ask a quick question? This could be Drew or Amy. Couple of things. So, Drew, it sounds like are you a board member?

**Drew** [00:20:42] That's correct.

**Tim Marchant** [00:20:43] Yeah. Sounds like you guys are doing a lot of PR websites. Newspaper articles. Mm hmm.

**Drew** [00:20:52] That's correct.

**Tim Marchant** [00:20:52] Can can I ask who's doing that for you? Do you have a teacher or somebody? And who's doing this sort of PR PR stuff for you?

**Drew** [00:21:03] I've definitely taken on a lot of it just in my own time. I also chair a communications committee as part of the larger school district. And that, you know, we have internal people that work on communications and PR stuff, but we haven't really tapped them that much. It's just been reaching out to our local paper when we knew we were going to have kids out there on the farm or farmers in the classroom and inviting them to do that. I mean, yes, the website is simple. As far as the actual content and stuff, but it was nice to have somewhere for people to go and say, Oh, this is the thing now in our school district.

**Tim Marchant** [00:21:48] Yeah, we definitely need to do that and there's lots of opportunity for it. But I'm also the high school English teacher for some reason can't seem to squeeze it into my schedule, but we need to do that for Amy real quick. Two questions. One. I'm guessing by the time we're done with the garden, getting it operational, it's probably going to be \$150,000 to get it just open. We haven't. I haven't even addressed an operating budget. Do you? What do you or do you have. Do you guys have a yearly budget? You know what? It's running you to run a school.

**Amy** [00:22:21] No, we are far from that. We honestly are still working on like, what we want the space to look like. And it's been you know, it was started at one point and was very neglected. And so we're still trying to work on like what our new vision for it is. And like, we just didn't really prioritize that in the fall, which we're trying to do this winter. So I think that will be a goal for us moving forward because we don't have that plan.

**Tim Marchant** [00:22:46] Yeah, that's that's kind of where I am. The second part of the question is I've already had teachers in the little potting shed, growing stuff with their kids. Very, very cool, even though we're not completely up. I'm not I haven't designed any curriculum, but my hope was that science teachers will figure that out, what they want to do. Are you designing curriculum that you expect to have happen in the in the garden area?

**Amy** [00:23:13] Again, that's something that we're working on. But I would say we're not planning on designing any of our own. We're going to use what's out there. And I'm sure Aubrey and Jason can talk about all the awesome things that are already out there. But that's definitely one of our goals, is to not reinvent the wheel but give suggestions for teachers. Well.

**Tim Marchant** [00:23:34] Yeah. My sense is if you build it, they will come. And I'm hoping that that happens. I don't want to direct curriculum for it, but, you know, something's got to happen out there. So anyway, we got.

**Amy** [00:23:49] We've talked about, you know, having it be an expectation that teachers use it like once in the fall and once in the spring and kind of leaving what that looks like up to them. But that hasn't been communicated because we're far from having the space ready.

**Tim Marchant** [00:24:03] Right. Yeah. Yeah. My I thought are too I mean, you wouldn't necessarily have to grow. So I mean it's a place for reflection and. Yeah. You know, other stuff. Anyway, that's all I had. Yeah. Thank you.

**Aubree** [00:24:15] That's awesome. Great questions. Okay, we are going to move over to power. So. So take it away, Power team.

**Power Team** [00:24:25] So what we started with and our main goal from. The institute was to get a freezer so we could put in local produce, we could buy local local products, we could buy local produce, processed it in the school and get it so we could use it in the kitchen. That happens has turned out to be one of our our biggest challenge. We found out that it was \$56,000 to have a freezer that's only at eight by 12 installed. So we found another one for \$25,000 if we can install it ourselves. We have \$13,000. So fundraising is where we're at right now. It has to be all grants and donations, the school said. They couldn't afford to put a freezer up for us. So that's what that's one. That's our big

challenge. However, we left with other ideas and we've had a whole bunch of successes. We started with Harvest of the Month. And with that we started right off with. The Zulu recipe that we learned down at the institute. So in September, we did our. Zucchini. Pesto. And then we did for apples. We did apple fritters for carrots. We did some carrot cookies, We did beets and wood beat lemonade. And then we just cherries were the very first month that we just did a little bit of cherries there. We have a bulletin board that is beautiful, which apparently now I wish I would have taken pictures and give them to everybody. That is changed by our teachers every month and they can go and see everything about the the harvest of the month idea. Another good success is we wanted to continue the continuity of our group. So we have monthly meetings that has been met. Every week we pick the day and it's the third Monday of every month that we've been meeting and it's helped us on our progress with the challenges that we've had with our freezer and trying to figure out other places to look for grants. The other great idea we had at the end was food with families, and that is we decided it would be kind of a fundraiser, but it was also been a way to get us out to the community. So on parent teacher conference nights, we did a local dinner and so we did loaded baked potato soup with local potatoes, local ham milk's also local. We had our our FCS classmate some pickled beets. Did you do anything besides the pickled beads for that? They process the ham hocks all down in to make it usable so the kitchen didn't have to do it. We did local, we did cornbread with local corn. Now we ground down and then we did a two meals for before Christmas concerts and that had local ham in it also. But it was just a way to provide people with a meal and a non messy meal in the concert so that they could bring their whole family there, feed them before the concert. And to me, that's one of our biggest successes because all those families really appreciated the fact of the ease of making that and the donation. I mean, and then they they donated for the meal. It was a freewill offering. I mean, we have about 100 students in the school. And on those three, the the. The local meal. The total local meal was less well attended. We learned we needed a little bit better PR plus we also had a terrible snowstorm that day, so we really didn't get a lot of people at parent teacher conferences. But I think the really big success was the people and how appreciative they were for that. And it and it drives us to figure out other ways we can do that and do a fundraising for us and let them know about us. The. One question that that ah, we had as what other grants has schools applied for that we can consider in addition to the farm to school grant and what ways have they come up with funding matches?

**Aubree** [00:29:01] Awesome. So any questions for power? That's a fantastic update. Love it. And and if anyone also wants to comment on the grants on their question.

**Grace** [00:29:17] I know your son's school district has applied for a few grants, but they've all been for school gardens. But Laura, I don't know if you're familiar with the Food and AG Development Center in Great Falls. I, I can email you their information, but they might be good people to contact. Just because you're so close to Great Falls, they help people with funding and all kinds of stuff.

**Power Team** [00:29:45] I see Whitney just said. Montana Farmers Union. We did receive a \$10,000 grant from them. So that's ten of our 13,000.

**Robin** [00:29:56] Hi, Laura. This is Robin. Mm hmm. One way that summer school was able to procure some funding for our freezers was through the electric company. Okay, so if you're electric company has anything similar in the way of proگرامing that in the Flathead Valley, we do what's called Roundup for safety. Okay. One of the ways that I approached the electric company was through safety concerns about the bad shape that

our freezer was in, that I recall. Okay. So I went at it from a safety point of view. They did not fund the whole project, but I think they gave us 5000 toward it. Okay. Which helped. That might be worth investigating.

**Stephanie** [00:30:48] This is Stephanie over in Bozeman. And one other suggestion is local banks and local hospitals. A lot of times have community giving funds that can go towards whether it's depending on their giving guidelines, whether it's an actual project or an event or just an an it should have. In Bozeman, this Bozeman Deaconess Health Center found that in their community assessment. One of their big three things that it needs in the community was rural, local food access in our area. And so we were able to use that to then help them fund scholarships for schools that are that can't afford it. Okay.

**Power Team** [00:31:26] All right. Thank you.

**Aubree** [00:31:29] And it looks like there's another suggestion for no kid hungry. They've done some various grants in the past, too.

**Power Team** [00:31:36] All right. Thank you.

**Aubree** [00:31:37] Thank you so much, Power team. And if anyone else has more grants, please keep putting them in the chat box. It sounds like everybody's kind of in that same boat, and I'd be happy to follow up with you all regarding ideas for in-kind or other match sources for those USDA and federal grants. I can iPad to get them get the match as well. So I've got some tips and tricks for you. Good to hear those updates. I've gotten some updates throughout the last few months from you all. But nice to see that all together. Keep sending photos and updates as you go along through your coaches and you can also send to me directly. I know Wendy has sent me a few pictures from Harvest of the Month and I love getting those because I do stare at a computer screen all day long. So getting those pictures really just brings me a ray of sunshine. So we're a bit off schedule, but that is okay because I think your updates are more important. There were no questions from you all or certain topics that you wanted to cover with local procurement. So what I thought we would do is just take a few minutes to go through some of the opportunities that might help you with procurement, finding local food and things like that. And so I hope you find that useful because there's just so much happening right now in terms of local procurement supports as well as trainings and events. And it's a lot to keep track of. So we're going to do we'll go through a few of those and we'll hopefully have some time for discussion with that. But I just want to kind of alert you to some of these opportunities here. So the supply chain assistance funding and the second disbursement was sent to schools in December. And so that isn't specific to local foods, but you certainly can use that funding for local foods that's for minimally and unprocessed foods. If you want more information on that, go to the API, school nutrition programs, supply chain assistance page for it. I can send you the link. You can. I think it also shows up if you Google it, that disbursement, like I said, went out in December and you can see how much your school received on that page. It has a document you can download. It's a minimum of \$5,000 per school district or SFA. And then the other piece of the supply chain assistance is API actually has two solicitations out. This is new for API. This is not something that they have done in the past and so they are purchasing Montana beef and Montana roasted lentils for distribution to schools throughout the state. So those solicitations are currently open until January 24th, I think is the deadline. So if there are producers and vendors who are interested in that, they should check that out. It's a really great opportunity. These have to be pushed through really quickly because of the funding that they're coming from. So things are happening and there will be more solicitations coming from the supply chain



assistance pot of funds through API as well as through the second part of funds that API received called local food for Schools. And so this is a smaller amount of funds. I think Montana received about \$700,000 and it's divided into three different groups. So grants for schools. So those will be opening sometime this winter and so you'll apply for that funding and then you can use that for minimally or unprocessed local foods. Things like ground beef do count as minimally or unprocessed in this particular program. So you can get some things that are kind of that minimally processed. So look for those. I will, of course, send you guys information when that comes out. And then API will be doing a solicitation for Montana flour for schools, and then doing a sub grant for distribution of Montana dry goods. So that one is more nebulous and we'll probably have a request for information first. So if there are certain dry goods or certain ideas you have on that, I'd love to chat with you all. I don't think we have time today, but if you're interested, I'd love to hear your thoughts on what your schools could need so that solicitation can really meet your needs. And then there's a multiple connection event. So I think all of you mentioned that you've been having difficulty sourcing things. Here is our training and events page. The link that I just put in the chat box and there are a couple of things coming up. So the first is a bullet connection. This is a virtual buyer seller connection event, not specific to schools, but including schools. So we're partnering with a bandit Montana, to put this on. So you can register as a buyer or seller. If you're a producer until January 20th, you'll go in registering, you'll create a profile, and then that will once all of the profiles are complete, there will be a sort of a guide or a resource created and sent to everyone who registered. And then as a buyer or seller, you can find folks that you want to connect with and then schedule a time to meet with them during that week, February 13th through 19th on your own time. So I'm really interested to see how this structure works out. I have never seen it done, and so I think it'll be really interesting and hopefully it's useful for you all. So check that out. And at the minimum, even if you register and you don't find anyone, you'll still get that resource that has profiles of different producers and what they are offering. And then we have in-person ones, if that's your jam. So we'll have local procurement trainings that will also include buyer seller connection events. So we will be holding three of those in 2023. On the first one, we haven't tracked down a date yet, but we're looking at March in Hardin and then we'll have two other ones, time and location TBD, but they'll be in other parts of the state. So we're trying to disperse those around and the registration for that is not open yet because we're still trying to figure that out, because we are trying to connect that first one with the rescheduled Montana Farm School producer training. We had to cancel session three of the second training. And so we're trying to sort of combine those events. So producers would already be at this training and school nutrition professionals would be attending a local procurement training. So bring them together during that connection event, trying to streamline things. So yeah, and it will also with that producer training will be reopening the registration for that because the sessions one and two were virtual. So they'll be able to watch those recordings. And then we will also have three halves of the month workshops in 2023. So tons of events you can go to. The first one is in Gardner and that is a rescheduled event. It was originally scheduled for December but had to be canceled. So that is rescheduled for April 21st. Registration to open soon and then Helena and Polson showcases will be held later.

**Tim Marchant** [00:39:23] Aubrey, can I ask a quick question?

**Aubree** [00:39:26] You bet.

**Tim Marchant** [00:39:26] This may be for power as well. My folks I've been talking to, it is KC ext Self-scrutiny College Extension Office. They're not on the. Procurement in there on the distribution in, are there not? Maybe you can clear this up. They're not. Legal Hurdles

to Schools procuring food from local. Producers. I mean. I know stores just can't take stuff from. Local producers. Esky has a lot of food they like to distribute, but they can't get into stores in schools because of safety hazards. Is that a problem that.

**Aubree** [00:40:07] Well, there are regulations to follow. So the the most straightforward regulations, I think are like for livestock, it's state and bodily inspected. Just pretty simple. There's one little exception to that. But otherwise it's like pretty straightforward regulations, wise produce. You get into this more gray area. There is technically a producer dealer's license and then. It. It really it can vary and depend. And then if it's a processed product, it does need to be licensed by the Department of Public Health and Human Services. So that's a that's a retail or wholesale establishment license.

**Tim Marchant** [00:40:57] Are other schools having this problem moving stuff from their garden to their kitchen? Is that a problem?

**Aubree** [00:41:04] Well, with gardens, two kitchens, that's something that a school would need to work with their county sanitarian to figure out the proper operating standard operating procedures, how to make that happen. There's a garden to cafeteria manual that I would really recommend that comes out of Colorado from the Whole Kids Foundation. And they have some really good tools to use. That is a very case by case situation. So I can't say like, yes, it is a blanket allowable. That's a work with your county sanitarian.

**Tim Marchant** [00:41:40] Thank you.

**Aubree** [00:41:40] Yeah. Just pop over to some of these other little announcements and then we can open for discussion and questions. So a few things that I just want to bring to your attention. We have this handy. The timeline and roles document. I'm not going to pull it up now, but you can refer back to that. And that is also included on this website that I put out. So I'll put that in the chat box too. So that's your place to find the various resources and documents. So where are we in our process? So right now we're here in our program. We will have hour by hour producer connection event. And that's a virtual that's not a requirement. That's just something that is available to all. And then in May is when we'll have our end of year reflection gathering and do the post assessment evaluation. I do have some questions about the end of year reflection gathering. So. We do have that as it was originally as a virtual event. I potentially have funding to be able to support an in-person event, but don't know how that jives with everyone. So I'm going to open up a poll here. If you can select, if you would like, virtual, which was the original plan or in-person location TBD. Not in a completely inconvenient place. Hopefully someplace in the middle. Abby, do you have specific dates already? We're looking at just May. That's all I know. Okay. And then if you can put in the chat box too, it looks currently kind of half and half if it were to be held in person. What would you need to be able to attend an in person? Would you need travel funding? Would you need just mileage? Would you need lodging? Just if you can put that in the chat box. What would you absolutely need to be able to attend? That would be great. So I don't know.

**Speaker 5** [00:44:03] What all that kind of look like. Would that be like a after school hours event or a weekend or.

**Aubree** [00:44:11] Like, that's a good thing to put in the chat box if you all need it to be after school hours or on the weekends. Put that in the chat. Very close with in-person just squeaking ahead at 53%. I'm going to keep reviewing that, but please keep putting things in that chat box for things you would need or considerations or even dates that are like,

Absolutely not. All of that I'll look at with the advisory team. Just giving you a heads up on that. You will have post assessments that very much mirror the pre assessments that you did at the beginning of this program. So you will have your individual assessment and then you'll have your team assessment. The team assessment is the one that includes the local procurement tracking on the students reached that kind of information. So how is the tracking for that going? Because I know especially the local procurement tracking is probably the most challenging. So how is that going? Are you tracking it? Did you totally forget? No shame. Having a panic moment right now, as I am reminding you, that you need to do it. Okay. So this is a reminder to to get on that tracking. New Year. New you. And there is. Just look at that pre assessment video that is on your institute team's web page for instructions that that local procurement tracking is a few minutes and so you can kind of scrub through it. But please reach out to your coach Jason or myself if you have any questions about effective methods for tracking. You don't have to use that optional spreadsheet, but you will have to report it. So. So find a method that's going to work for you. And then that is all I have.

**Grace** [00:46:20] I have a question for everyone. So we we haven't had trouble sourcing local between November and January, but obviously there are less produce available between those months. I was wondering how people have been sourcing local towards the winter months for your schools.

**Tim Marchant** [00:46:42] Oh. And, and I haven't I've been on the greenhouse integrated and been on the procurement end of it very much. But and this may not help anybody else, but we do have access through the tribe. They often have game meat and things that I can get my hands on in the winter time that they've they have stored frozen bison stuff that I can use. I've used that for other dinners that we've been here in the school. So for us to the tribe is one place to get some stuff in the off months.

**Grace** [00:47:21] Thank you.

**Whitney** [00:47:23] Grace. I was going to say that the harvest of the month calendar is pretty great for what you can usually get your hands on. So really looking at legumes, carrots, root vegetables, those storage crops up here in the flathead, we actually advance purchase carrots because we know we won't be able to get them. So we buy like thousands of pounds, but that's not an option for everyone.

**Grace** [00:47:49] Thank you.

**Ms. Grassman** [00:47:52] We haven't done much local produce in the in in our in our school that's. I worked with western Montana growers co-op to get started there. But life happened and we haven't done it But we are starting a hybrid hydroponic garden, so we're hoping to be getting lettuce to put in our salad bar in the next month or so. Thank you. Now, I was just going to say Western Growers Co-op has a lot of produce, storage, route crops, that sort of thing. But also a lot of hydroponic lettuces coming out of the better it right now. And we were using that in the school just as our weekly purchase for our salads and it's it's well-priced and it. It's beautiful.

**Aubree** [00:48:42] It's awesome. Those are great suggestions. Well, like I said, it was going to be a quick hour and we have come to the hour. So my apologies that we're so compressed here. Thank you all for all of your work. You're doing really fantastic work. Even if it feels like you get bogged down sometimes. I'm impressed with the progress you've made in just a few months. So please keep reaching out and working with your

coaches and let us know. You can let your coaches know. Jason or myself know if you have any training needs, if you have any like resource needs. Jason is an expert in many areas and especially with school garden. So if you want him to come out and provide some consulting services, he's he's here for that. So please, please let us know how we can support you and then I'll be back in touch regarding scheduling and the details on the end of year gathering, which is when we will share out your kind of final report progress and then also set an action plan for the year ahead. Have a wonderful afternoon and evening and we'll talk again soon. Take care.