



## JULY NEWSLETTER

The Zero Waste Schools newsletter will help you get your school on a path toward generating zero waste through waste prevention, recycling, composting, and food recovery. You'll also find resources that connect zero waste to healthy eating, school gardens, and environmental education and action.

Feel free to share the newsletter with friends, colleagues, and students who are interested in zero waste.

[Sign up for ZWS news](#)

### Zero Waste Schools Now in Lake County



"I was shocked at how much food was getting thrown away and how much trash was being generated during the lunch period," Braeside School parent Philippa Dejmal remarked. "Since the start of Zero Waste at Braeside, the students are learning how to make better choices and are learning that a small action can bring about big change."

Braeside is one of three Lake County schools to recently implement zero waste lunchroom systems that incorporate commercial composting, recycling, and food recovery as part of the Zero Waste Schools–Lake County Program. Red Oak School and Rondout School also participate in the program. Braeside and Red Oak are in North Shore District 112 in Highland Park. Rondout is in Rondout School District 72 in Lake Forest.

Seven Generations Ahead (SGA) implements the Zero Waste Schools–Lake County Program in partnership with the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO). The program is currently being implemented in 3–5 kindergarten through 12th grade Lake County schools. New to Lake County this year, the program is modeled after SGA's work with the Chicago Public Schools Commercial Composting & Recycling Program, in which 14 schools divert roughly 85% by weight of lunchroom waste from landfills through commercial composting, recycling, and share tables.



Read more [HERE](#).

## Plastic Free July

Do you want to challenge yourself and your community to reduce your plastic consumption? Join millions of people around the world who are participating in [Plastic Free July](#) by refusing single use plastics and pledging to be a part of the solution to plastic pollution. The Plastic Free July website has resources to help you find plastic free alternatives, tips on engaging your community in going plastic free, and even tips for [schools to participate](#) in the challenge.



Ready to make your July plastic free? Take the challenge now!

### Willard Elementary Strives for Zero Waste at their End of Year Celebration

Willard Elementary School in Evanston/Skokie School District 65 has made significant strides reducing waste at all PTA sponsored school events throughout the year. Their year-end picnic celebration was no exception. Through recycling, composting, and encouraging the use of reusable water bottles, approximately 500 attendees generated only one large bin of landfill trash. Roughly 350 pounds of food scraps and compostable disposables were sent to a commercial composting facility, and 190 gallons of cans, foil containers, and plastics were recycled.



The PTA provided all compostable disposables and encouraged everyone to bring their own reusable water bottle and a dish to share in a reusable container. The school rented the City of Evanston's mobile water refill station for the event, and the absence of disposable water bottles and cups greatly reduced the amount of waste generated at the picnic. In previous years, hundreds of disposable water bottles had been purchased for the picnic. This year, not a single disposable water bottle was used.



Separating food scraps is not new to Willard students as they have been composting in their lunchroom since the beginning of the school year. Willard is one of five schools in the District that diverts all food scraps from the landfill with the help of the food scrap pick-up service, Collective Resource. The Evanston-based company also hauls the compostable lunch trays that are used in all of the District's lunchrooms. The District has plans to add at least three more schools to the composting program in the coming school year.

With a little creativity and some advance planning you, too, can go for zero waste at your next school event.



Are you looking for an engaging way to teach climate change to young people? Our Climate Our Future, a project of the Alliance for Climate Education, is an interactive video series that teaches youth the science of climate change and

empowers them to take action in their community.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

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## Should we say goodbye to the school lunch milk carton?

According to a plate waste study done by the USDA, nearly 30 percent of milk goes to waste in US schools. In hopes of decreasing the amount of milk wasted, people are advocating for schools to switch from individual cartons to milk dispensers. With dispensers, students have the opportunity to choose the amount of milk they want meaning less milk is wasted. It also eliminates the carton waste at schools.



One school district in Olympia, Wash., eliminated 400,000 empty cartons from the waste stream, the study said. It also prevented as much as 10,000 gallons of milk from being poured out. "Multiple other districts report that milk sales have gone up while waste has dropped."

Read more of this article from the *New Food Economy* [HERE](#).

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## New Map of School Gardens in Illinois

The [Illinois Farm to School Network](#) created a statewide map of school gardens in Illinois. Use this map as a resource to connect to other garden programs across Illinois to help you grow your own.



Don't see your garden on the map? Luckily you can add it! Just click [HERE](#) to submit your garden information on the map page.

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## Register for Harvest of the Month



Harvest of the Month registration is now open!

Illinois Harvest of the Month celebrates a different in-season, locally grown food item every month. Registered feeding sites and garden sites receive a seasonal calendar of suggestions for what to feature then choose what works best for their meal or garden program.

It's a free and flexible way to buy, grow, and serve more local food while teaching students about healthy eating, nutrition, and agriculture.

Learn more and register [HERE](#).

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## Grant Opportunities

**Salad Bars to Schools:** Bring a salad bar to your school. Salad Bars to Schools' goal is for every school in the United States to have a salad bar as part of their school food service program. Any district or independent school participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is eligible to apply.

**Annie's Grants for Gardens:** Get the funds you need to start or sustain an edible school garden. Up to \$3,000 is available for new grant applicants and \$5,000 for returning Grants for Gardens winners. The application period will be open from August 1, 2019 to November 1, 2019.

## Support Zero Waste Schools

Do you value the work of Seven Generations Ahead and our Zero Waste Schools Program? Your support will help us help more schools. Here are two easy ways to give:

- **Amazon Smile:** Choose SGA as your charity of choice and Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase to support our programs.
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- Give a monetary gift to SGA via our [donate page](#).



## Events



### Canoe and Clean Ups

One Saturday each month, June 29–October 31  
Enjoy the Chicago River with Friends, and make the river cleaner while you're at it. Friends of the Chicago River provides the canoes, the equipment, and the know-how. Cost \$10.



### Great Lakes Action Days

Various locations & dates

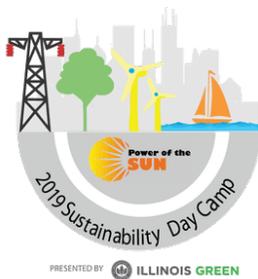
Join a Great Lakes Action Day organized by the Shedd Aquarium to give back to the wild places in your backyard.



### Summer Nature Fest

Thursday, July 18, 4 pm–8pm  
Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

This event features conservation scientists, cool critters, nature walks, live music, and great food. Suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 per family.



### Sustainability Day Camp

Saturday, July 27, 9:30 am–4 pm

The Illinois Green Alliance invites kids ages 5–14 to register for this **FREE** day camp. Students will learn about solar and energy efficiency topics through fun, hands-on activities to gain a better understanding of the natural world around them, with a focus on the power of the sun. Location: Elliott Donnelley Youth Center, 3947 S Michigan Ave, Chicago.

## Do you have feedback for Zero Waste Schools?

Contact us with feedback, recommendations, stories to include, and more at [zerowaste@sevengenerationsahead.org](mailto:zerowaste@sevengenerationsahead.org)

STAY CONNECTED



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