



JUNE 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](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

Green Locker Clean-Out



The end of the school year is coming up soon and with it the opportunity for a great end-of-year project: a Green Locker Clean-Out. With a just a little advanced planning, your school can keep mountains of materials out of landfills. SGA created a Green Locker Clean-Out Guide to help.

A Green Locker Clean-Out involves providing bins for students to sort their unwanted locker or desk contents into categories of Donate, Recycle, and Landfill. Donated items can be made available to other students and staff in the school or can be donated (the [Chicago Creative Reuse Exchange](#) has a new opportunity to donate items). A Green Locker Clean-out can be a great student-led project, as well.

SGA's Green Locker Clean-Out Guide will take you through all steps of planning and implementation, providing best practices and tips along the way.

Download the guide [HERE](#).

2019 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Winners



In May, the U.S. Department of Education honored 53 schools from across the country as [Green Ribbon Schools](#). The award recognizes schools, districts, and institutions of higher education that reduce environmental impact and costs; improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff; and

provide environmental education.

Read [Highlights from the 2019 Honorees](#) to learn about and be inspired by all the ways that these institutions are making a difference. Among those honored are one school, one district, and one university from Illinois:

- Meadowview Elementary School (Grayslake)
- Bloomington Public School District 87
- Loyola University of Chicago

Congrats to all honorees! Be on the look out for the 2020 application this fall.

Kindergarten Zero Waste Orientation Guide



Kindergarten and new student orientation is a great time to introduce your school's newest students and their parents to your zero waste and sustainability efforts.

Starting at a new school can be both exciting and intimidating, and many students may not have previous experience recycling or composting. Help new students feel comfortable and part of the school community by incorporating some of the ideas in this guide.

Click [HERE](#) for SGA's Kindergarten & New Student Zero Waste Orientation Guide.

May 3 Youth Climate Strike in the News

"People and Planet, Always Over Profit" echoed off the buildings of downtown Chicago as area high school students took part in the Youth Climate Strike. Taking inspiration from Greta Thunberg, these students are sending a message to leaders that climate change is an important issue and action is necessary. Read more about the Youth Climate Strikes in the news:

- [Chicago–Area Students Join Global ‘Strike’ Over Climate Change](#), WTTW
- [Protest climate change or attend class? For these area high school students, the answer was clear](#), Chicago Tribune

Get Outside!

Kids who spend time in nature grow to love and protect nature. Encourage your students/families to explore our unique and beautiful region this summer. Here's some inspiration:



- [Forest Preserves of Cook County](#)
- [Forest Preserve District of DuPage County](#)
- [McHenry County Conservation District](#)
- [Lake County Forest Preserves](#)
- [Forest Preserve District of Kane County](#)
- [Forest Preserve District of Will County](#)
- [Illinois State Parks](#)
- [Indiana Dunes National Park](#) (Yes, it's now a national park! And accessible

by public transportation from downtown Chicago via the [South Shore Line.](#))

- [Chicago Park District Nature Play Spaces](#)

Inspiration for Summer Reading

Summer is a great time to enjoy and explore new interests and new books. Check out these compilations of environmentally themed books to help the kids and youth in your life find some inspirational reading:



- [Social Justice Books: Environment/Climate Justice](#)
- [Amazon Best Sellers in Teen & Young Adult Environmental Conservation & Protection](#)
- [Environmental Books for Kids - To Teach and Inspire](#)

COMPOSTING & RECYCLING

LaSalle School Digs into Onsite Composting and Slashes Food Waste



[LaSalle Language Academy](#) students gathered around desks waiting for their chance to dig through containers of compost filled with food scraps, worms, and other soil critters. These students had just learned how composting can help their school reduce waste and help prevent climate change. Then they saw how the decomposition process works with their own eyes.

LaSalle is one of several Chicago Public Schools (CPS) this past school year to engage students in environmental learning and action on a daily basis-- right in their own lunchrooms. Since March 2019 when their zero waste program launched, LaSalle has reduced lunchroom landfill waste by over 50% by weight through food recovery, onsite composting, liquid diversion and recycling.

SGA's [Zero Waste Schools Program](#) helped LaSalle get there by providing onsite logistical guidance, best practices, a waste audit, and educational presentations about the how and why of going for zero waste for all students and staff.

Read more [HERE](#).

FOOD WASTE REDUCTION

The [Center for Green Schools](#) has released a toolkit to help school stakeholders create programs to reduce and recover surplus food.

[Sharing the Table: A Roadmap to Reducing and Recovering Surplus Food in Schools](#) toolkit provides valuable knowledge and resources on how to help K-12 schools reduce food waste and decrease their environmental impact.

HEALTHY LOCAL FOOD

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](#).

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.
- Give a monetary gift to SGA via our [donate page](#).



EVENTS

Does Recycling Still Matter?



[Environmental Series: Does Recycling Still Matter?](#)

June 11, 6 – 8 pm

Harold Washington Library, Chicago

This free panel discussion will explore the future of recycling in Chicago and nationally. Featured guests include Kuldip Kumar (Scientist, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District), Carter O'Brien (Sustainability Officer, The Field Museum), and Michelle Thoma (President, Chicago Recycling Coalition). Moderated by Madison Hopkins (Reporter, Better Government Association).

June 2019

CCRx invites Chicagoland schools to donate leftover supplies from their end-of-year locker and classroom clean-outs to

CCRx. They will redistribute the materials to Chicago teachers at their back-to-school Swap Circle this fall.



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.

Do you have feedback for Zero Waste Schools?

Contact us with feedback, recommendations, stories to include, and more at zerowaste@sevengenerationsahead.org

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STAY CONNECTED



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