



## FEBRUARY 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 At Oak Terrace



SGA helped Oak Terrace Elementary School launch their Zero Waste Lunchroom in November 2019. See the wonderful [VIDEO](#) they produced that highlights the process and its impact on students and the school's waste stream.

Read more about their program launch [HERE](#).

### "The Power of We" in Action

The One Earth Film Festival is returning for its 9th year this March! It's the Midwest's premier environmental film festival, creating opportunities for understanding climate change, sustainability and the power of human involvement. The fest will showcase 26 top-issue, thought-provoking environmental films and lead audiences



in interactive post-film discussions focused on solutions.

The theme of this year's fest is "The Power Of We." The schedule includes environmental films covering climate change, conservation, food waste, energy, and more.

Screenings will take place March 6–15 at locations throughout Chicago and the surrounding counties. For the full schedule click [HERE](#).

## New Bill Aims to Fix Food Waste



A new bill was introduced in January that would establish a grant program for schools to cut cafeteria food waste. Its goals are to reduce environmental impacts while improving student nutrition.

Read the full article [HERE](#).

## USDA Releases New Resource to Help Schools Prevent Wasted Food

This eight-page [BOOKLET](#) from the USDA features tips for school nutrition professionals, teachers, administrators, parents, and students to reduce, recover, and recycle food before it goes to waste.



## Grant opportunity

[Garden For Nature Grant Program](#): This West Cook Wild Ones grant is for local non-profits and organizations who would like to improve the environment and engage the public through a native plant garden. Applicants must be located in West Cook County. Deadline **Mar. 15**.

## Pay it forward – Donate to Zero Waste Schools

When you donate to Zero Waste Schools, you support:

- teaching the next generation the How and Why of recycling, composting, and food recovery
- drastically reducing the amount of waste that schools send to landfills
- the creation of new tools/resources, including our forthcoming *Food Waste Reduction Toolkit for Illinois Schools*.



Please [SUPPORT THIS WORK](#) by donating today.  
We have zero time to waste. Thank you for your generosity.

## Events

### [Environmental Education Outcomes Online Course](#)

Feb. 11 – Mar. 17

Education and environmental professionals, students, and community leaders are encouraged to take this interactive online course through Cornell University's Civic Ecology Lab. Suggested Fee: \$60.



### [15th Annual Chicago Food Policy Summit](#)



**Feb. 21, 9 am– 5 pm, Chicago, IL**

Celebrate leveraging collective power to policy. This summit will equip attendees with meaningful knowledge, relationships, and conversations to envision our food future together. The themed tracks will highlight ways to ground policy in community action and engage participants in strengthening Chicago’s foodscape. FREE.



**Critical Conversations 2020: Responses to Climate Change**

**Feb. 25, 6:30 pm – 8 pm, Chicago, IL**

The Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership brings together high-profile speakers to address the most critical issues of the day. Activists and experts will debate what needs to be done in response to climate change and why we are too immobilized to act.

Fee for the public: \$36.

**SCHOOL WELLNESS  
CONFERENCE 2020**



**School Wellness Conference**

**Feb. 24 & 25, Bloomington, IL**

School nutrition professionals, PE teachers, school nurses, school social workers, and others dedicated to the well-being of Illinois schoolchildren are encouraged to attend this free conference of the Illinois State Board of Education. Three session tracks will feature Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Social Emotional Health. Attendees can receive up to five Continuing Education Units.



**23rd Annual Chicago River Student Congress**

**Feb. 29, 8 am–1 pm, Chicago, IL**

Join students, teachers, and environmental professionals to share knowledge and celebrate each other's efforts to improve the Chicago River at the Friends of the Chicago River's 23rd annual congress. This year's theme is climate change. Deadline for registration is Feb. 19.



**Green Schools Conference and Expo 2020**

**Mar. 2–4, Portland, OR**

Three days of invaluable education and networking opportunities.



**Go Green Illinois Schools – U.S. EPA Presentation**

**Mar. 12, 10 am–11 am, Kenilworth, IL**

Better understand how to share the EPA’s energy efficiency, environmental health, citizen science, air monitoring and water sampling resources. Speakers: Kara Belle, School Assistance Center Coordinator, and Megan Gavin, Environmental Education Coordinator from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

RSVP [HERE](#).



**Earth Day 50th Anniversary Celebration:  
Bill McKibben via Skype with Local Sustainability Experts**

**Apr. 2, 3 pm –7 pm, River Forest, IL**

Bill McKibben, founder of the environmental organization 350.org, was among the first writers to warn of the danger of global warming. He will join via Skype at 6 pm. Throughout the afternoon community sustainability experts will share their work and invite us all into active participation in caring for our Earth. FREE.

**Do you have feedback for Zero Waste Schools?**

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



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