



SEPTEMBER 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](#)

SGA webinar helps schools adapt



Despite the challenges, school leaders across the country are figuring out ways to adapt their zero waste strategies for school year 20-21, and some are even using the disruption caused by the pandemic to establish better, more sustainable ways of doing things. This was the big take-away from SGA's webinar ***Zero Waste School Practices During COVID-19***, which took place on Sept 2.

Susan Casey and **Becky Brodsky** from SGA's Zero Waste Schools program moderated the conversation and started things off: "Even if some ideas aren't fully fleshed-out or have not been tested, we believe that there is a lot of value in just sharing ideas during this time when no one really knows what to expect. We hope that something you hear today will spark potential solutions for you and your school." Casey and Brodsky shared options and questions to consider for recycling and composting in the classroom, and also offered resources for learning how to reduce waste at home. They were delighted to have **three school leaders** from around the country contribute to the conversation.

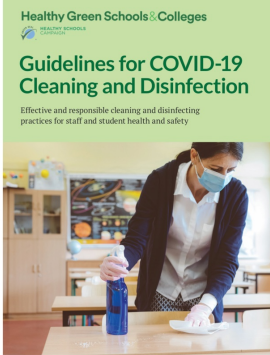
Read more [HERE](#).

Guidelines for COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection

Healthy Green Schools & Colleges just released its new **Guidelines for COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection** for effective and responsible cleaning and disinfecting practices for staff and student health and safety.

These recommendations were created from science-based standards for high-performance cleaning products and practices to reduce unnecessary use of hazardous chemicals and promote safer and healthier indoor air.

Download the guide [HERE](#).



Grant Opportunities

COVID-19 Emergency School Meal Delivery Fund: GENYOUth is providing grants of up to **\$3,000 per school** to supply much-needed resources for meal distribution and delivery efforts to get food to students during COVID-19. From soft-sided coolers, bags and containers for individual servings, to protective gear for food service sanitation and safety, this equipment will help ensure our children continue to receive the nutritious meals they need. Applications will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis.

Carton Council School Carton Recycling Grant Program: The [Carton Council](#) is offering recycling grants of up to **\$5,000 per school district** to start or expand milk carton recycling programs. Funds can be used for equipment, education, and implementation support services. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Contact your regional coordinator to request an application:

- Barbara Heineken (IL, MI, OH, IN, eastern U.S.): bheineken@recycle.com
- Debra Dodson (MN, WI, western U.S.): ddodson1@mac.com
- Michele Wagner (Rocky Mountain region, central southern U.S.): micheleawagner@gmail.com

Climate Solutions Campaign: Grades of Green kicks off this new campaign on Sept. 14. It extends through May 2021. Students can win **Eco-Grants up to \$1,000** and complete the campaign 100% virtually. A **\$500 stipend** will be provided to the first 25 adult facilitators who register, finish training, and guide their team to complete the campaign.

Green Thumb Challenge Grant: Available for established youth garden projects nationwide. Schools and youth groups are eligible to win **\$500. Deadline: Sept. 30.**

Annie's Garden Grants: Annie's wants to help schools build their own gardens. This grant will provide funding for edible school gardens. **Deadline: Nov. 2.**

Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grants: Involve your students in hands-on natural resources stewardship. Projects for this IL Department of Natural Resources grant must emphasize student involvement and wildlife habitat. Maximum award is **\$1,000 per applicant**. Teachers, nature center personnel, and youth group leaders (prekindergarten-12) may apply. **Preliminary (optional) deadline: Oct. 31. Final deadline: Nov. 20.**

Outfit your remote or in-school learning space with help from CCRx



surplus, and share. CCRx believes that "trash is just a failure of imagination."

The Creative Chicago Reuse Exchange (CCRx) is a nonprofit that solicits donations of surplus materials, equipment, and supplies for teachers and non-profits. Their goal is to educate and empower the public to reduce waste, rethink

Make an appointment to shop: Wednesdays and Saturdays, up to 5 people can shop for an hour from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The warehouse is located at 2124 W. 82nd Place, Chicago.

Furniture: Office desks, work tables, office chairs and more available for low prices to Chicago teachers and nonprofits. See examples [HERE](#).

Featured items: Dry erase whiteboards, Astroturf, picture frames, costumes, printers, classroom projectors, calculators, pencil sharpeners, microscopes

Get the basics: Fill a small box with pens, pencils, markers, post-its, etc. for \$5. Fill a larger box with office/art supplies, manipulatives, and teacher resources for \$20.

Always free: Binders, office organizers, fabric scraps, books (class sets), workbooks, posters, classroom decor, vinyl banners, and more.

If you have materials to donate or time to volunteer, click [HERE](#).

Pumpkin Smash 2020

The Pumpkin Smash is an annual effort by communities to divert pumpkins from landfills by providing locations for residents to drop-off jack-o-lanterns to be composted. Organized by SCARCE, the event is held each year the Saturday after Halloween. It's a great community sustainability project for **school environmental or service clubs** and community groups.



This year's Pumpkin Smash is Saturday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Site registration opens Aug. 1. Given that this event is held outdoors and can be conducted with minimal contact, SCARCE does not expect to experience disruptions due to COVID-19. All participants are advised to wear a mask and maintain proper social distancing.

Interested in volunteering or even hosting your own site but wondering how it all works? Join SCARCE for a live **webinar on Thursday, Sept. 10, at 3:30 p.m.**, to learn all about the Pumpkin Smash, including how it got started, environmental impact, steps for hosting, volunteer opportunities, and day-of learning fun.

Click [HERE](#) to register for the webinar so you are ready to get smashing!

Compost Awareness Week poster & video contests

This year's International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) theme is Grow, Eat... COMPOST...Repeat.

The poster contest is for 9th grade (age 14) or older. The winning poster will be used to promote International Compost Awareness Week, May 2-8, 2021.

The video contest is for grades 4-8. All video entries will be shown on the ICAW YouTube channel. The winning video will be highlighted on the ICAW website.

Both contests are accepting entries **Sept. 1 - Nov. 2, 2020**. Learn more [HERE](#).



Composting
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Walk to School Day 2020



Since 1997, communities have been coming together for [Walk to School Day](#). This year, the coronavirus pandemic means that travel to school may be different than prior years. In some places, schools are open and students are able to walk and roll to school. In other places, the school trip might just be to the living room.

Regardless, the reasons for participating remain the same, with physical activity, safety, and social connectedness rising to the top. While **Oct. 7** is officially Walk to School Day, celebrate any day in October and in a way that fits with local public health guidance.

Click [HERE](#) for 20 ideas for celebrating Walk to School Day in 2020.

Illinois Harvest of the Month is registration-free

[Illinois Harvest of the Month](#) is now registration-free to all Illinois feeding, garden, and education sites. You'll have access to technical assistance and virtual learning sessions, including virtual farm tours that you can share with teachers.



Illinois Harvest of the Month celebrates a different in-season, locally grown food item every month. Registered 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.

The Great Apple Crunch 2020

It's official--the [Illinois Great Apple Crunch](#) will take place on Oct. 8, and registration is now open. All K-12 schools, early childhood sites, and organizations across Illinois can sign up to crunch! into local apples. Discover the many ways you can celebrate. Should your site not reopen for in-person learning before October, the Great Apple Crunch will share "Apple Crunch Boxed" tools to continue participation in the Crunch at home.



Events



[Faith in Place's Virtual Green Team Summit](#)

Sept. 13-17

Explore how interconnected our world is with people of faith who care about the environment and justice. Connect the dots between the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and racial justice through free workshops.



[Center for Green Schools' COVID webinar series](#)

[Mental Health and Resiliency in the Time of COVID](#)

Sept. 15, 2-3 p.m. CST

[Pivoting Sustainability Programming in the Time of COVID](#)

Sept. 22, 2-3 p.m. CST

Check out recordings of the [previous webinars](#) in the series (scroll to the bottom of the page).



[Go Green Illinois Schools Fall Meeting](#)

Sept. 15, 4-5 p.m.

Join GGIL's fall meeting when the Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI) will share national best practices in reopening schools and the importance of utilizing outdoor learning spaces as a tool for healthy and engaging learning. Co-presented by EEAI's Abbie Enlund & Meghan Bowe.



[GreenTown: Climate Crisis](#)

Sept. 23 & 30

Co-produced by SGA and a5 Inc, this virtual event includes breakout sessions, plenary presentations, pre-event film screenings, and panel discussions centered on the connection between climate solutions and equity with

a focus on Cook County.



[Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act - Update & Webinar](#)

Sept. 29, 5 p.m. CST

Learn about this promising new bill (SB 3263/ HR 5845) that addresses the rapidly growing plastic pollution crisis. Join Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) and other congressional leaders for this interactive webinar. Moderated by Beyond Plastics' president, Judith Enck.

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