



## OCTOBER 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](#)

### Green Your Halloween Guide



Halloween may need to be a little different this year, but there are still many ways to celebrate.

From pumpkins to costumes to decorations, we can all enjoy a more environmentally-sustainable Halloween and still have fun.

Promote zero waste for the planet and save money with SGA's [Green Your Halloween Guide](#).

### Apply to be a 2021 Green Ribbon School

The [Illinois Green Ribbon Schools Application](#) is now open! Illinois Green Ribbon Schools recognizes PreK-12 schools that have active programs and actions to promote and educate students on sustainability. This year the evaluation process will take into account the changes and challenges this school year has presented. Applications can highlight pre-COVID sustainability efforts, as well as any current work being done to move these efforts forward.



Top scoring schools from Illinois will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools program for consideration at the national level.

- Attend the Illinois Green Alliance's [webinar](#) on Nov. 4 to learn more about the application/nomination process, including a basic timeline and best practices for Illinois schools to apply.
- Contact Illinois Green Alliance for technical assistance at [info@illinoisgreenalliance.org](mailto:info@illinoisgreenalliance.org) or (312) 245-8300.

**Application deadline: Feb. 8 at 5 p.m.**

The Pumpkin Smash is an annual effort 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 project for school environmental or service clubs** and community groups. Since the first collection event in 2014, the Pumpkin Smash has diverted over 377 tons of pumpkins from landfills.



This year's Pumpkin Smash is **Saturday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Site registration is now open. 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.

Learn more or find an event site [HERE](#).

Interested in volunteering or even hosting your own site but wondering how it all works? Check out SCARCE's [Pumpkin Smash Guide](#) so you are ready to get smashing!

## Fall offerings from the Illinois Green Alliance



### The Illinois Green Schools Project

Our friends at the Illinois Green Alliance just announced their exciting new program: a project-based challenge for K-12 schools to “devise and implement creative no- to low-cost energy, water and waste initiatives, and sustainable practices for their schools.” Schools can join virtually or

from their school building and will be matched with a mentor who will provide them support and guidance along the way.

**Registration is open through Dec. 14.**

### Green Schools Webinar Series

Join Illinois Green Alliance on Wednesdays this fall to find out more about the Illinois Green Schools Project and to learn best practices and resources for greening your school:

- Oct. 14, 3:30 p.m. - *Forming a Green Team at Your School*
- Oct. 21, 3:30 p.m. - *Taking a Whole-School Sustainability Approach*
- Oct. 28, 3:30 p.m. - *Tracking Sustainability Progress at Your School*
- Nov. 4, 3:30 p.m. - *Earning Recognition for Your Green Schools Work*
- Nov. 18, 3:30 p.m. - *Connecting Students to Green Building Careers*

Click on link above to register.

## September Green Schools Catalyst Quarterly



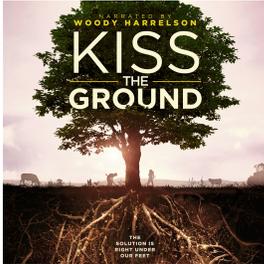
The Green Schools National Network's most recent issue of the [Green School Catalyst Quarterly](#) explores the role that green, healthy, and sustainable schools can play in a post-COVID-19 world. Thought-leaders share insights about how we can rethink the future of schools by changing operations, curriculum, and culture resulting in more sustainable and equitable schools. They make the case for how whole school sustainability can save money, provide healthier and safer learning environments, enhance community resilience, and offer real-world learning experiences that will prepare students for an uncertain future.

## Food Waste in Rural Schools

Iowa Waste Reduction Center at Northern Iowa University has released a new [whitepaper](#) detailing food waste at K-12 schools in rural Iowa. The whitepaper analyzes data collected over the last five years of providing direct assistance to K-12 schools across the state in the fight against food waste.



## Kiss the Ground, the movie



[Kiss the Ground, the movie](#), is now available for viewing on Netflix. The film demonstrates that by “regenerating the world’s soils, we can completely and rapidly stabilize Earth’s climate, restore lost ecosystems and create abundant food supplies.” Watch to learn why soil is the missing piece of the climate puzzle.

Beginning Oct. 22, you can help spread the news about regeneration by hosting a screening in your community. If you are a student, educator, or administrator, you can arrange a free

[Educator’s Edition screening](#) for your school.

Click [HERE](#) to view the movie trailer and Kiss the Ground's other inspiring videos about soil health and composting.

## Young Filmmakers & The One Earth Film Festival

### Young Filmmakers Contest 2021

The [Young Filmmakers Contest](#) is now open for submissions. Youth in grades 3 through age 25 are invited to submit a short film that presents solutions to an environmental/sustainability related issue.



Submissions are due by midnight on **Jan. 5, 2021**. The winning films will premiere at the [One Earth Film Festival](#) in March 2021, and winners will receive cash prizes or scholarships.

### Young Filmmakers Online Academy

The new Young Filmmakers Online Academy for students in grades 3-8 takes the most up-to-date filmmaking pedagogy and distills it into a series that covers Pre-Production, Production, and Post-Production. The course includes a series of short videos that explain all the major concepts involved in filmmaking along with supplemental materials, such as storyboards. Only cell phones or tablets with editing software are required.



This series is for individuals and classrooms to use on their own or synchronously. Click [HERE](#) to learn more and to enroll in a course.

## “Let’s Shrink Food Waste Mountain”



The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) recently launched its “Let’s Shrink Food Waste Mountain” awareness campaign, which aims to address the issue of food waste in North America (Canada, Mexico and United States). By educating youth about the impact of food loss and waste, the CEC hopes to inspire everyday behavior changes. Check out their easy-to-use tools,

including a series of e-learning videos. These resources will help youth better understand the problem of food waste and will provide them the tools to be part of the solution to the problem.

To learn more and to download the *Food Matters Action Kit*, click [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](mailto:bheineken@recycle.com)
- Debra Dodson (MN, WI, western U.S.): [ddodson1@mac.com](mailto:ddodson1@mac.com)
- Michele Wagner (Rocky Mountain region, central southern U.S.): [micheleawagner@gmail.com](mailto:micheleawagner@gmail.com)

**Annie's Garden Grants:** 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 (pre-kindergarten-12) may apply. **Preliminary (optional) deadline: Oct. 31. Final deadline: Nov. 20.**

## Compost Awareness Week poster & video contests

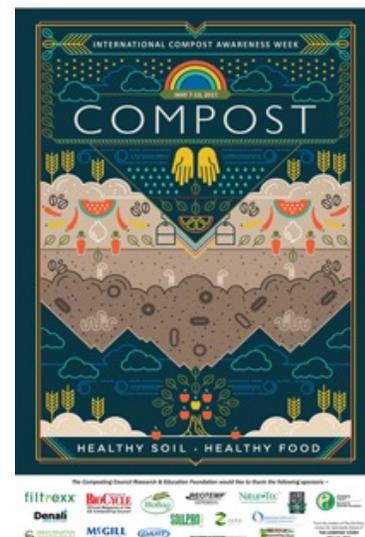
This year's International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) theme is Grow, Eat...COMPOST...Repeat.

**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](#).

ICAW is a program of the [Composting Council Research and Education Foundation](#).



## SWANCC educators offer virtual presentations



The Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) has provided educational resources to schools since 1993 and will continue to do so during these challenging times.

SWANCC is now offering online presentations for students in Grades PreK-12. Educators

may schedule a presentation (through Zoom, Google Meet, or other platform) or request a recorded video presentation. Concepts include the environmental R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and are correlated to NGSS standards. There is no cost for this program, but teachers must pre-register and schools must be located in a [SWANCC-member community](#).

How to schedule a virtual presentation:

- **Grades PreK-2** "Taking Care of Our Earth" presentation: Contact Theresa Greinig, [theresa@swancc.org](mailto:theresa@swancc.org), 847-724-920 x 212
- **Grades 3-12**: Contact Mary Allen, [mary@swancc.org](mailto:mary@swancc.org), 847-724-9205 x 204

## Events



### Oaktober

#### **Throughout the month of October**

October has been officially proclaimed OAKtober-Oak Awareness Month. Celebrate oaks and oak ecosystems across Illinois throughout the month by participating in one of many events.



### Cook County Food Summit

**Oct. 14-16**

This three-day event will provide a progress update on the County's Good Food Purchasing Policy and will focus on strategies for building a more racially and socially equitable food system in Cook County.



### Center for Green Schools' COVID Webinar Series

October - *How to Take Project Based Learning Virtual*  
November - *The Future of the Green Schools Movement*  
December - *Retro-Commissioning: School Energy & Health Improvements*  
(scroll to bottom of their page for details)



### Healthy Green Schools & Colleges Webinar Series

**Oct. 22, 12-1 p.m. - COVID-19 Update for K-12 Webinar**  
**Oct 27, 12-1 p.m. - COVID-19 Update for Higher Education Webinar**  
**Oct. 29, 12-2 p.m. - COVID-19 Update for Schools Webinar**  
Healthy Green Schools & Colleges Committee members will share their reopening success stories and biggest challenges and will provide real-time answers to your questions.

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