



# 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.

Share the newsletter with friends, colleagues, and students interested in zero waste.

[Sign up for ZWS news](#)

## C4 and Cook County Composting and Recycling: Engaging Schools and Governments

Recent heat, drought, and air quality issues in the Chicago area underscored the vital importance of this year's GreenTown: Climate and Equity conference. Held on June 22nd at Triton College, the conference brought together sustainability advocates from communities throughout Chicagoland and beyond. Among the topics of the day were renewable energy, active transportation, and decarbonization.

Seven Generations Ahead's (SGA) Zero Waste Schools (ZWS) Program Manager Becky Brodsky and SGA Program Director Jen Nelson led an informative session on engaging schools and municipal governments in recycling, composting, and waste reduction initiatives. Read full article [HERE](#).



## Plastic Free July

[Plastic Free July](#) is the global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution. Here are some ways you can start going plastic-free or help your school go plastic-free.

- Take the [Plastic Free July Challenge](#).
- Start planning ways to transition your school from single-use plastics to reusable food ware with the Center for Environmental Health's [Ditching](#)



## [Disposables: A Toolkit for Healthier Foodware in K-12 Schools.](#)

- Connect with [Plastic Free Restaurants](#) to learn more about their cash subsidy to help schools switch from single-use plastics to reusables.
- Get more ideas for reducing single-use plastic in every area of your life with the [Plastic Free Eco-Challenge](#).
- Watch [inspiring videos](#) about plastic waste solutions.
- Register for the [Beyond Plastic Pollution virtual class](#) with Judith Enck.
- Sign up for a [Shedd Aquarium Action Day](#).

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## Host a screening of "Microplastic Madness" in honor of Plastic Free July



Plastic Free July is the perfect time to bring the award-winning film, [Microplastic Madness](#), to your community. Host a screening at your school, local library, park district, or house of worship to ignite conversation and action.

'Microplastic Madness' is the story of 56 fifth graders from Red Hook, Brooklyn -- living on the frontline of the climate crisis -- whose actions on plastic pollution morph into extraordinary leadership and scalable victories. Created to inspire kids, teachers, and policy makers alike, this is the spark needed to grow a youth-led Plastic Free Future movement in schools everywhere.

Sign up to host a screening [HERE](#).

The film was produced by Cafeteria Culture. Check out their Microplastic Madness Toolkit [HERE](#).

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## *The Blue Paradox*

### **Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago**

In honor of Plastic Free July, pay a visit to the new exhibit, [The Blue Paradox](#), at the Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago. "The Blue Paradox is a powerful, immersive experience taking you below the ocean's surface to explore the impact plastic pollution has had on our planet's largest ecosystem. The paradox? Our use of plastic in daily life has led modern society to advances and convenience, but also to one of our planet's biggest pollution issues."

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about the problem of plastic pollution and to get inspired to take immediate action!

Photo by [Naja Bertolt Jensen](#) on [Unsplash](#)



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## "Composting Food Scraps in Your Community: A Social Marketing Toolkit"



The [EPA](#) has released a [toolkit](#) to encourage residents to start composting their food scraps. This toolkit can help communities at different stages of their composting journeys - whether it's launching a new food scrap composting program, increasing participation in existing food scrap composting programs, or reducing contamination in a compost collection stream.

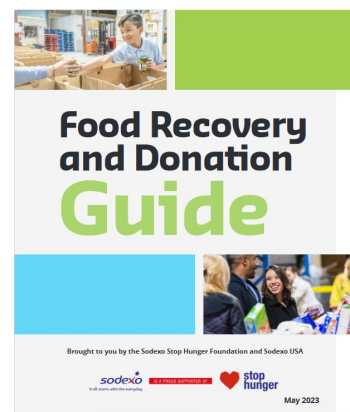
The toolkit also walks through the steps it takes to design a community behavior change campaign and provides customizable campaign materials from communities and organizations that have implemented successful food scrap composting programs. These communities include the King County Solid Waste Division, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, and the Metro Vancouver Regional District.

## Sodexo's Food Recovery and Donation Guide

[Sodexo USA](#) and the [Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation](#) have been reducing food loss in their operations by donating meals to those in need and recently released the [Food Recovery & Donation Guide](#) aimed at assisting other food service operators in doing the same.

Throwing away edible food wastes money and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions while much of this food could be used to feed hungry people.

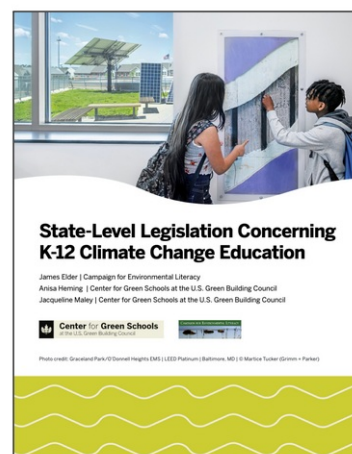
The *Food Recovery & Donation Guide* shares Sodexo's food recovery journey and lessons learned in order to help other food service establishments build successful food recovery programs that are efficient, effective, and safe.



## State-Level Legislation Concerning K-12 Climate Change Education

On June 22, 2023, the [Center for Green Schools](#) with the [Campaign for Environmental Literacy](#) published a [report](#) examining how state legislation can help prepare students for the climate crisis. The report demonstrates how implementing state legislation can play an important role in making climate change education more accessible to all students and provides the following resources:

- Detailed talking points with citations for making the case for this type of legislation
- Essential elements of climate change education legislation
- Model state bill framework
- Examples of legislation that supports climate change education in the formal K-12 education system



The report profiles California, Maine, New Jersey, Washington, and Connecticut and how their state-level legislation has influenced the teaching of both the scientific and human aspects of climate change while increasing students' understanding of the climate crisis.

# ISBE's Local Food in Schools allotments



## Wondering how much money you can receive through the Local Food in Schools grant application?

The Illinois School Board of Education (ISBE) has posted a [list of allotments](#) for all National School Lunch and National Breakfast programs in Illinois. The email invite to fill out the application will be delivered to your SFA's email box in mid-May.

This grant will help schools in Illinois access and purchase domestic local foods for distribution in the lunchroom. This program will strengthen the food system for schools and help to build a resilient local food chain and expand local and regional markets with an emphasis

on purchasing from historically underserved producers and processors.

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## Grants and other opportunities

**[Whole Kids Foundation Salad Bar Grant](#)** Any district or independent school participating in the National School Lunch Program can apply. The grant program donates salad bars to U.S. schools to give kids daily access to fresh fruits and vegetables. **Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.**

### **[Summer Adventures with the Lake County Forest Preserves](#)**

Hands-on nature and history education programs for children and teenagers ages 4–16. Programs range from consecutive 3-day and 5-day options to programs you can experience with your child. Program prices vary. Partial scholarships are available in the case of financial hardship.

### **[Leaders in Air Quality & School Sustainability Fellowship Programs](#)**

The Center for Green Schools selects fellows from school systems around the country to participate in peer networking, targeted professional development, and leadership training, and attend professional learning events such as the Green Schools Conference.

- Leaders in Sustainability Fellowship: provides support to K-12 sustainability professionals working to improve the operations and/or curriculum across a school system or district. [Learn more and apply.](#)
- Leaders in Air Quality Fellowship: provides support to K-12 professionals specifically working on indoor air quality and environmental health within school systems. [Learn more and apply.](#)

**Applications are due by July 21, 2023.**

### **[Green Our Planet Grant Programs](#)**

Green Our Planet is providing grants to 250 schools this fall to help fund the implementation of the [HydroConnect STEM Program](#) and the [GardenConnect STEM Program](#) in schools! **Applications are due by July 21, 2023.**

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## Events

### **[Federal funding for Equipment Installation or Replacement at K-12 Schools](#)**

**July 20, 11:00 a.m. cst**

This webinar will discuss utilizing federal incentives for the installation or replacement of a single-building system. The session will also review labor provisions and controls an entity may want to put in place to ensure compliance.

### **[ISBE Back to School Conference](#)**

**July 25 & 26, Springfield, IL**

Illinois Farm to School Network will host a table answering questions and supplying much-needed info at the ISBE Back to School Conference. A "Local Food for Schools" session is being offered on **July 26 at 8**

a.m. To register, click [HERE](#).

### Federal Funding for School Renovation and New Construction

**Aug. 2, 11:00 a.m. cst**

This webinar will explore the use of federal incentives for school renovations or new construction that includes lighting, windows, and HVAC replacement.

### Unanswered Questions: Series Speakers “Get Back to You on That”

**Aug. 30, 11:00 a.m. cst**

This webinar will identify at the end of each session what questions and concerns remain unanswered. The Center for Green Schools will invite previous speakers to address these unmet needs during the final session.

Seven Generations Ahead | [Email](#) | [Website](#)



This newsletter was created by **Seven Generations Ahead**.  
Funding for Zero Waste Schools is provided by **Peoples Gas, North Shore Gas, and Food:Land:Opportunity**, a collaboration between Kinship Foundation and The Chicago Community Trust and funded through the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust.

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