

January 2018 Newsletter

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"Thank you for this great learning tool. We have learned so much about composting and look forward to learning more."

- Ms. Nikki Rupu, Centerville Elementary School, Beverly

Happy New Year, GREEN TEAM Teachers!

We hope your students are taking action to help the environment as we kick off 2018! Don't forget to share your students' waste reduction, energy conservation, and pollution prevention activities using the Teacher Response Form. Please submit your form [online](#) or mail in the [printable version](#) by **March 31** so that your students can receive prizes - such as a garden center gift certificate or a school-wide performance by an edutainer - to recognize their work!

The beginning of a new year is a great time to encourage your students to take [THE GREEN TEAM PLEDGE](#). This activity motivates students to take action at home and at school to help protect the environment.

GREEN TEAM Spotlight

At **Centerville Elementary School** in Beverly, second graders are using their new composter from THE GREEN TEAM to learn the difference between bio-degradable and non-biodegradable materials.

Students have been collecting fruit and vegetable scraps from the cafeteria and raking leaves from the school yard to add to the bin.



Second graders at Centerville Elementary School add food scraps and water to their composter.



Centerville Elementary STEAM Integrator Nikki Rupu helps students assemble their new GREEN TEAM compost bin

Students at **STEM Middle Academy** in Springfield are motivated to make the planet cleaner, greener, and less polluted for the next generation. The student-led STEM Green Team is empowered by faculty volunteers to reduce waste, prevent hunger, and teach others how going green can benefit our communities and society. They established a goal of consistently diverting 8 pounds of compostable material for every 1 pound of trash generated, which they accomplish by donating surplus food to a local homeless shelter and composting food scraps.



Students at STEM Middle Academy in Springfield are working hard to reduce the amount of waste that travels to landfills.

Last spring, students from the University of Massachusetts Amherst volunteered with **Four Corners Elementary School** and **Federal Street Elementary School** in Greenfield as part of their Sustainability Leadership Project. UMass volunteers helped the elementary students learn how to sort their trash, recycling, and compostable items into the appropriate bins to reduce waste sent to landfills. Check out the excellent [video](#) below showcasing this beneficial partnership between Greenfield Schools and UMass Amherst.



Greenfield Schools elementary students learn about preventing waste in the cafeteria from UMass Amherst volunteers and Amy Donovan, Program Director for the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

GREEN TEAM in the Media

Wicked Local Arlington reports that **Dallin** and **Brackett Elementary Schools** in Arlington [helped collect 3,000 pounds of pumpkins](#) after Halloween, which were taken to Davidian Farm in Northborough for composting.

The Town of Wellesley recently issued a press release describing how **Wellesley Public Schools** are participating in a [collaborative food rescue program](#), which will donate an estimated 20,000 meals to people in need this year.

Wicked Local Needham reported on the Girls in STEM Club at **Minuteman High School** in Lexington, which recently [launched a new textile recycling program](#) through a partnership with Bay State Textiles.

School Programs, Events, Competitions, and Professional Development

Mark your calendars with these grant opportunities, workshops, conferences and more!

January 15 – Application deadline for the [Captain Planet Foundation's ecoSolution Grants](#). Grants of up to \$2,500 are available to help support environment-focused, project-based activities performed by young people.

January 22 – [Application deadline for Roots and Shoots Mini-Grants](#). Educators are invited to apply for a mini-grant to start, support, or celebrate the service campaigns of their schools or students.

January 24 – [Museum Institute for Teaching Science \(MITS\) 2018 Professional Development Seminar Series: Extreme Events and Climate Change: What We Know and Some Ideas About What to Do About It](#) and [How We Know What We Know: Using Real-World Data to Explore Key Climate Concepts](#). First of four full-day sessions, exploring STEM content areas in the morning and skill-based hands-on activities in the afternoon.

February 9 – [Mass Envirothon Winter Workshop](#) for teams and coaches. Topics will include soil, forests, water, and wildlife.

February 14 – [Museum Institute for Teaching Science \(MITS\) 2018 Professional Development Seminar Series: Developing a Taste for Molecular Biology and Sharing Science: Connecting Scientists and Engineers with the Public](#). Second of four full-day sessions, exploring STEM content areas in the morning and skill-based hands-on activities in the afternoon.

February 15 – Registration deadline for [Mass Envirothon 2018](#). This program challenges high-school aged young people to get outdoors and explore while testing their environmental knowledge.

February 16 – Deadline to [register](#) for New England Aquarium **Climate Science for Educators workshop** on **Feb 21-22**.

February 21-22 – New England Aquarium [Climate Science for Educators](#) workshop. This two-day workshop will examine the use and distribution of natural resources, the effects humans have on the climate, current and future natural disasters, and the ways humans are developing solutions to climate change.

February 22 – Submission deadline for [World of 7 Billion Student Video Contest](#). Students must create a short video about human population growth that highlights a global challenge.

March 1 – [President's Environmental Youth Award](#) application deadline. This program honors a wide variety of projects developed by young individuals, school classes, summer camps, public interest groups, and youth organizations to promote environmental awareness.

March 7 – [Massachusetts Environmental Education Society \(MEES\) 2018 Conference](#). The MEES conference brings together environmental educators from across the state to network and learn new skills.

March 26 – [MassRecycle R3 Conference](#). The R3 Conference is the biggest annual recycling and organics conference in Massachusetts, and one of the biggest state conferences in the nation. At R3, MassRecycle fosters discussion on issues that affect recycling, reuse, and waste reduction, and provides a venue to convene individuals from all sectors.

March 28 – [Museum Institute for Teaching Science \(MITS\) 2018 Professional Development Seminar Series: Dig In: Strengthening Sustainability Learning Through Farm-to-School Connections](#). Third of four full-day sessions, exploring STEM content areas in the morning and skill-based hands-on activities in the afternoon.

March 31 – Deadline to submit **THE GREEN TEAM** [Teacher Response Form](#) to report your students' activities and receive a Certificate of Recognition and student prizes to recognize their work.

April 24 – [Museum Institute for Teaching Science \(MITS\) 2018 Professional Development Seminar Series: The Technology, Data and People Behind Forecasting in the National Weather Service and Engaging Students with Weather & Climate Through Media](#). Final of four full-day sessions, exploring STEM content areas in the morning and skill-based hands-on activities in the afternoon.

May 18 – [Massachusetts Envirothon 2018](#). Save the date for this year's Massachusetts Envirothon, at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge.

Other Resources

The Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) [December 2017 News Bulletin](#) describes how NERC has found success providing training, technical assistance, and outreach to promote waste diversion in rural schools in Bennington County, VT.

The Packer recently reported on a new study finding that children attending schools with a Farm to School program [threw away less food and consumed more fruits and vegetables](#) than the average student consumed before their school adopted the program.

The GREEN TEAM wishes your school a happy and healthy start to 2018!

Emily Fabel

Green Team Program Administrator

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Contact Us:

Tel: (413) 586-7350 ext. 290

Fax: (413) 586-7351

Email: recycle@thegreenteam.org