



January 2020 Newsletter

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Presented by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

“As a group, the Green Team received acknowledgement that their passion and efforts were truly important and influencing the greater student body.”

– Peter Afanasiw, Cohasset High School, Cohasset

Happy New Year, GREEN TEAM Teachers!

We hope your students are taking action to help the environment as we kick off 2020! 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 New Year is a great time to encourage your students to take [THE GREEN TEAM PLEDGE](#). This activity encourages students to act at home or at school to help protect the environment. During the 2018-2019 school year, more than 4,350 students took the pledge.

Making Your School an Idle-Free Zone This Winter

On cold winter days, drivers often make the mistake of idling their cars to stay warm. The GREEN TEAM [Clean Air Activities](#) (PDF) teaches students:

- The concept of air quality and how it affects health
- How vehicle exhaust contributes to air pollution

- Ways students and their families can take action to improve air quality

Students can also get their parents involved by encouraging them to sign a [GREEN TEAM Idling Reduction Pledge](#), in which they promise to turn off their vehicle's engine when waiting to pick up their child or running errands.



GREEN TEAM Spotlight

Thomson Elementary School, Kittredge Elementary School, and North Andover Middle School in North Andover [started successful cafeteria composting programs](#) with the aid of a MassDEP [Sustainable Materials Recovery Program](#) (SMRP) Grant. In 2019, North Andover received the MassDEP's SMRP Grant in the amount of \$30,000 to be distributed over the next 3 years. With this funding, the schools initiated composting programs with a local organics hauler. Students source separate their food waste in the cafeteria; this food waste is then transported by the custodial staff to an outdoor compost bin, where it is picked up by a local hauler that turns it into compost. The program has seen great success so far, as well as a reduction of trash going out, and the schools have been able to incorporate the program into the district's R.A.I.S.E. (Respect, Achievement, Inclusion, Service, Empathy) initiative.



*Green Team students from **Thomson Elementary School** in North Andover separating food waste in their cafeteria.*

Throughout the school year, send us photos and stories about the great work you are doing to share in [THE GREEN TEAM Photo Gallery](#) and [THE GREEN TEAM Spotlight!](#)

GREEN TEAM in the Media

Wicked Local reported on [Westwood Elementary Schools'](#) lunchroom composting program, which was launched this fall. At present, three schools in the district have fully implemented the composting system. Rather than simply having one large trash can into which all waste goes, students are now taught how to separate everything at the end of their lunch period. Liquids are emptied into a bucket and eventually poured down the drain. Leftover food and any organic material is put into a compost bucket, plastic or paper that can be recycled is put into a recycle bin, and any remaining trash is put in the trash barrel. The compostable material is picked up by a local hauler for composting off-site, and finished compost will be returned to the school.

[yourArlington.com](#) featured a story on the series of climate change rallies being held by [Arlington Public Schools](#). On December 13, Green Team students met with Rep. Sean Garballey at the Massachusetts State House to advocate for climate legislation.

[iberkshires.com](#) published an article about [Youth Center Inc.'s](#) Green Team Members who made ornaments in the shape of recycling bins to promote recycling in their homes and community. The

ornaments were then presented to their town's solid waste management district members, commissioners, and vendors.

If your school is covered in the local media, let us know and we'll add it to [THE GREEN TEAM in the Media!](#)

School Programs, Events, Competitions, and Professional Development

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

January 6 – Application Deadline for the EPA's [Environmental Education Grants](#). This program supports environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship. The grants provide financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques.

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 15 – Application Deadline for the EPA's 2020 [President's Environmental Youth Award](#) (PEYA) program, and the [Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators](#) (PIAEE). The PEYA program recognizes outstanding environmental stewardship projects by K-12 youth, promoting awareness of our nation's natural resources and encouraging positive community involvement. The PIAEE recognizes outstanding kindergarten through grade 12 teachers who employ innovative approaches to environmental education and use the environment as a context for learning for their students.

January 16 – The Wade Institute for Science Education will be offering a [Professional Development Seminar Series](#) designed for the education staff and volunteers from science, environmental, natural history, technology, art, history, and other cultural institutions and centers in New England. The first full day seminar will feature sessions on **Ornithology and Our Changing Environment: Understanding Climate Change Through Bird Research** as well as **Spark Creativity and Fuel Innovation by Teaching Students to Ask Their Own Questions**.

January 29 – [Register](#) for a free informational webinar about THE GREEN TEAM program from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Learn more about how your school and classroom can benefit from THE GREEN TEAM resources, including free curricula, lesson plans & activities, composting & idling reduction equipment, and recognition & prizes for your students!

January 30 – Request for Proposals deadline for the [2020 Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program](#). The program funds projects focused on ecological improvements along with targeted community outreach, education, and stewardship. Grants should span 12 to 18 months in length, with a start date in late summer/early fall. Awards range from \$20,000 to \$50,000 and 40-50 grants are awarded per year.

February 6 – [The Wade Institute for Science Education's Professional Development Seminar Series](#) second group of seminars will feature sessions on **Insights Into Climate Change From Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) Sites** and **Digging Into Data Analysis**.

February 14 – Registration deadline for the Wade Institute for Science Education [Hybrid Professional Development Institute](#) for middle and high school teachers focusing on issues related to climate change education. This professional development opportunity runs from February 24 to May 8 and is entitled **Our Climate, Our Communities: Science, Systems, and Solutions**. It features online and on-site classes with leading scientists working on climate change issues.

February 27 – 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 4 – [Massachusetts Environmental Education Society \(MEES\) 2020 Conference](#). The MEES conference brings together environmental educators from across the state to network and learn new skills. This year, THE GREEN TEAM will offer a workshop “On-Site Composting for Sustainability and Science” on how to compost outdoors at your school and how to make a worm bin for indoor composting in the classroom. Bring a 14 gallon or larger plastic storage bin to make a worm bin. Worms provided free!

March 12 – [The Wade Institute for Science Education's Professional Development Seminar Series](#) third day will feature the full day seminar: ***Becoming a 21st Century Organization For All***.

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 2 – [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.

April 6 – Deadline to submit THE GREEN TEAM [recycling equipment application](#) for the April 8 distribution day to be held in Boston. (Equipment requests for the Amherst and Pittsfield equipment locations may be submitted at any time).

April 8 – [Distribution day](#) for THE GREEN TEAM recycling equipment for schools in the Boston area. Register for [THE GREEN TEAM](#) and submit a [recycling equipment application](#) by April 6 for this distribution.

April 9 – [The Wade Institute for Science Education's Professional Development Seminar Series](#) fourth day will feature seminars with the titles **Weather-Wise, Not Otherwise** and **Phenomena Are Not Always Phenomenal: The Hows and Whys of Engaging Students in Phenomena-Based Instruction**.

Other Resources

[Green Schoolyards Resource Hub](#) offers tools for municipal leaders, administrators, school staff, parents, and community members to advocate for, implement, and steward citywide or school districtwide green schoolyard programs.

[Massachusetts Farm to School](#) recently produced a webinar on [School-Wide Composting and Curricular Tie-ins](#). The [webinar slides](#) were posted to their website along with a [recording of the webinar](#).

The GREEN TEAM wishes your school a safe and happy New Year!

Megan Denardo
GREEN TEAM Program Administrator