



SCHOOLYARD ECOLOGY EXPLORATIONS

Request for Proposals to Create, Enhance and Utilize Schoolyard Nature Areas

This is a request for proposals from K-12 teachers who want to create or enhance a schoolyard garden site. Through the distribution of several grants, the Schoolyard Ecology Exploration (SEE) program at the University of Minnesota seeks to increase K-12 student interest and knowledge about ecological processes through direct observation and authentic inquiry based activities conducted in their schoolyard garden. Funds for these grants are provided by the Northern Environmental Support Trust and Monarchs in the Classroom.

Request for Proposals

There are two types of funding requests for SEE funds:

- ✓ The A request is for a prescribed garden. It is designed to foster success for teachers who are new to gardening or have limited space.
- ✓ The B request is for teachers who have gardening experience or an established schoolyard garden. Funds can be used to make a new garden, or improve an existing garden. Improvement includes better use of the garden through equipment and curriculum.

How to Apply

1. Form a team. A team is a minimum of 2 persons and a maximum of 5, at least one of whom teaches some science. The team will designate a Team Leader who must be tenured and will be the contact person for the team and the administrator of the grant money. The project team may include educators of any discipline or administrators. The team must have the support of the principal, head building engineer and a parent or community member (see forms at end of application).
2. Select either the A or B request, and then complete the appropriate application. A team of teachers, master gardeners, staff and faculty of the University of Minnesota will evaluate proposals. Criteria for judging applications include, but are not limited to: innovative integration of garden use into multiple disciplines, a clear understanding of the implications of managing a garden at a school site, a plan to involve stakeholders in creating and maintaining the garden, a plan to involve many students in outdoor learning, and a knowledgeable garden plan for B proposals.

3. Preference will be given to urban schools, although some awards will be made to schools in out-state or suburban districts. We also encourage all applicants to consider attending the two-week Schoolyard Ecology Exploration summer workshop 2010.
4. The Application must be received by e-mail by December 1, 2009. Notification of awards will be e-mailed to Team Leaders by January 10, 2010.
5. You will need to use the address below to mail the support letters and with the required signatures at the end of the application.

Dr. Karen Oberhauser
University of Minnesota, Dept. FWCB
200 Hodson Hall
1980 Folwell Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55108

6. If your garden is funded we ask that you submit a report of your garden project to receive the final payment of the grant (about 10% of the award). Below are the requirements of the report:
 - a. Before and after photos, preferably electronic, via email or cd
 - b. Receipts for purchases (copies are fine)
 - c. A description of the impact the schoolyard garden has had on student learning and motivation. Please be as specific as possible, using examples of how activities have affected students.
 - d. A description of 3 lessons or activities that utilize the new schoolyard garden space including the number of students involved.
 - e. Samples of student work, if available.

Summary of Schoolyard Ecology Explorations Project

Schoolyard Ecology Explorations (SEE) has grown out of a commitment to support science inquiry in K-12 classrooms. The program seeks to develop students' connections to the natural world by promoting research in their schoolyards, which become the laboratory for both short- and long-term biology and ecology research.

To support this new effort three main initiatives are underway: 1) Grants to support the creation, enhancement and use of nature areas in Minnesota schoolyards, *see attached request form*. 2) The Schoolyard Ecology Exploration summer workshop for teachers. This workshop focuses on techniques for teachers to conduct science inquiry in the schoolyard with their students. 3) A model nature area has been planted on the St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota. This nature area is used by summer workshop participants to practice lessons and serve as a model to advise teachers on the construction, maintenance and use of their school garden.

Schoolyard Ecology Explorations Request "B"

The "B" request was developed for teachers who have an experienced gardener on their team and want to create a unique schoolyard garden or teachers who have a schoolyard garden in need of improvement, including better use through equipment and curriculum. Request "B" provides up to \$1,000 to purchase plants, gardening equipment, curriculum, staff development and any other items that foster connections between K-12 student's and nature. Funds cannot be used for salary or stipends. Please carefully complete all sections of the proposal including the three letters of support. Thank you for your interest!

Team Leader's name:

Other Team Members' name(s):

School name:

School address: City: State: Zip:

Phone number of Team Leader:

FAX number of school:

Email address of Team Leader:

Is your school publicly or privately funded?

Slogan or name for your schoolyard garden project:

Schoolyard Site

Briefly explain why you chose the location of your potential or existing site:

What are the dimensions of your proposed or existing site?

What side of the building is the schoolyard site? *Circle one or two*

North South East West Courtyard

What is the amount of sun available to the site for about 10 hours of a summer day? *Circle one*

Full Sun Partially shaded Full Shade

How will you get water to your site?

Describe the soil on your site: e.g. wet, dry, sand, or clay:

Is there a garden currently planted on your site? (*Circle one and answer below*) YES NO

✓ If yes, please provide a current inventory of species at your site.

✓ If no, what is the current ground cover of your site?

How will students get to the site?

What is the accessibility of your schoolyard site to the surrounding community?

Please include a photo of your proposed site. (This photo can be inserted here into your word file, or put onto a separate page at the end. If you only have a “hard” copy of the photo, please mail it to the address on the cover page, with clear indication of the name of the team leader.)

Planning and Using Your Schoolyard Garden

Please place an X where you will involve different stakeholders in your schoolyard garden project.

	Planning	Promotion	Site Prep	Planting	Maintenance	Summer Care	Improvement
Teachers							
Administration							
Students							
Parents							
Community							

From the chart above describe the involvement of each stakeholder.

Teachers:

Administrators:

Students:

Parents:

Community:

Description of Schoolyard Use

Please describe some of the successes and challenges you have experienced while engaging students in outdoor investigations.

How do you expect to enhance student learning in your schoolyard garden?

In the chart below please describe three projects you plan to carry out in your new or enhanced Schoolyard garden. Include a description of the project, approximate number of students to be impacted and how students will benefit. At least one project should be science inquiry based.

Project Description	Numbers of students	Benefit to students

Evaluation Plan

Describe how you will measure your project's success: (suggestions are; number of projects completed, number of students utilizing the garden, growth of garden, new partnerships established, etc.)

Project Calendar

Please provide a timeline for your proposed schoolyard garden project, year 2010:

January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	



****Please make copies and provide one page for each team member****

Your name:

School name:

Current position and duties:

How long have you been teaching in your current position?

What is the total number of years you have been teaching?

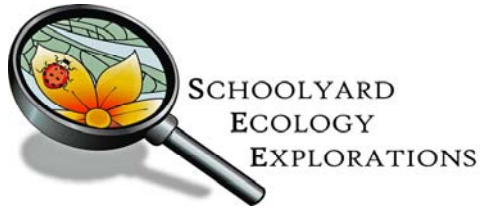
Are you available to participate in the two week Schoolyard Ecology Explorations workshop in the summer of 2008? (*Circle one*) YES NO MAYBE

Please tell us a little about your past and present involvement in innovative teaching programs.

How do you plan to enhance your teaching using your new or improved schoolyard garden?

What is/are your role(s) in planning, planting, promoting, maintaining, and enhancing your new schoolyard garden?

Please describe your commitment to maintain and enhance your schoolyard garden during the school year and summer months.



Principal's commitment of support (print and mail this form)

To be filled in by the Team Leader:

School Name:

Team Leader's name:

Team Member names:

Discuss the project with your principal, and ways that he or she can support this project. Then briefly summarize this support and describe it in the space below. Give the completed form to your principal to sign. Suggested forms of administrative support include:

- ✓ Help receiving and making grant funds accessible to the team.
- ✓ Provision of time needed to successfully plan, plant and maintain the garden. This may include staff development.
- ✓ Coordination of garden plan with building engineers and other personnel affected by the garden.
- ✓ Support in locating a garden site and assuming its permanence.
- ✓ Planning the garden, including timing and involvement of stakeholders.

To be filled in by the Principal:

By signing below, I agree to the proposed project summarized above. I have discussed the project details outlined above with the Team Leader and Members, and agree to support this project.

Principal's name, printed:

Signature:

Additional comments:



Building Engineer's commitment of support (print and mail this form)

To be filled in by the Team Leader:

School Name:

Team Leader's name:

Team Member names:

Discuss the project with your building engineer, and ways that he or she can support this project. Then briefly summarize this support and describe it in the space below. Give the completed form to your building engineer to sign. Suggested forms of engineering support include:

- ✓ Support in planting, maintaining and enhancing the schoolyard garden. (*Watering, mowing, equipment use, snow removal and pilling, etc.*)
- ✓ Coordination of garden plan with all building engineers and other personnel affected by the garden, perhaps building improvement such as painting or window replacement activities.
- ✓ Locating a garden site and assuring its permanence.

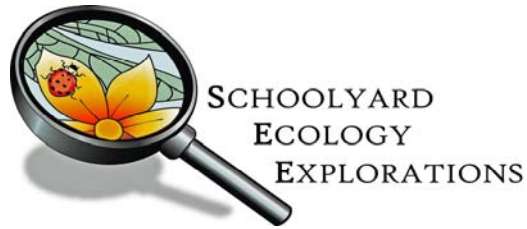
To be filled in by the Building Engineer:

By signing below, I agree to the proposed project summarized above. I have discussed the project details outlined above with the Team Leader and Members, and agree to support this project.

Building Engineer's name, printed:

Signature:

Additional comments:



Parent or Community member's commitment of support (print and mail this form)

To be filled in by the Team Leader:

School Name:

Team Leader's name:

Team Member names:

Discuss the project with the parent or community member, and ways that he or she can support this project. Then briefly summarize this support and describe it in the space below. Give the completed form to your parent or community member to sign. Suggested forms of parent or community support include:

- ✓ Planning the garden.
- ✓ Planting the garden.
- ✓ Helping with garden maintenance, especially during the summer.
- ✓ Providing materials.

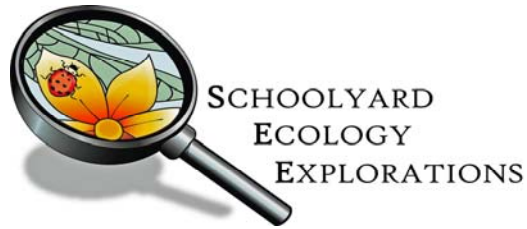
To be filled in by the Community Member or Parent:

By signing below, I agree to the proposed project summarized above. I have discussed the project in detail with the Team Leader and Members, and agree to support this project.

Parent or Community Member's name, printed:

Signature:

Additional comments:



Team Agreement form to provide feedback to Schoolyard Ecology Explorations
(Please print and mail)

If your grant is funded we require the following submissions before the final 10% payment of the grant is mailed. Please read the requirements below and sign below to signify your agreement to provide us with this feed back.

- f. Before and after photos, preferably electronic via email or cd
- g. Receipts for purchases (copies are fine)
- h. A short description of the impact the schoolyard garden has had on student learning and motivation. Please be as specific as possible, using examples of how specific activities have affected students.
- i. A summary of 3 lessons or activities that utilize the new schoolyard garden space including the number of students involved.
- j. Samples of student work, if available.

Your feedback allows us to continue the program. Thank you!

Signature of team leader

date