

## Teaching Science Outdoors: Protecting MI Water

September 12, 2016

### Subject: Opportunity for schoolyard improvement funding

Dear administrators and teachers,

We are pleased to let you know that Kellogg Biological Station has received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency for "Teaching Science Outdoors: A pathway to enhancing K-5 teacher and student environmental education" (TSO-Protecting MI Water). **Our goal is to continue to work with you, recruit new teachers from your school/district to participate in the summer workshop and improve your schoolyard classroom by offering an assessment of the resources and mini-grants to fund improvements and equipment needs.** In this letter, we'd like to describe *TSO-Protecting MI Water* and invite you to join.

**What:** The goal of *TSO-Protecting MI Water* is to increase elementary teachers' ability to integrate environmental education into their science teaching, in line with the new Michigan Science Standards. It funds the week-long professional development workshop for the next two summers, monthly webinars for workshop graduates, schoolyard assessments, and funding for equipment and schoolyard improvements. The expected outcome is to translate classroom experiences into action to protect local water resources. Website:

<http://www.kbs.msu.edu/outreach/elementary-teacher-program/>

**Who:** Elementary teachers in Southwestern Michigan are the primary audience. Mini-grant funding will be awarded to schools located there. However, teachers outside of Southwestern Michigan can attend the PD workshop and the webinars are open to all graduates the TSO. Project leaders: Kara Haas, Kellogg Biological Station and Renee Bayer, CREATE for STEM Institute, both from Michigan State University, and Tali Tal, Technion Israel Institute of Technology. Resource partner: Kalamazoo Nature Center to conduct the schoolyard assessments.

**Timeline:** Monthly webinars will begin in October. Dates and times TBD. Webinars will be recorded.

Mini-grant applications will be due in Fall 2016 (target of Oct. 15) and summer 2017. Mini-grants will be awarded within a month of the application deadline, schools will have 12 months to spend. A final report of how the grant was spent will be due before Fall 2017.

Summer workshop 2017: dates TBD, most likely in late July

**Invitation to participate:** Submit a letter of intent to participate signed by a principal or district administrator by October 1, 2016 to Kara Haas. See template for letter below.

If you have any questions, please contact Kara Haas at [karahaas@msu.edu](mailto:karahaas@msu.edu)

Sincerely,

Kara Haas, Science Education and Outreach Coordinator, W.K. Kellogg Biological Station,  
Michigan State University

Renee Bayer, Associate Director for Engagement, CREATE for STEM Institute, Michigan State University

Tali Tal, Associate Professor, Education in Science and Technology Department, Technion Israel Institute of Technology



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*Letter of Intent Template for participation in Teaching Science Outdoors: Protecting MI Water*

**[School letterhead]**

**Date**

Dear Kara Haas,

Our school, \_\_\_\_\_, plans (or is continuing) to participate in the *Teaching Science Outdoors: Protecting MI Water* project fall 2016-fall 2017.

To fully participate in this opportunity we commit to:

1. Participate in monthly TSO webinars; monthly, schedule TBD
2. Permit Kellogg Biological Station and Kalamazoo Nature Center professionals to conduct a schoolyard assessment to take place in Fall 2016 (approximately 4 hours per schoolyard);
3. Share schoolyard survey information with teachers, students and families to gather input for utilizing the schoolyard to help protect Michigan water; and
4. Submit a proposal (by Oct. 15, 2016) for a mini-grant. Proposals should support the translation of classroom experiences into action to protect local water resources (for example: schoolyard habitat improvements, materials for lessons and outdoor learning, resource protection projects).
5. Encourage teachers to participate in the week-long professional development, late July, 2016 at Kellogg Biological Station

I understand and accept the above expectations and agree to participate in Teaching Science Outdoors: Protecting MI Water

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



W. K. Kellogg  
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**Technion**  
Israel Institute of Technology

