

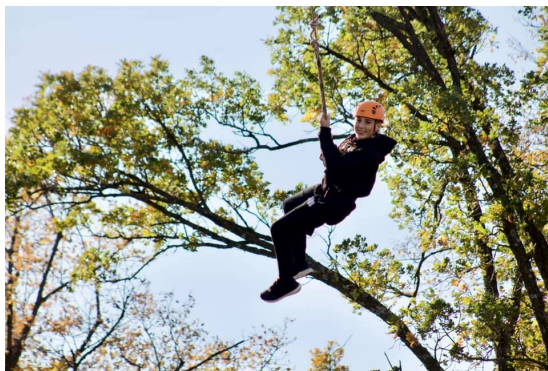


YES! Accomplishments 2019-2020

13th Season of YES!

The 2019-2020 season included 21 amazing teams and 348 students working on 108 projects across the state. This school year, YES! students directly worked with 165 additional students, local businesses, organizations and community members to impact an additional 6,500 students and 6,370 community members.

Since its inception, YES! has supported over 4,300 students in working with over 7,100 local businesses, organizations and community members to impact an additional 126,000 students and 166,000 community members.



During the 2019-2020 season, teams:

- Volunteered for over 3,000 hours
- Organized and participated in 52 educational events in their schools and communities
- Completed 41 community events
- Leveraged over \$60,000 for action projects in their schools and communities



YES! empowers youth to create solutions to today's ecological challenges through community-based hands-on projects to fulfill community needs and build life-long skills.

www.yesmn.org

2019-2020 YES! Team Project Highlights

Carlton

5th year team

Inspired by a YES! Workshop, replaced shower heads in locker-rooms with low flow units, reducing water consumption from 5 to 1.5 gallons per minute. Educated peers about not throwing away silverware in their cafeteria. Participated in a virtual climate strike. Purchased new recycling bins.



Lac qui Parle Valley

12th year team

Worked to restore 38 acres of grassland to native prairie at their school. Recycled almost 400 pounds of markers, holiday lights, and plastic bottles.



Mankato West

9th year team

Replaced 1,333 energy-hungry fluorescent tubes with LED lighting in the school's common areas, saving the school \$5,125 per year and reducing the carbon emitted to power the lights by an estimated 44.82 tons of CO₂ per year. Taught students, families, and staff about the project, the economic and environmental benefits of lighting changes, and how to reduce their carbon footprint.

Discovery Woods (Brainerd)

5th year team

Reduced plastic lunch waste by 50%. Gave fellow students and families tips on reducing single-use plastics, which 94% of survey respondents said reduced their plastic consumption. Educated 5th grade classes about single-use plastics and reducing waste. Created a video to inform the public about single-use plastics.



Edina

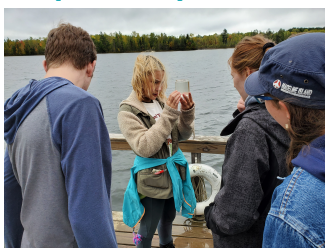
1st year team

Planned a Project Earth Youth Climate Summit. Worked to install a 12-panel solar array at their school after fundraising over \$20,000. Planting a pollinator garden on school grounds. Developed a composting informational kiosk for their school cafeteria.

Harbor City International (Duluth)

2nd year team

Worked to compost all food waste from school lunch. Conducted educational programs for students about pollinators and bats. Cleaned up 300 feet of Lake Superior shoreline. Hosted multiple Earth Week events for students. Conducted an energy audit to deduce how they can reduce energy consumption in their school. Hosted a food and clothing drive. Working to construct planter boxes for fruits and veggies for school lunches.



Minnewaska Schools

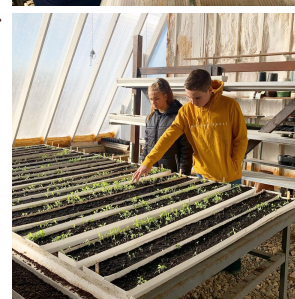
3rd year team

Created signs on composting, recycling, and trash for proper disposal in their lunch room. Participated in aquatic invasive species surveying.

New London-Spicer Middle School

13th year team

Planned an Outdoor Science Day for local elementary students. Planned an Energy Week for Middle School students. Recycled 57 pounds of holiday lights. Harvest lettuce from their greenhouse every week for school lunches. Made beeswax food wraps and lip balms for pollinator and waste reduction awareness and sold them as a fundraiser. Participated in aquatic invasive species surveying.



New London-Spicer High School

3rd year team

Harvested and spread native prairie seeds in their rain garden. Planted over 200 native prairie plugs in their rain garden. Planned an Eco Art Competition.



Hopkins

1st year team

Developed a campaign to encourage their student body to be effective at recycling and composting waste. Worked on the B3 Benchmarking assessment of their school's energy performance and identifying opportunities for energy saving at their school. Planted pollinator flowers on school grounds.

Northern Lights Community (Warba)

6th year team

Participated in two public events to educate the public about aquatic invasive species, specifically the Rusty Patch Crayfish. Continued to compost all food waste at school lunches and delivered for a local farmer in exchange for manure for their greenhouse. Vermi-composted to help feed their aquatic turtles. Grew fruits and vegetables in their greenhouse and garden. Planned a lake cleanup event. Planned a Water Summit for 5th graders. Raised trout and released them into local streams to increase biodiversity.



Pelican Rapids

1st year team

Assessed school and community for water quality and environmental needs. Researched and planned improvements to school-wide recycling, improving recycling rates of plastic from 1% to 20%. Purchased recycling bins for school and educated students and staff about recycling benefits.

Rockford

1st year team

Completed B3 Benchmarking assessment of their school's energy performance, identifying opportunities for saving energy at their school. Planned a prairie restoration/pollinator garden on school grounds.

Royalton

8th year team

Conducted two trainings concerning water quality testing. Planned to test and collected data from Mississippi and Platte rivers and four small tributaries. Conducted three invasive species pulls from school's forest, removing over 200 buckthorn plants. Maintained school's oil collection site. Completed trail preparation at Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.



Sleepy Eye

9th year team

Hosted Energy Conservation Week including daily hands-on displays, announcements, and activities. Collected 996 pounds of holiday lights for recycling. Lead three activity stations during Sleepy Eye's Party in the Park event. Collected and reported water-quality data. Planned interpretive signs about pollinators and native plants to display at prairie plots. Planned improvements to their cafeteria's recycling system.



Springfield

12th year team

Collected 500 pounds of holiday lights for recycling. Filled two large recycling bins with pop tabs for recycling. Collected used mascara wands for Appalachian Wildlife Refuge to be used to remove fly eggs and larva from animal fur and feathers. Planned an organics composting project.



Virginia

3rd year team

Participated in the adopt-a-drain program. Continued their Silver Lake shoreline restoration efforts. Purchased new recycling bins and carts for their school. Created videos of their tour of the St. Louis Recycling Center to educate others about their recycling efforts.

Voyageurs Expeditionary (Bemidji)

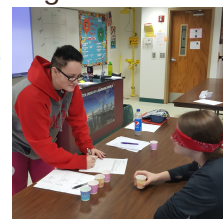
1st year team

Worked to reduce electricity usage and increase recycling rates in their school. Planned rain gardens for their school to avoid yearly flooding.

Westbrook-Walnut Grove

11th year team

Planted native species in school's rain garden. Kept over 350 plastic bags out of landfill by making bracelets out of them, selling 121 at school basketball games. Recycled over 4,200 pounds of waste from school and community. Completed initial training to teach water-quality education to elementary students. Monitored home electric meters, adopting strategies to increase energy-efficiency at home, and sharing with others.



World Learner (Chaska)

1st year team

Built 40 birdhouses from re-claimed materials. Planted pollinator flowers on school grounds to improve bee habitat. Completed B3 school energy benchmarking assessment.



Yellow Medicine East

10th year team

Created a pollinator garden for educational purposes. Worked to maintain their community garden and orchard.





2020 State Award Winners

- 1st Place All Star Award: **Lac qui Parle Valley High School**
- 2nd Place Award: **Sleepy Eye Schools and Northern Lights Community School**
- Water Stewardship Award: **Carlton High School**

Congratulations to all the teams who participated in the competition this year as each teams' dedication, innovation, and passion was evident throughout every project they completed.

"What's neat about YES! is that it creates a permanent bond between the students and the subject matter. It allows kids to get personally involved with their environment"

-YES! coach

"My favorite part of YES! was being able to help my school and the local environment as a student-led group while having access to resources and guidance we wouldn't have had on our own"

-YES! student



In this time of physical distance, we have worked hard to continue to support YES! youth taking action. We executed our first fully online workshop, hosted virtual spring judging, hosted our state awards ceremony via Zoom, and offered various online challenges to inspire and celebrate the work these youth are doing across the state!

"It is incredibly empowering for students to be able to see the changes they are making in their schools, and the education is invaluable"

-YES! student



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