

Zimmerman Agriculture/Natural Resource Educator Grant

This grant is in memorandum of Eldora “Dorie” Zimmerman. Dorie was a lifelong supporter of the Winnebago County SWCD, an advocate for locally led conservation, and very passionate about the education of our natural resources, especially to our youth.

Teachers or educators of grades prekindergarten through 12 in Winnebago County, including home-school teachers, may apply to the Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District to receive funding for natural resources-related field trips; or classroom activity(s)/event(s).

INSTRUCTIONS: Application Requirements and Information

- Grants are available to teachers of grades prekindergarten through 12 schools, home-schooling teachers, or other educators located in Winnebago County, and are awarded for the purpose of studying some aspect of Illinois’ natural resources or agricultural practices/systems. The field trip or in-classroom activity/event should support topics currently being taught in the applicant’s curriculum.
- Items eligible for funding include transportation, admission fees and program fees directly related to the field trip; specific expenses related to the school classroom activity/event.
- This is a \$1,000 maximum grant. Multiple teachers within the same school can collaborate on a field trip or multiple field trips; or in-classroom activities/events to reach this maximum amount.
- One grant distribution period is held per year. Applications are reviewed by a committee and notification will be made no sooner than two weeks after the application deadline. No reimbursement will be made for expenses incurred prior to grant award notification. Funds must be applied before June 1, 2025.
- You must submit the entire application, including attachments. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Omitting ANY required information will result in disqualification. If your application is received by the optional preliminary application date of November 1, 2024, it will be reviewed for the common errors that cause disqualification. You will be notified by e-mail, and given until November 15, 2024 to submit corrections. Items that may cause disqualification include: blanks not completed; narrative incomplete or absent; missing pages; budget incomplete or absent; signature(s) missing; not typing the questions for the narrative section. If the applicant does not submit the missing information by November 15, 2024, the application will be disqualified. Any applicant who submits an application package that is received after November 1, 2024 will not have the opportunity to correct errors.
- Any preliminary recipient must complete a W-9 form prior to the grant being official. If you need assistance with the W-9 form, talk to the business/financial staff members at your school. Do not use the tax exemption number for your school. Home-schooling applicants must use their cooperative organization’s FEIN number or a personal Social Security number on the W-9 form, if there is no cooperative organization. Home-schooling educators are the only applicants allowed to use a personal Social Security number. You can access a blank W-9 form at <http://www.irs.gov/>
- Funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis to the school. Reimbursement will only occur for budget items approved by the judging committee. With the exception of home-schooling teachers who do not have a cooperative organization FEIN, no reimbursement is made to individuals.
- **Timeline**
 - November 1, 2024 – Preliminary Application Date (optional)
 - November 15, 2024 – Application package must be postmarked no later than this date.
 - December 6, 2024 – Notification to all applicants will be made no later than this date. Do not plan a field trip, or purchase material for school classroom activities/events, prior to this date.
 - Funds must be applied before the end of the school year, or June 1, 2025, whichever is earlier.
 - The Final Report is due no later than one month after the date of the field trip; or school classroom activity/event.
- Grants are not transferable. They may not be transferred to another person, school, or grade level.

Funding is administered by the Winnebago County SWCD. For additional information regarding the grant, contact the District at danthonyswcd@comcast.net or 815-965-2392 x3247.