

Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant - Sample Application Seven

The following text illustrates responses to some of the narrative questions on the *Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant* application form. These responses were provided by teachers whose application scored highly with all the reviewers. Please do not copy the responses into your own application form. Read them to see examples of some complete, high-quality responses to the questions. Please note that the application form is revised annually, and the narrative questions in the current application form may not match the narrative questions from the older application form that these responses represent.

Application Seven

1a. In 50 words or less describe the proposed project (who, what, where, when, how).

The middle years IB students will design and install a pollinator garden to extend our outdoor classroom space. The project will be led by the Environmental Club (6th-8th grade students) with all classrooms helping to plant and mulch. The project will be complete by November.

1b. What are your goals for this project (why do you want to implement the project)?

Our goal is to create a healthy habitat for a variety of pollinators. Students will learn about native plants and the importance of pollinators.

1c. How will you measure the success of the project?

The success of the project will be measured by the presence of pollinators visiting the garden. Students will also share what they learned from the project with other students at the school.

2a. What planning activities did the students perform for the project? Be specific.

Students in the Environmental Club will create a base map of the current garden area. Each student will have a plant that they will research and share with the larger class. Once students are familiar with the native plants, they will create a design that includes where the plants will be planted, how many of each and a budget for their design.

2b. What implementation activities will students perform for the project? Be specific.

Students will be involved in the preparation of the garden beds: removing existing vegetation, adding soil, planting and mulching. Once everything is in the ground, students will be responsible for watering the garden and cleaning up the site from the planting day.

2c. What maintenance activities will students perform for the project? Be specific.

Students will be responsible for the initial watering as well as design a watering schedule for the rest of the school year and summer. Students will also host and facilitate bi-weekly weeding days throughout the summer with support from parents and staff.

3a. Describe how the project will enhance the educational use of the area. Please do not list learning standards.

The area will be used as an outdoor classroom space. The garden will be used to enhance learning about butterflies, pollinators and native plants. Students will also learn and participate in environmental stewardship, conservation and sustainability.

4. Describe how the proposed project will positively affect wildlife, improve wildlife habitat and demonstrate relevant ecological concepts.

The project will provide food and habitat throughout the year for a variety of wildlife species. In addition, the project will provide opportunities to learn about best soil management practices, observe decomposition in action, observe the life cycle of pollinators and learn about seeds and how they can be saved and used in other areas of our schoolyard. The importance of using native plants not just for habitat but also as a stormwater management tool to get water into the ground will be stressed.

6. What is your time line for this project? List the major activities associated with development of the project and when you expect to perform them.

March – base map completed

April – design approved; plant list and quantity confirmed; order plants; create plant ID guide

May – prep site; community day; create stewardship schedule for summer

June – plant and mulch garden

7. A long-term care/maintenance plan for the project is imperative.

7a. How will the area be maintained during the school year? Who will do the work?

During the school year, students from the Environmental Club will be responsible for the stewardship of the garden with the assistance of parents, if needed. Opportunities to care for the garden will also be offered to other classes.

7b. How will the area be maintained during the summer? Who will do the work?

Currently, our school has an edible kitchen garden that families take care of during the summer. Families will also be involved to help water and weed. In addition, the Environmental Club will hold stewardship days throughout the summer.

7c. How will the area be maintained in subsequent years? Who will do the work?

Once established, the habitat will need less maintenance than during the first summer. The Environmental Club and the school's Green Team will continue to be active in the sustainability of the habitat.

8. Tell us about the resources that you utilized in preparing for this project and discuss how you will involve other people (teachers, community members, etc.) in the project.

The school engineer will be included in all communication about the project. In the past, he has assisted with stewardship days, specifically in supplying tools and compost bags. Currently there is a working water source near the garden that is accessible as well as two functioning rain barrels. Other staff will be kept up to date about the project's progress, as well as invited to participate in watering and/or

weeding. Volunteers will be important to implementing the project as well as sustaining the project. Volunteers will assist with prepping the site, supervising planting days and assisting with maintenance.