



MINNDEPENDENT

November 2023 Newsletter

Dear Friends of Private and Independent Education,

Normally, I use this monthly communication to relay important information, items that may require attention or opportunities for member school or friends of MINNDEPENDENT to engage in our mission. However, this month I'm compelled to share a personal story.

On October 10, my dad, Bill, passed away at the age of 88. He was the best – the most humble, simple and faithful person I have ever encountered. A product of private education, he was a proud graduate of Nativity of Our Lord (St. Paul) and Cretin High School (now Cretin-Derham Hall). His lifelong friends were from these schools. He had to work to pay for his high school education, due to family circumstances. He cherished his experience and attended his monthly luncheons and reunions until he was not physically able. Fast forward to the 1970's - he and my mom made sacrifices to send my sister and me to private schools. Was it difficult for them? Absolutely. Did they ever question their decision this sacrifice? Never.

Be assured, there are families and donors in your school communities who reflect this commitment to providing a transformative and remarkable education. I share this story to reinforce the impact your school has on students and families. Do not underestimate the mission of your school, or the commitment of your community of supporters.

As we enter this season of gratitude, I want to extend our appreciation for your support, commitment and connection to MINNDEPENDENT. We are humbled by the trust placed in our mission.

Tim Benz, President

MINNDEPENDENT has negotiated a discounted rate for member schools interested in participating in the [#SocialSchool4EDU Membership Program](#).

[READ MORE](#)

MINNDEPENDENT Jobs Board

Member schools can post job listings for free.

[READ MORE](#)

Hats & Mittens is a 26- year- old all volunteer Minnesota non- profit. Their curriculum, focused on volunteering and philanthropy for students of all ages, is being offered free of charge to schools, churches, and youth organizations. To learn more and find out **how you can use this in your school**, [Click here](#).

SHARE THE LINK!

Be sure your school's faculty and staff have subscribed to our newsletter! Important information about STEM grants, Professional Development sessions, advocacy, conferences and more.

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2024/2025 STEM Grant Program

FOUR types of STEM Grants are available this year

MINNDEPENDENT is excited to offer member schools the opportunity to apply for the **2024/2025 STEM Grant Program**. Four types of STEM Grants are available to fit your school's needs.

NEW THIS YEAR - Community Partnership Grants (We Share Solar)

Innovation Grants - up to \$5000

Starter Grants - up to \$1500

Sustainability Grants - up to 20% of the original grant, not to exceed \$1000

Community Partnership Grants (We Share Solar)

STEM Grant Resource Page

The STEM Grant Resource Page includes:

STEM Grant Program Calendar

STEM Grant Guidelines

Academic Standards and Other STEM Resources

Resources for Inclusive STEM Learning

Letters of Interest (must submit an LOI to be eligible to submit a grant application)

- PDF- Reference Form
- Link to complete and submit Letter of Interest in Survey Monkey
- **Deadline - By 6:00 pm on Tuesday, January 16, 2024**

Grant Application

- PDF- Reference Form
- Link to complete and submit Letter of Interest in Survey Monkey
- **Deadline - By 6:00 pm on Tuesday, February 13, 2024**

We Share Solar Program Overview

Project Descriptions of STEM Grants Awarded in the Last Six Years

MINNDEPENDENT'S STEM Program: How to Write a Winning STEM Grant Proposal & Intro to Community Partnerships

In this session, new and experienced grant writers will gain tips for writing stronger MINNDEPENDENT STEM Grant applications and learn about what our STEM Advisory Committee looks for when they review grant proposals and make funding recommendations.



Beth Murphy, Ph.D.
STEM Program Manager

**RECORDED
WEBINAR**

For questions or more information

Beth Murphy, Ph.D.
STEM Program Manager
bmurphy@minndependent.org
612-720-2857

Lisa Vosbeek
Director of Development & Programs
lvosbeek@minndependent.org
651-4524-4930

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STEM Scoop



Freebies for Science and STEM Teachers: Grades K-12

[Bee Cause Education Resources](#)

Explore lesson plans, teacher guides, grant resources, and more to engage K-12 audiences in learning about pollinators and their importance. Take elementary and middle level students on a trip inside a hive with the Bee Cause Project Digital Hive

and Educator Guide. High school students can engage with the topic as they explore bee anatomy and scientific illustration with activities from the Bee Cause Insect Unit Plan. The project website also includes information for teachers interested in starting a bee program at their school.

Freebies for Science and STEM Teachers: Elementary and Middle Level **[Forward to the Moon With Artemis](#)**

Engage K–8 students in a study of space science using *Forward to the Moon With Artemis*, a 48-page printable activity booklet highlighting NASA missions and spacecraft from the past and future. Through a series of mazes, word searches, sudoku puzzles with pictures, and other activities, students will learn about the Apollo mission that first put people on the Moon, as well as the Artemis mission, which will land the first American woman and the next American man on the Moon. The booklet also showcases NASA’s Space Launch System rocket and the Orion spacecraft, which will take humans to the Moon and to Mars.

Freebies for Science and STEM Teachers: Middle Level and High School **[World Wildlife Fund's The Living Planet Report 2022, Youth Edition](#)**

WWF’s *Living Planet Report 2022* is a comprehensive study of trends in global biodiversity and the health of the planet. WWF has created a youth edition of the report that uses infographics and visuals to highlight the state of our planet and explain the causes of decline, what this means for us, and what we can all do to help reverse nature loss. You can use the report and accompanying classroom presentation with your students. WWF also offers the following classroom activities you can use with the report.

- *Science*. Sharks—Overfished and Under Pressure: Sustainable Solutions. Teach students about sustainability while evaluating solutions to determine what methods will stop the overfishing of sharks while protecting the health of humans and ocean ecosystems.
- *Math*. Proportional Perspectives: Recognizing Significant Values and Measurements. Use these activities to teach students how to interpret graphs, percentages, and ratios to understand biodiversity data in the report.
- *Language Arts*. Tips and Tricks to Understanding Science Text. Use these techniques to improve students’ comprehension and interpretation of scientific texts and visuals.
- *Language Arts*. Short answer assessment questions you can use with the *Living Planet Report Youth Edition 2022* to help shape supplementary discussions and activities.

Opportunities for Grades K–12

[EARTHDAY.ORG’s Your Art, Our Earth Poster Competition](#)

Students in two categories—ages 5–17 and 18+—are invited to create posters for this year’s theme, “Planet vs. Plastics.” Students will design an iconic poster that expresses why we need to say no to plastics. The competition has three categories:

- Human Health and Plastics
- Oceans and Plastics
- Fast Fashion and Plastics

A panel of judges, consisting of EARTHDAY.ORG Board members, will choose two posters to champion the cause of Planet vs. Plastics. Six finalists may have their artwork posted on the EARTHDAY.ORG website and social media accounts.

(Deadline **January 22, 2024**)

ALDI Cares Community Grants

Nonprofits and schools where ALDI stores are located can apply for these grants to support children through education, arts, athletics, or addressing food insecurity locally. Grant requests can range from \$250 to \$5,000. Applications are due by **December 15**.

[Learn more here.](#)

Opportunity for Elementary and Middle School Students

World Wildlife Fund Conservation in the Classroom Livestream Event— Seaweed: Growing Underwater Forests to “Kelp” Our Planet

Thousands of species of plant-like seaweed grow in the world’s oceans. One type of seaweed, kelp, is excellent at creating habitat, cleaning our coasts, and serving as a healthy food. It’s also one of the fastest-growing organisms on Earth. Bailey Moritz, WWF seaweed expert, will discuss the biology of seaweed and the solutions kelp farms can bring to the ocean. The livestream event for grades 4–8 will take place on November 29 at 12:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

A supplemental material pack to be released soon will contain pre- and post-materials such as warm-up questions, assessment questions, and links to relevant teaching materials (within Wild Classroom, Kahoot, WWF pages, etc.) The topic could be a great tie-in with lessons about climate change, sustainability, or ecosystems.

FEMA Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) FY2024 Winter Webinar Series

The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) invites interested organizations to attend upcoming webinars regarding the [**Nonprofit Security Grant Program \(NSGP\)**](#). The NSGP is a competitive grant awarded to nonprofit organizations at high risk of a terrorist or other extremist attack for the purposes of facility hardening and other security enhancements.

Please note that depending on the timing of a Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 appropriations bill, final FY2024 information on the NSGP may not be available at the time of the webinars. Interested nonprofits should maintain communication with their [**State Administrative Agency \(SAA\)**](#) for all deadlines and application requirements.

Tuesday, November 28, 1pm CST: [**Registration link**](#)

Friday, December 8, 2pm CST: [**Registration link**](#)

Tuesday, December 19, 1pm CST: [**Registration link**](#)

Wednesday, December 20, 2pm CST: [**Registration link**](#)

Following registration, you will receive a calendar invitation via email for the webinar. The link to join the webinar will be contained in that calendar event email. It may take time for this email to arrive – please be patient following registration and be sure to check your junk/spam folders.

School Bus Stop Arm Camera System Grants

The 2024 Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) School Bus Stop Arm Camera System Grant Phase VII Grant Application will be open in [**e-grants**](#) on Tuesday, October 31, 2023. Feel free to [**View the RFP!**](#)

Applications will be considered to provide funding to school districts, nonpublic schools, charter schools, and/or companies that provide school bus services to purchase, install, operate and update school bus stop-signal arm camera systems.

The application must be submitted by 4PM on Friday December 1, 2023.



Important Dates to Remember

Tuesday, January 16:

Due date (6pm) for STEM Grant Letters of Interest (LOIs)

Tuesday, February 13:

Due date (6pm) for STEM Grant Final Applications

Sunday, April 28:

STEM Grant Awardees honored at the
2024 Minnesota Private & Independent Education Awards

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