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MEDIA CONTACT: Dina Pierce, (614) 644-2160
CITIZEN CONTACT: Darla Peelle, (614) 64-2160

Ohio EPA Awards \$3,321 Environmental Education Mini Grant to Mansfield School

Ohio EPA has awarded a \$3,321 Ohio environmental education mini grant to Mansfield City Schools for a “learning garden” at the district’s Spanish Immersion School. Thirteen projects throughout the state were funded for \$50,000.

The grant will provide tools and supplies for a quarter-acre learning garden and greenhouse for hands-on learning experiences about ecosystems, wildlife habitat, food production and composting. The school will incorporate lessons from Project WILD, the National Wildlife Federation’s “Garden for Wildlife,” and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s S.K. Worm program on soil.

Learning activities are aligned with state academic standards for science according to grade groups: pre-school-kindergarten students will observe living and non-living things in local surroundings to investigate the physical and behavioral traits of living things; first-second graders will plan and conduct an investigation into the basic needs of living things and plant and animal interactions within habitats; third-fifth graders will observe and investigate behavior, growth, changes and interactions within ecosystems. The project also will have community through open houses, volunteer opportunities, student-led tours and a farmers’ market.

The Ohio Environmental Education Fund gives out approximately \$1 million each year for environmental education projects targeting kindergarten through university students, the general public, and the regulated community. General grants are given for projects lasting up to 30 months and costing up to \$50,000.

Mini grants are available for projects lasting up to 12 months and costing between \$500 and \$5,000. Proposals for classroom projects, conference speakers, and other activities that are eligible under the general grant program are eligible under the mini-grant program, but the application process is streamlined. Ohio EPA’s Office of Environmental Education reserves up to \$50,000 each grant round to fund projects submitted under this program. Just like the general grant program, there are two mini-grant rounds each year, with the next application deadline on July 16, 2012. An electronic letter of intent to apply is due on July 9.

For more information, contact Ohio EPA’s Office of Environmental Education at (614) 644-2873. Staff is available to assist potential grant applicants who contact the office before the submission deadline. Information also is available [online](#).