



Hello Science Education Colleagues,

I hope you're doing well and staying warm as the first semester of the school year comes to a close!

Congratulations to **Kristin Michalski** (East Troy HS, formerly), **Suzy Zietlow** (Discovery Charter School, Columbus), and **Cindy Stetzer** (Gale-Ettrick-Trempealeau HS) who are the newest Wisconsin awardees for the [Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching!](#)

I enjoyed a visit in December to the [Glen Hills Middle School STEAM Faire](#), where families connected to STEAM learning with staff and over 20 community partners - fabulous work by coordinator Lalitha Murali!

To clarify, it's official that we are not changing our state science standards. They were up for review in 2024, and after feedback and discussion, the State Superintendent agreed to keep them as is. Because they are essentially the NGSS and all resources coming out now are being aligned to the NGSS, I think that was the best decision. They'll be up for review again in 7 more years.

Below are a few science education resources I've heard about. If you have announcements to share, please send them my way. A record of these emails can be found [on my website](#).

Cheers,

Kevin

Learning Opportunities

- [WI Science Education Leadership Association](#) - Waukesha on 2/26
 - [Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo \(MOHEE\)](#) - 5/7 MKE, 5/14-15 Poynette
 - [Yerkes Observatory](#) - Field Trips and Educator Reception - 3/1
 - [CREATE Energy Center at Madison College](#) - Free Solar Workshops Apr, Jun, & Jul
 - [Groundwater Model Workshops](#) - Apr 16 Tomahawk or Apr 29 Wis Dells
 - [Shipboard Science Experience on Lake Michigan](#) - July 7-13
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- [WSST Conference](#) - April 3-5 in Oshkosh

Resources

- [Winter Salt Week Jan 27-31](#) - local and national info available
- [Recent articles](#) on reading science, using AI, and designing science materials

Student Opportunities

- [WSST Writing Contest](#) for grades K-12
- [Crystal Growing Contest](#) - MS/HS competition this winter/spring
- [Milwaukee City Science and Engineering Fair \(MICSEF\)](#) - Mar 2
- [High School Student Freshwater Science Camp](#) - UW-Eau Claire June 22-25
- [Starbase Wisconsin Free Middle School STEM Programs](#) - Summer in MKE
- [National Youth Science Camp](#) - app opens on Jan 27, closes on Feb 28

Details

Learning Opportunities

- WI Science Education Leadership Association - Waukesha on 2/26

The next meeting of the WI Science Education Leadership Association (WSELA) will be next month, February 26th, at the [EB Shurts Center](#) in Waukesha. As usual, we'll dig into the latest resources and district science work across the state. A light breakfast and networking will start around 8:30, with lunch at 11:45 and concluding around 3. New participants are free while returning participants are \$20. Please, RSVP to me by 2/14.

- Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo (MOHEE) - 5/7 MKE, 5/14-15 Poynette

<https://ohecyes.org/unicdn/expo/> - The Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo is presented by the Outdoor Heritage Education Center, a non-profit conservation organization. This annual free field trip for grades 4-7th is a perfect opportunity to extend learning and take learning outdoors before the school year comes to an end. Students can explore mentored programs so they can develop outdoor skills and enjoy lifelong outdoor activities. Connect with educators, trained safety instructors and other volunteer mentors who provide an enriching and engaging experience connecting students to Wisconsin's natural resources, outdoor heritage and lifelong skills. Limited scholarships available to cover transportation costs for schools that qualify. Sign up today with our [registration form](#).

- Yerkes Observatory - Field Trips and Educator Reception - 3/1

Yerkes Observatory is excited to welcome school groups for curated educational visits for the 2024-25 school year! There are still dates available for the Spring 2025 semester. Details and information, such as costs per student and other logistics, can be found on the [Yerkes](#)

[website](#). Also, head to the Yerkes Observatory on March 1 from 6pm - 8pm to hear from Dr. Sahar Alameh, Asst Professor of STEM Ed at the Univ of Kentucky. Dr. Alameh's research focuses on meaningful scientific explanations within K-12 science classrooms and teaching and learning of the Nature of Science (NOS). She will share strategies for teaching science through phenomena-based approaches and storylines and address socially relevant contexts. From 7pm - 8pm, we'll have light refreshments and a chance to connect with Dr. Alameh and other STEM educators in attendance. [Tickets are \\$15 and available on the Yerkes website](#). Reach out to Mallory Conlon (mconlon@yerkobservatory.org) with any questions.

- CREATE Energy Center at Madison College - Free Workshops Apr, Jun, & Jul

The CREATE Energy Center is offering three FREE workshops to any STEM Educator. The goal of these workshops is to provide STEM Educators with renewable energy lesson plans, classroom equipment, and a unique hands-on learning experience to take back to their students. After completing a workshop, you will be eligible to receive \$1200 of classroom equipment funded by the CREATE Energy NSF ATE National Center!

- [STEM Educator Virtual Solar Institute beginning on April 26](#)
- [STEM Educator Solar Institute, July 8-10 in Madison](#)
- [STEM Educator Solar + Storage, July 29-31 in Madison](#)

CREATE provides hotel lodging, lunches, and a stipend upon completion of the in-person institutes. For more details see the [2025 STEM Educator Institutes website](#). For questions contact Liz Reinke at Madison College, Ereinke@madisoncollege.edu.

- Groundwater Model Workshops - Apr 16 Tomahawk or Apr 29 Wis Dells

K-12 Educators, apply for this year's Groundwater Model Workshops! Get support, supplies, and skills from groundwater experts to teach about groundwater in Wisconsin and how to protect it. In these one-day workshops on 4/16 or 4/29, you will:

- Learn where drinking water comes from in Wisconsin and how to protect it
- Engage in hands-on learning and additional resources
- Be reimbursed for your time (as needed)
- Receive a FREE sand-tank groundwater model for your organization

Learn more and apply by Feb. 15: <https://ow.ly/n1zb50UypPE>. For questions, contact Mel Reusche, communications specialist at the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey (Reusche@wisc.edu)

- Shipboard Science Experience on Lake Michigan - July 7-13

<https://www.cgll.org/education/professional-learning/r-v-lake-guardian/2025-lake-michigan-r-v-lake-guardian-shipboard-science/> - Apply now to spend a week aboard the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency RV Lake Guardian on Lake Michigan Assisting with research. The ship departs from and returns to Milwaukee. The workshop promotes Great

Lakes literacy while forging relationships between researchers and educators. The workshop is free to participating educators with only 15 spots available. Formal 5th-12th grade teachers and non-formal educators from the Great Lakes' states may apply. Apply by Feb 10.

- WSST Conference - April 3-5 in Oshkosh

<https://www.wsst.org/2025-conference> - I hope to see you at the upcoming conference of the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers, taking place in downtown Oshkosh on April 3-5. There is a huge range of sessions for educators of all backgrounds. I'm also looking forward to the EAA Night at the Museum. Please, say hello if we cross paths there!

Resources

- Winter Salt Week Jan 27-31 - local and national info available

<https://www.wisaltwise.com/> - there are many [hidden consequences](#) to oversalting our roads. This program provides information helpful for educators and students. There are also a couple upcoming national webinars.

Recent articles on reading science, using AI, and designing science materials

- Tips for reading scientific information (disciplinary literacy) - <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/reading-and-writing-like-a-scientist/2024/10>
- Thoughtful article on authentic strategies for using AI in classrooms - <https://ascd.org/blogs/ensuring-authentic-student-work-in-the-age-of-ai>
- You might need an NSTA membership for this article on designing NGSS-aligned instructional materials that connect to students' interests and communities (but I hope you don't) - <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00368555.2024.2390547#abstract>

Student Opportunities

- WSST Writing Contest for grades K-12

https://www.wsst.org/_files/ugd/be0e84_ad68ff0260ad4b94b8501ab81754588c.pdf - This annual contest has separate categories by K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 grade bands. Again this year, they are all on the topic of water, as the contest is in partnership with the Wisconsin Water Week and the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Consortium. Essays are due Mar 7. Student and educator prizes are given, as [supported by WSST](#).

- Crystal Growing Contest - MS/HS competition this winter/spring

<https://wicgc.chem.wisc.edu/> - After a five-year hiatus, the 2025 state-wide [Wisconsin Crystal Growing Contest](#) is back! It will take place from March to May of 2025. This event is FREE and registration is open to middle and high school students ages 11-18 as well as home-schooled youth. The specific goal of this program is to engage students in chemistry, crystallography, and optical microscopy. All contestants are invited to visit the UW-Madison

Chemistry Department on May 24, 2025 where they will tour the university and visit an X-ray laboratory, where expert crystallographers demonstrate instruments that support investigation of molecular structure. Awards will also be given at this May event. Reach out to Ilia Guzei (iguzei@chem.wisc.edu) or Peter Jaeger (pfjaeger@wisc.edu) for more information.

- Milwaukee City Science and Engineering Fair (MICSEF) - Mar 2

www.micsef.org - A group of educators is organizing the Milwaukee City Science and Engineering Fair (MICSEF) in spring 2025. The fair aims to provide opportunities for high school students across Wisconsin who are unable to participate in regional fairs, with a particular focus on MPS students. Additional details can be found at www.micsef.org. The fair is (most likely) scheduled for Sunday, March 2, 2025, at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

- HS Student Freshwater Science Field Experience UW-Eau Claire - June 22-25

<https://www.uwec.edu/geology-and-environmental-science-department/freshwater-science-summer-field-experience> - High school juniors can apply to participate in freshwater science studies and learn about degree programs at UW-Eau Claire. Students will stay in dorms with chaperones, and meals will be provided. Participants are responsible for finding transportation to/from UWEC on June 22 and June 25, though transportation to field sites during the program will be provided. Applications are due Mar 1.

- Starbase Wisconsin Free Middle School STEM Programs this Summer in MKE

<https://starbase.wi.gov/students/summer-programs/> - There are several weeks and options for free STEM-focused programs this summer for youth who have completed grades 4-8. Topics include robotics, rockets, flight, and general hands-on STEM. The deadlines to submit interest is Feb 28. School or community groups with chaperones can also apply. All sessions are held at the US Army Reserve Center in Milwaukee.

- National Youth Science Camp - apps open on Jan 27, close on Feb 28

<https://www.nysacademy.org/programs/nyscamp/2024-nyscamp/> - This is an all-expense-paid student science camp with delegates from all over the U.S. and several other countries. Each state can send two delegates, and we do not usually get many applicants. Current juniors or seniors can apply starting Jan 27, with applications due on Feb 28. The camp goes from July 10 - Aug 2, and delegates have to commit to attending the full program. There are amazing science speakers that visit, and past participants have loved the program.
