



Race 2 Reduce is an effective and proven program to educate students about water conservation and protection of our precious water resources. The Race 2 Reduce Legislative Grant, which has funded this curriculum development and water resource education, stands to be de-funded. **The House bill cuts \$614,000 for FY18-19 biennium. The Senate funds \$614,000 for the FY18-19, but cuts the funding in the out years (FY20-21 and beyond).** It is our sincere hope that the value and importance of this program will be recognized and funding will continue through to the project's completion in fiscal year 2018. As you know, H2O for Life and our collaborative partners in the White Bear Lake and Mahtomedi school districts are developing and implementing educational resources focused on local and global water issues for schools in Minnesota and nationwide. Our program helps empower children to develop leadership skills and a sense of personal responsibility and accountability while meeting core content standards in a place-based authentic learning context.

In partnership with the White Bear Lake Area Schools and Mahtomedi School District, H2O for Life has formed a community-wide education and action initiative focused on preserving and protecting our water resources, called Race 2 Reduce. Through this initiative, we are helping develop and implement rich interdisciplinary K-12 curriculum modules, which contain fully articulated standards-aligned lessons complete with teacher resources and assessment instruments.

- ❖ The Race 2 Reduce curriculum modules have been designed and formatted using the UbD (Understanding by Design) model, which includes the following elements:
 - Focus on essential questions, goals and student outcomes.
 - Lessons that are fully aligned to MN Standards
 - All teaching and learning materials, supporting media, and enrichment tools are linked and embedded in the online platform for easy access in the classroom through widely available technology
 - Assessment instruments are included

• Phase 1, **curriculum modules for grades 3-5, were completed last year** and have now been fully implemented. Anchored by the themes of Awareness, Action and Advocacy, students are learning about their watersheds and the impact of human activity, tracking their personal water use and taking personal conservation steps, and discovering their own voice as decision makers through learning to write letters of advocacy.

• Phase 2, **K-2 curriculum is scheduled to be completed and piloted by June 30, 2017**, with implementation in all K-2 classrooms in both school districts to follow in September of 2017. Students in this phase of the project will engage in inquiry based learning to gain understanding of the role of water in their lives, the importance of water to all living things on the planet and the dynamic processes in healthy ecosystems, demonstrating their competency through public outreach.

- Phase 3, **development of pre-K, middle school and high school modules, is planned for this coming school year (2017-18)** with completion of materials and pilot programs implemented in both districts by June 30, 2018.

Last year, we were honored to receive the **Environmental Initiative Award for Best Environmental Education.**

The Race 2 Reduce model includes robust water conservation units that align local environmental issues with current curriculum standards. The successful implementation of **phase 1 of this project in the current school year has impacted more than 6000 students** in our partner school districts alone. The Improve Group has tracked our progress and has compiled verifiable data pointing to the strong outcomes and efficacy of this program. The report was previously submitted to the legislature in support of continued funding. This rich and successful program is now available to all school districts in Minnesota through the Race 2 Reduce web-based platform.

Our goal is to complete phase 2 this year, adding K-2 modules and round out the complete program with middle school and high school modules by June 30 of 2018. Since its inception, the accomplishments are significant and impressive.

- ❖ To date, **Race 2 Reduce has reached over 8,800 students and over 1150 teachers/adult community members, engaging more than 100 classrooms, 7 clubs and 5 extended-day programs throughout the two local school districts.** Our poster contest in collaboration with the Governor's Year of Water Action, MDH, Xcel Energy, Kinetico, AWWA and Elkay drew over **1,600 submissions from across the state of Minnesota with more than 70 school districts participating.**
- ❖ The Earth Week Water Awareness 5-day educational resource has been developed and used widely across the state of Minnesota. **It continues to be available on the Race 2 Reduce website at no cost to all schools.** It is currently being hosted on the "Year of Water Action" website and MDE's website as part of Earth Week Activities.
- ❖ **Fix-a-Leak week**, which took place March 20-24, had a second successful year reaching **5000 elementary students and their families** in both school districts, engaging all participants to take action to reduce wasteful water use.

Through Race 2 Reduce programming, students will understand issues that affect water use, water availability and water conservation. This will develop and prepare our young people to participate in community decision-making and collective actions regarding environmental stewardship now and in the future, for the good of all Minnesotans. **It certainly has the potential to be a model program for all US schools as a full scope and sequence of water resource education modules.**



H2O for Life...
Engage, Educate and
Inspire Youth

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