Northport Public School Awarded Fresh Water Stewardship Initiative Grant

Northport, MI --- Northport Public School is one of six school districts across the state of Michigan to be selected for a freshwater stewardship grant initiative funded through a multi-agency collaboration between the MiSTEM Network, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE), Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Office of Labor and Economic Opportunity, and Grand Valley State University. The From Students to Stewards: Fostering Great Lakes Literacy to Improve School Performance grant will support a unique place-based learning experience titled Leelanau Watershed and Waterway Expedition for Northport Public School students in Grades 5 through 11 during the 2020-2021 school year.

Northport Public School principal and project director Andrea Burks indicates the award will further Northport’s long-standing commitment to project-based learning and community involvement. Each project approved through the grant highlights unique regional experiences that support the integration of Great Lakes and freshwater literacy principles into standards-based school curricula and enhances school continuous improvement plans.

The six grant recipients include Allegan Area Educational District, Comstock Public Schools, Copper Country Intermediate School District, Les Cheneaux Community Schools, Niles Community Schools, and Northport Public School.

"We are really excited to gain state recognition and receive funding through this From Students to Stewardship grant to further student learning experiences in our region,” says Drea Weiner, MiSTEM Network Regional Director for northwest Michigan. “We are fortunate to have rich regional resources like Lake Michigan at our back door and we are excited to work with teachers to expand upon current STEM and project-based learning that will cultivate student interest and opportunities in water stewardship.”

This From Students to Stewards project is intended to make progress toward closing the water literacy gap in Michigan and growing the next generation of water stewards, leaders, skilled workers, and decision-makers needed to solve complex water issues in a changing world. This project places student
voice and choice as the center of student learning. A water focus tied to STEM education, built over a child’s educational life and into adulthood, can serve as the basis for place-based learning and scientific knowledge. This place-based approach engages students through their socio-cultural contexts and brings their internal assets to the foreground. The field test opportunity will engage schools in reimagining their systems to support this pedagogical approach for learning focused on a central Great Lakes - Freshwater Vision. From Students to Stewards will close the water literacy gap and make critical steps to growing water stewardship in the State of Michigan.

State Press Release Link

About the MiSTEM Network:

The MiSTEM Network connects education, business and community partners across the state to transform the way Michigan does STEM. Established by the Michigan Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (MiSTEM) Advisory Council, the MiSTEM Network is a new vision for inspiring 21st-century, STEM-equipped students, educators and workers. Through 16 regional hubs focused on identifying and addressing STEM education needs across the state, the MiSTEM Network supports opportunities for every student to experience project-based learning that allows them to use STEM skills to address authentic challenges in their communities.