Grants focus on school water projects

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Twelve northern Michigan schools are reaping reward from the Grand Traverse Conservation District.

The Grand Traverse Stewardship Initiative handed out $1,500 grants to use for place-based education for water stewardship projects this year. Place-based education uses the local community and the environment as a starting point for teaching and learning. With an emphasis on inquiry-based, hands-on, real-world experiences, and direct collaboration with community partners, these GTSI teams will accomplish project goals and outcomes that will benefit both the students and the community.

At Benzie Central High School, Kevin Kinnan’s Environmental Science classes, students in Melinda Klockzeim’s AgriScience/FFA program, and Josh Stoltz’s students in SEEDS after school program are joining forces for a year long study of water related issues in Benzie County culminating in a Water Fair that will occur in collaboration with the Benzie County Water Festival. GTSI students will be presenting a variety of water related activities to increase awareness of the importance of water in Benzie County.

To receive grant approval, teacher teams submitted extensive project proposals to secure the financial support and resources required to accomplish their year-long plans. GTSI Program Coordinator, Jenifer Strauss has been making "Big Check" presentations to each school, thanking the teachers and students for their involvement in the Stewardship Initiative. The following GTSI school projects were approved for funding.