

School Forest Summit Agenda

Feb. 21, 2025 | Dodge Nature Center, West St. Paul



- 8 am Check in. Enjoy coffee, tea, snacks
- 9 **Knowing Your Place** (aka “getting to know you!”)
- School Forest Program resources
 - “Your Place on the Line” exercise
 - Post-it exercise – What do you want in your school forest? One idea per post-it. Put on wall. We will use these in our afternoon session.
- 9:45 **Who’s in Charge of Your Place? School Forest Principal Panel**
Let’s talk to some principals to explore what school leadership needs to understand about using and maintaining your school forest. Where is our common ground? Learn how principals from these school forests help make their sites successful, safe, and memorable.
Principal Panelists:
- Gretchen Mattson, Linwood School Forest
 - Ryan Ihrke, St. Charles School Forest
 - Dr. Kathy Kindem, Oak Grove School Forest, Eagan
- 10:30 **Break** – stretch, network, reflect
- 10:40 **Understanding Your Place: Treaties 101** TBA, Dakota educator
- 11:45 **Lunch**
- 12:15 pm** Get ready to GO OUTSIDE!

Notes

12:30 **What makes a healthy forest place?**
August Kramer, DNR forest health specialist. Session starts OUTDOORS then moves and ends indoors.

2:00 **Minding your place** – How to improve your school forest. We will use your post-it notes from the morning session and focus on next steps for you and your school to improve your site.

Panelists:

- Kim Benton, Garlough School Forest, West St. Paul
- Kelli Ellickson, Cedar Park School Forest, Apple Valley

Websites to refer to in this session:

- Minnesota School Forest Getting Help and Funding
- Minnesota School Forest Outdoor Classroom Features

2:45 Evaluations, CEUs, takeaways.
Summit ends at 3 pm.

*“If we want children to love the earth, to become truly empowered, let us allow them to **love** the earth before we ask them to save it.” – David Sobel, founder of place-based education and professor of environmental education, Antioch University*

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder. . . he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.” – Dr. Rachel Carson, biologist, educator, and author of Silent Spring (1962)

www.mndnr.gov/schoolforest

schoolforest@state.mn.us

Facebook: Minnesota School Forest