



St. Catherine University



NATIONAL CENTER FOR STEM  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

# Partner School District



**PRIOR LAKE-SAVAGE**  
**AREA SCHOOLS**

Prior Lake | Savage | Credit River Twp | Spring Lake Twp  
Sand Creek Twp | Cedar Lake Twp



# Why SCU and PLSSD Partnership?

1. STEM education needs to start in the early elementary years
2. Teachers need a high comfort level in STEM
3. More girls and students of color need to enter college prepared to study STEM-based majors
4. Pre-Service STEM Certificate & Minor
5. EcoSTARS: Students, Teachers, & Real Science

# Projects at PLSSD Elementary Schools

## GLOBE & EcoSTARS

### Scott County Environmental Health

- ▣ Students developed and implemented with teachers and other staff a food composting program
- ▣ Scott County personnel use data from composting program to encourage other schools to begin a composting program
- ▣ Environmental health specialists work with students in gathering data and present results to students on the program



# Projects

## Prior Lake Watershed District

### Lakeshore Erosion

- Monitor erosion around lakes that are near the schools in the district
- A 'snap-shot' of data
- Specialists come and report back data to students

### Prairie Restoration

- Around some of the schools, students are restoring prairie habitat to improve water quality
- Monitor water quality
- Partner with watershed district, Scott County, and *Mdewakanton sioux*
- Specialists report data to students

# Projects

## MN Dept. of Natural Resources

- ❑ Fish releases in local lakes
- ❑ Students with DNR scientists determine the lake temp. and dissolved oxygen (DO)
- ❑ Scientists return to update the students on fish populations



# Outcomes



- Create environmentally and STEM literate elementary students
- Involve them in research projects
- Improve students' test scores

# Questions?



Dr. Tony P. Murphy, Executive Director  
National Center for  
STEM Elementary Education

St. Catherine University  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
[stem.stkate.edu](http://stem.stkate.edu)