



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

## 2023 Request for Proposal

### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2023-020

**Proposal Title:** Outdoor Classroom

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Sarah Pasela

**Organization:** Order of Saint Benedict - Saint John's Preparatory School

**Office Telephone:** (320) 232-5104

**Email:** [spasela001@sjprep.net](mailto:spasela001@sjprep.net)

### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Saint John's Preparatory School seeks funding to build an outdoor classroom to connect nature and learning in an immersive environment for students in grades 6-12 and the surrounding community.

**Funds Requested:** \$210,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** July 31, 2024

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Environmental Education (C)

### Project Location

**What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?**

Region(s): Central

**What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?**

Region(s): Central

**When will the work impact occur?**

In the Future

## Narrative

### **Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.**

Set on 2,900 acres of water, woodlands, and prairie, environmental and outdoor education is central to the learning experience at Saint John's Preparatory School. The school's recently approved strategic plan makes expanded environmental and outdoor learning a key priority. While we currently hold classes in many of our outdoor spaces, we lack a formal outdoor classroom to promote comfortable and attentive learning. We do not have dry spaces with seating and desks. Students cannot use books or technology without awkwardly sitting on the ground or in wet grass. More importantly, we are subject to Minnesota's ever-changing weather, which often makes it difficult to reliably learn, discover, and explore outdoors. An outdoor classroom will improve our ability to teach and learn outside in this magnificent setting, enhancing the educational experience for all of our students.

Many research studies have proven that exposure to nature can improve cognition and emotional wellbeing (resources attached). Studying outdoors helps students process and retain academic content and contributes to mental health, reduced anxiety, and improved student attendance. A green classroom would have a positive effect on our students and guests as we emerge from a challenging pandemic.

### **What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.**

We envision a classroom with a roof-like covering to support for accommodate multi-season courses and meetings. It will have weather resistant furnishings allowing students to sit in comfort and write, read, or manipulate hands-on small group projects. The classroom will have no walls to ensure we can enjoy the stunning campus around us and receive all the benefits of outdoor education. Set contiguous to our main academic building, the classroom will not disturb any natural ecosystems as the area is presently lawn. It is easily accessible with the sidewalks already in place would lead directly to it. These elements will be incorporated to beautifully honor the existing natural setting.

After consulting educators at other schools with outdoor classrooms, we determined that proximity to the school would be important. Even a five-minute walk can create a barrier sufficient to dissuade use. Our chosen space abuts doorways just 30 meters from our main entrance. We will integrate the area into our campus emergency communication network. We fully expect the classroom will become a place of community education and much needed sanctuary.

### **What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?**

Saint John's Preparatory School is grounded in the Benedictine tradition of land stewardship and environmentalism. The project outcomes address environmental education. Outdoor learning provides our students with opportunities to gain an appreciation for the natural world around them. Research demonstrates that that time outside supports not only improved cognitive growth, but also a deeper connection with self and with the environment around us. Beyond its use during the academic year, the outdoor classroom will support and enhance Prep School summer programming as well as summer camps associated with Outdoor U.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Design, Bid, and Build

**Activity Budget:** \$50,000

**Activity Description:**

We will begin with a competitive bidding process. Our physical plant will suggest three companies and we will choose the one that makes the most sense for design and budget. The outdoor classroom will be built.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Requests for designs and bids	October 31, 2023
Present designs and bids to Campus Design Committee	December 31, 2023
Ask for Board approval to accept grant and award bid	July 31, 2024

### Activity 2: Grant Management

**Activity Budget:** \$10,000

**Activity Description:**

This will cover administrative fees and permits

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Segregate project administrative costs	October 31, 2023
Pay management and permit fees	December 31, 2023

### Activity 3: Project build and completion

**Activity Budget:** \$150,000

**Activity Description:**

Project will be completed and ready for use by the fall of 2023.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Notify contractor of award and create a work agreement	November 30, 2023
Survey and prepare ground and surrounding areas	December 31, 2023
Build, including materials purchase	July 31, 2024
Create and distribute marketing to share availability of space	July 31, 2024
Purchase all weather furniture	July 31, 2024
Purchase wifi and cabling and install	July 31, 2024

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Russ Klein	Saint John's University Physical Plant	Physical Plant Director	No
Sherry Krebsbach	Saint John's Preparatory School/ Order of Saint Benedict	Director of Finance and Facilities	Yes

## Long-Term Implementation and Funding

**Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?**

Ongoing maintenance will be funded through operations and auxiliary funding from our summer camps.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Sarah Pasela

**Job Title:** Science Instructor

**Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.**

I see the need for this project first hand. I am working closely with our Director of Finance and Facilities. I have done research on the benefits of outdoor education.

**Organization:** Order of Saint Benedict - Saint John's Preparatory School

**Organization Description:**

Saint John's Prep is a premier arts and sciences world school where we prize imagination, creativity and discovery. Prep offers experiences that nurture curiosity and expand horizons. Learning is about more than academics. It's about self-reflection, connection and purpose. Our globally diverse community, rooted in Catholic Benedictine values, offers students an experience that prepares them for the future—as agents of leadership, learning and service. We know every student's name. This may seem like a small detail, but to us it's intrinsic to the fabric of our community, where learning is individual and collaborative, community-centered and worldly, traditional and contemporary. We are devoted to social justice, relentless curiosity and respect for each student's individual needs and talents.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Saint John's Physical Plant		Project Management Fee			0%	0.1		\$10,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Breitbach	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Bid submission for site preparation, outdoor classroom build, and reconfiguration of access to school.				1		\$185,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$185,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
		outdoor media, speakers, wifi, and cabling	communication, instruction, and outdoor emergency notification system	X				\$13,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$13,000</b>
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								

							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
	Printing	print materials and postage	to notify non-profit partners, schools, and organizations of the availability of the space					\$2,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$210,000</b>

## Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
<p><b>Capital Expenditures</b></p>		<p>outdoor media, speakers, wifi, and cabling</p>	<p>The initial equipment and setup (cabling) will cost in excess of \$5,000 but the school will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance, care, and replacement of the equipment.  <b>Additional Explanation :</b> The outdoor speakers and media, as well as the cabling requirements will remain fixed in location and tied into our campus life safety. This will allow users of the space to be notified of severe weather or other threats to safety as well as how to respond.</p>

## Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
<b>State</b>				
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Non-State</b>				
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	-
			<b>Funds Total</b>	-

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [90a203f2-d67.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Visual Component Sketch of Outdoor Classroom...

### Optional Attachments

#### *Support Letter or Other*

Title	File
Saint John's Prep Mission and Vision	<a href="#">0954187a-349.pdf</a>
Board Resolution	<a href="#">7beb03cb-a51.pdf</a>
Background Research	<a href="#">d0d3ec92-619.docx</a>

## Administrative Use

**Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?**

No

**Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?**

No

**Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?**

N/A

**Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?**

N/A

**Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?**

No

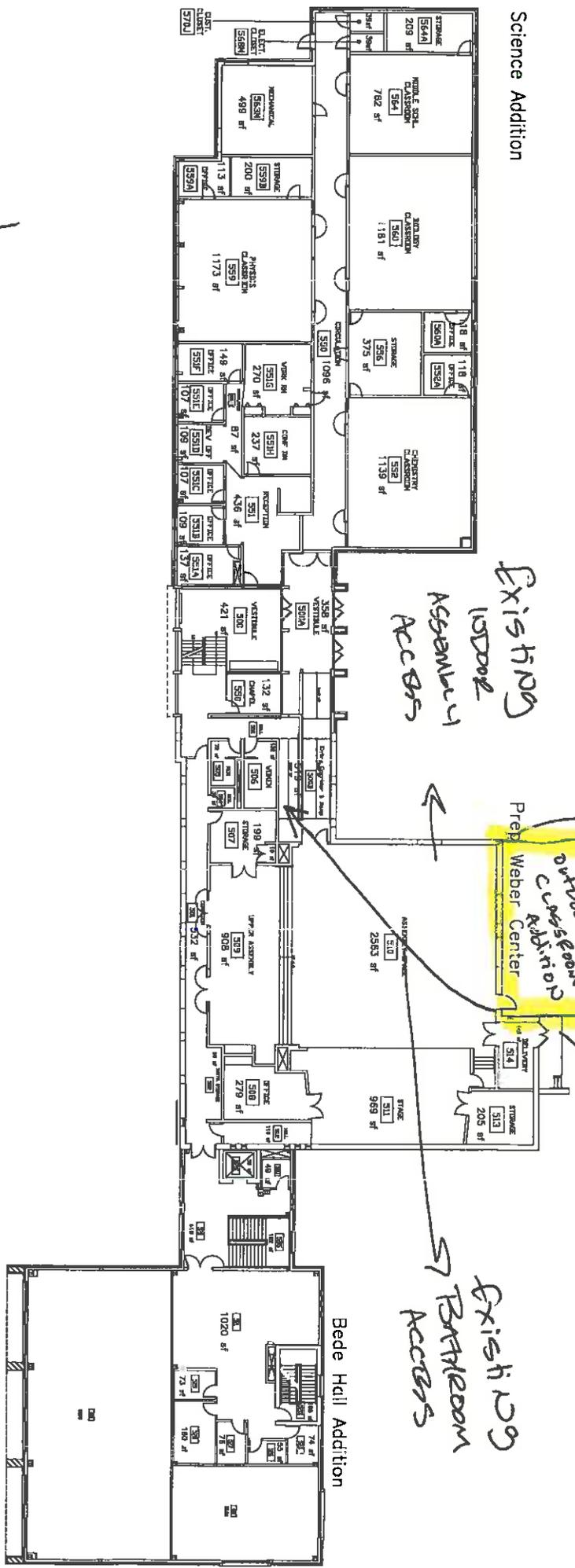
**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**

No

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Prep School 5th Floor

Science Addition



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