

Program Information

Is the program aligned to standards?

Yes! The lessons and project How-to Guides are NGSS-aligned. Each aligned standard is listed at the top of the individual lessons and How-to Guides.

What are the program requirements?

Participating groups must consist of high-school-aged students who go through the four required lessons and spend at least 15 hours working on the project (including design and implementation). Additionally, the participating teacher must submit the following documents via their [Connect portal](#):

- A signed MOU
- Student roster with names and grade levels of participating students
- A W-9 for the participating school or organization
- A completed How-to Guide
- An invoice
- A final program report

What is the program timeline?

The Walking Softer Education program runs in cohorts following the academic school year (beginning in July and ending at the end of May). Groups can register at any time, but the deadline to join the current cohort is February 20th, 2026. After that, they'll be part of next year's cohort. All Final Program Reports are due May 31st of the academic year in which the group participates. Please contact us directly if you have questions or require a different timeline.

Eligibility

What teachers are eligible for program participation?

In the Walking Softer Education Program context, “teacher” or “educator” refers to someone who can facilitate the four required lessons and project implementation with a group of participating students. This can include formal and non-formal educators, such as educators at afterschool programs.

What grade levels are eligible to participate?

All students in grades 9-12 can participate in the program, but only participating juniors and seniors are eligible to apply for the scholarship.

What is a “participating group”?

A “participating group” is a teacher and a group of students (we recommend a minimum of five and a maximum of 40) who go through the four required lesson plans and implement a community-based project after completing a project “How-to Guide” together.

A participating group is entitled to up to \$2,000 in project funding, and the teacher is entitled to a \$1,000 teacher stipend. Each participating group needs to submit all required documents (MOU, student roster, W9, How-to Guide, invoice, and program report).

Examples of participating groups would be a biology class that goes over the lessons and works on the community-based project together in class or an afterschool club that meets once a week to go over the lessons and works on the community-based project together.

Can a participating group work on more than one project?

We recommend each group work on one project together. If students in one participating group have different interests, they can work on multiple projects; however, they would need to split the \$2,000 of project funding between those projects.

Can a school/organization have multiple groups participate?

Yes, however, to be considered distinct participating groups, they would need to go through the lessons and project separately and submit their own project documents. An example of a school or organization having multiple participating groups would be if a school had a “green club” and an “environmental engineering club.” Both would meet separately to go through lessons; each club would work on its own project.

Can one teacher lead multiple participating groups?

Yes, one teacher can lead multiple participating groups. However, to be considered leading different participating groups, the teacher would have to facilitate the lessons and project process separately with those distinct groups of students.

For example, if one teacher facilitated the lessons during three different biology class periods and three different projects with those different biology classes, that would be considered three participating groups. In this case, the teacher would be entitled to three teacher stipends since they are effectively doing three times the amount of work.

Can multiple teachers lead one participating group?

Yes, multiple teachers can co-lead one participating group. However, we will only provide one \$1000 teacher stipend, which the teachers are responsible for splitting.

Funding And Invoicing

When will my group receive funding?

The table below outlines when funds will be distributed based on when you’re able to submit the completed How-to Guide and approved invoice:

*\*\*Please note that there is no funding distribution window in May, as groups would not have enough time to receive funds and implement the project before the Final Program Report is due.*

Teacher Stipend + Project Funding Invoice Submitted By	Funding Distribution Date: <i>*or following business day</i>	Final Program Report due by:
June 1	June 30	May 31
July 15	July 31	May 31
August 15	August 31	May 31
September 15	September 31	May 31
October 15	October 31	May 31
November 15	November 30	May 31
December 15	December 31	May 31
January 15	January 31	May 31
February 15	February 28	May 31
March 15	March 31	May 31
April 15	April 30	May 31

Where will the funds be sent?

The teacher stipend and the project funds are sent to the participating teacher’s school or organization. The school or organization will be responsible for distributing the teacher stipend and project funds appropriately.

How will the funds be sent?

The funds will be mailed or sent via a wire transfer, depending on what you select during the invoice submission process.

Reporting

What reports does the participating teacher need to submit?

Participating teachers are responsible for submitting a student roster with all participating students' names and grade levels, a How-to Guide the participating students have completed, and a Final Program Report.

Are the completed How-to Guides evaluated?

Groups should complete How-to Guides to the best of their ability. How-to Guides are not strictly evaluated; however, they do need to meet certain standards, such as fitting the program timeline and having environmental sustainability goals. After submitting the How-to Guides, Walking Softer will set up a meeting with the participating teacher. If there are any questions, concerns, or clarifications about the project or project funding needed, they will be discussed at the meeting.

What is the purpose of the Final Program Report?

The Final Program Report does not evaluate the teacher, students, or project. It is intended for Walking Softer to gather more information about the project's impact and receive feedback on how to improve the program in the future. We estimate it will take no more than one hour to complete.

Privacy And Data Collection

What data does Walking Softer collect about students?

The only student data we collect is each participating student's name and grade level. We collect this information to check for scholarship eligibility, and this data won't be shared externally.

We utilize a CRM called Apricot by Bonterra, which is used most often by social/caseworkers. Apricot uses usernames and passwords to prevent unauthorized access and to restrict user access within the application. Each unique user account is assigned access to programs and permission sets to restrict access to data and features in the system.

The software meets current HUD Domestic Violence, HMIS, and Social Security Administration data management and security protocols, as well as the minimum required FERPA and HIPAA standards. For more information, please see Apricot’s [Security and Hosting](#) page.

Thank you for your interest in Walking Softer Education. If you’d like to register for the program, the first step is to fill out the [intake form](#) on our [website](#). If you have any questions, we are happy to set up a virtual meeting! Please reach out to [education@walkingsofter.org](mailto:education@walkingsofter.org) to arrange a time.