EPA
Environmental Education (EE) Program
Green Schools Summit
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www.epa.gov/education
Environmental Education is **More than Information about the Environment**

Environmental Education vs. Environmental Information

Environmental Education increases public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues or problems. In doing so, it provides the public with the necessary skills to make decisions and take responsible action.
Components of Environmental Education

- Awareness and Sensitivity
- Knowledge and Understanding
- Attitudes
- Skills
- Participation

Environmental Education
Environmental Education in the U.S.

1. 1970 - 1975 - President Nixon signs the very first National Environmental Education Act into law
2. 1981 - Repealed as part of a budget reconciliation bill under President Reagan
3. 1990 - President Bush signs the National Environmental Education Act into law.
4. 1996 - NEEA “expires” - not currently an authorized program, but Congress continues to fund the program

Other Key Federal Funding Programs - NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) and Environmental Literacy Grant Programs (ELG)

- No Child Left Inside Act (NCLI- H.R.882, S.492), Federal Education Bill (S.1177), and Climate Education Funding (H.R.1961)
National Environmental Education Act of 1990 25th Anniversary

Requires EPA to provide national leadership to increase environmental literacy. EPA established the Office of Environmental Education to implement this program.
Findings of Congress

National Environmental Education Act

International Environmental Problems
- global warming (climate change)
- ocean pollution
- declines in species diversity

Problems threaten quality of life and economic vitality

Threats are complex
Many positives:

- Helped focus EE in the federal govt.
- Got EPA involved in EE
- Total $$ spent~$200M
- About 3,700 grants awarded
And some challenges...

- Very prescriptive- little flexibility
- Relatively flat budget
- Out of date
EPA’S OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BUDGET

- OEE Activities 25%
- EE Grants 38%
- Training 25%
- NEEF 10%
- Awards 2%
## What’s in the Act

- Established EPA’s Office of Environmental Education
- Environmental Education and Training Programs
- Environmental Education Grants
- Environmental Interns and Fellowship
- Student and Teacher Award Programs
- Established Environmental Education Advisory Council and Federal Task Force on EE
Environmental Education Grants

WHO WE FUND

- College/Universities: 23%
- Non Profit: 55%
- Local Government: 5%
- State Government: 6%
- Tribal: 1%
- Schools/Districts: 10%
- Tribal: 1%

Non-Profit 55%
Types of Projects Funded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Literacy</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biodiversity/Habitat</td>
<td>19%</td>
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TYPES OF PROJECTS

- Environmental Literacy: 29%
- Biodiversity/Habitat: 19%
- Human Health: 7%
- Water: 24%
- Toxic Substances: 5%
- Soil/Ag: 3%
- Solid Waste: 5%
- Pesticides: 1%
Summary of Regional EPA EE Grant Recipients - $557,957 Awarded in FY14/15

- **Los Angeles Unified School District**, $50,000 - Development of water curriculum under “One Water Los Angeles” Initiative
- **Merito Foundation**, $91,000 - Ventura, California  Energy Efficiency to Mitigate Climate Change and Ocean Acidification
- **Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation** - $91,000 - Monterey, California - Watsonville Teens Conserving Habitat Program
- **Malama Learning Center** - $91,000 - Oahu, Hawaii - Nanakuli Wetlands Restoration and Community Partnership
- **Pacific American Foundation** - $80,000 - Oahu, Hawaii - Wisdom of the Watershed Program for 6-12th Grade Students
- **Great Basin Institute** - $63,957 - Climate Change Education for Academically Low-Achieving High School Students
- **Tuolumne River Preservation Trust** - $91,000 - Water Ways: A water education pathway for K-12
Education and Training
“EE Capacity” - Cornell University

- 5 Year Cooperative Agreement with EPA - building capacity of environmental educators to provide quality EE that leads to improved environmental literacy and expanded civic engagement to help create an improved environment and more sustainable future.

- Global Online Course: Environmental Education: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Addressing Wicked Problems (Feb 1 - April 24, 2016)
  [http://www.eecapacity.net/global-ee](http://www.eecapacity.net/global-ee)

- COMING SOON New TOOL - eePRO - new online hub for EE professional development

- [www.eecapacity.net](http://www.eecapacity.net)
Presidential Environmental Youth Award Program

- Annual Program - Applications are due December of Each Year
- NEW FOR THIS YEAR - Recognizes one K-5th Grade Student and one 6th-12th per Region
- Winning project receives one Presidential plaque and each participant receives a certificate signed by the President
- White House Ceremony and Recognition in Washington DC (dependent on funding)

http://www2.epa.gov/education/presidents-environmental-youth-award
Mt. Madonna School - Watsonville, CA
Don’t Be A Nurdle - Help the Sea Turtle Project
Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators

- Awarded to K-12 teachers who incorporate environmental education in their classroom and teaching methods
- Teacher awardees will receive a Presidential award plaque and an award of up to $2,500 to be used to further the recipient's professional development in environmental education. Teacher awardees will also receive a congratulatory letter from a senior official from EPA and/or the White House.
- The teacher's local education agency will also receive an award of up to $2,500 to fund environmental educational activities and programs.
- Honorable Mention recipients will receive certificates of recognition

www2.epa.gov/education/presidential-innovation-award-environmental-educators
Dr. James Powell  
Menlo-Atherton High School  

- Teaches AP Environmental Science  
- Environmental Analysis through Chemistry  
- Uses innovative tools- all of classroom standard lecture done outside the classroom  
- Student led environmental projects  
- Received UC lab accreditation of his environmental chemistry course
EPA’s EE Materials

- Homework resources
- Games, quizzes
- Videos about the environment:
- Lesson plans, teacher guides
- Science Fair Project Ideas
- Community Service Project Ideas

NATIONAL SERVICE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLICATIONS

www2epa.gov/nscep

1-800-490-9198
Climate Change EE Materials

- **A Students Guide To Global Climate Change** - An interactive website from EPA for students that includes basic information, a glossary of terms, and a footprint calculator tool: GRADES 6-12

- **Climate Change Fundamentals** - Detailed information about climate change concepts and developments: what it is, what it can do, and what’s being done about it. GRADES 6-12

- **Generate! Game** - An interactive board game developed by EPA scientists enables players to explore energy choices and the environment. GRADES 6-12

- **Climate Change, Wildlife, and Wildlands Toolkit** - A toolkit for formal and informal educators - EPA, in partnership with the National Park Service and with U.S Fish & Wildlife Service. GRADES: ALL
EPA’s Office of Environmental Education
Strategic Plan Development

We want a strategic plan that is relevant to the field of EE
Our Strategic Planning process...
Goal 1:

To promote the use of EE in schools and communities to improve environmental literacy and environmental stewardship.
Goal 2:

To increase the capacity of states and others to develop, coordinate and/or deliver comprehensive statewide EE programs
Goal 3:

To support research and evaluation that assesses the effectiveness of EE in improving environmental literacy and encouraging stewardship.
Goal 4:

To promote professional/career development for environmental educators and encourage youth to consider careers related to the environment
Goal 5:

To build the capacity of the Agency to lead, engage and support quality EE
Framing Questions

What’s missing?

What can be improved?

What actions or strategies would you recommend to help EPA meet this goal?

What transformational change can this goal help bring about?

How could or would we measure success under this goal?
Strategic Plan Comments

If you have other thoughts or comments, you can send them to potter.ginger@epa.gov
Thank You!

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