

2021

DEP Environmental Education Grants Program Manual



Funding environmental education projects across Pennsylvania



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2021 DEP Environmental Education Grants Program

The 2021 Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Education Grants Program welcomes applications for the development of innovative formal and non-formal education projects that: 1) Address grant program priorities; 2) Provide opportunities to expand the public's understanding of Pennsylvania's environmental issues; and 3) Develop skills required to make informed decisions and take responsible action on behalf of the environment.

Since 1993, DEP has awarded 2,020 environmental education grants totaling more than \$11 million. Over the program's tenure, awardees have included schools, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, county conservation districts, businesses, and other eligible entities.

Proposals that fail to support the **Environmental Education Guiding Principles** (see Page 5), but simply disseminate information, will not be funded. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use and adapt existing, high-quality instructional materials and teaching curriculums, such as Bay BackPack, Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience materials, Project WET, Project WILD, Project Learning Tree and DCNR's Watershed Education, (see page 15) before creating new materials.

2021 Environmental Education Grant Program Timeline

September 11, 2020	The 2021 DEP Environmental Education Program round opens. The 2021 Environmental Education Grants Program Manual and other pertinent information will be posted to DEP's website. DEP EE database notifications will be sent via email.
December 11, 2020	Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on this date. Late submissions will not be considered.
Spring 2021	Awarded projects will be announced in Spring 2021. Unanticipated circumstances may result in announcement delays.
July 1, 2021	Awarded projects may begin on this date.
January 15, 2022	Draft project assessment plans/tools due for review and feedback.
January 15, 2022	General grant progress reports due.
June 30, 2022	Completion date for all projects.
July 15, 2022	Final reports, including assessment results, and final requests for reimbursement due.

DEP EE Grant Program Priorities

The DEP's Environmental Education (EE) Grants Program provides funding to support projects that address one or more of the following priorities:

Climate Change

Education projects to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and negative impacts of climate change including floods, changes to groundwater, pests, disease, agricultural disruptions, and potential threats to human health such as:

- Public education campaigns to reduce emissions and improve public health.
- Community projects promoting integrated water resource management, water conservation, and stormwater best management practices (BMPs).
- Educational tours and demonstration projects featuring renewable energy and energy conservation projects, sustainable transportation, alternative fuels, waste reduction, and agricultural best management practices (BMPs).
- Education projects supporting Green School initiatives.
- Selective climate adaptation projects, implemented as a part of a larger educational effort, such as urban tree and riparian buffer plantings, water quality monitoring, habitat improvement, and other meaningful experiences.

Water

Education programs promoting effective ways to reduce non-point source and source water pollution to improve water quality such as:

- Programs, workshops, and educational tours that connect local water quality issues with watersheds, agricultural nutrient management, abandoned mine drainage/reclamation, water conservation, private water wells, groundwater, road treatment, water quality monitoring, stormwater management, cold water habitats and fisheries, stream restoration, or other relevant subjects.
- Watershed education programs culminating in stewardship and/or community action projects.

Environmental Justice

Education programs designed to empower and engage residents and officials of communities located in Environmental Justice Areas, ([as defined by the U.S. Census](#)), develop meaningful solutions that address local environmental issues and public health concerns such as:

- Projects that support workforce development and environmentally-themed career opportunities.
- Projects for urban youth that help build connections between nature and the urban environment and encourage participation in hands-on stewardship projects.
- Projects to help residents identify sources of household and community hazardous wastes, understand how to properly use and dispose of products; and encourage practical use of "green" alternative products.
- Projects to reduce vehicle idling and promote alternative transportation.
- Educational demonstration projects that increase the community's understanding of climate change impacts and promote adoption of green infrastructure practices such as renewable energy

and energy conservation practices, permeable pavements, green rooftops, rain gardens, rain barrels or cisterns, tree box filters, urban tree plantings, and other related practices.

- Citizen involvement projects to create and support municipal or multi-municipal environmental advisory councils (EAC) and other public participation teams.
- Education and outreach projects, with an emphasis on improving water quality for MS4 permittees, such as storm water management.
- Workshops about DEP, including the regulatory process and public participation.

DEP EE Grants Program Description

“Environmental education is critical to promoting a healthy environment and citizenry, sustainable communities and to the growth of Pennsylvania’s economy.” (Environmental Education Act, Section 2, Declaration of Policy (6).

The Department of Environmental Protection’s Environmental Education Grant’s Program provides funding for education projects that foster an understanding of natural world functions and cultivate critical thinking and actions that promote environmental protection and sustainable resource management.

The Department of Environmental Education Grants Program will *not* provide funding for:

- Projects that are not entirely focused on environmental education.
- Basic research such as: data collection, surveys and/or stipends for researchers.
- Beautification projects or landscaping.
- Fundraising or membership drives.
- Political advocacy, campaigning, legislative lobbying or litigation programs. Applications that advocate for a particular policy position or appear biased will not be considered.
- Real estate acquisitions or due diligence research related to such acquisitions.
- Construction activities including building construction, improvement to existing structures, pond or wetland construction.

Eligible Applicants

- Public schools and school districts (K-12) (includes Intermediate Units and Charter Schools)
- Incorporated private schools (under limited circumstances, private religious schools may be exempted from the incorporation requirement)
- Incorporated conservation and education organizations and institutions
- Universities and colleges
- County conservation districts
- Incorporated nonprofit organizations
- Businesses (must be registered to do business in Pennsylvania)

Ineligible Applicants

- Entities, including municipalities, that do not appear on the Eligible Applicants listing cannot receive 2021 Environmental Education Program funds. Ineligible applicants are encouraged to partner with an eligible applicant to deliver environmental education programs.

Note: Applicants that were previously awarded a DEP Environmental Education Grant, but failed to meet its contractual obligations, may be deemed ineligible to receive 2021 Environmental Education Grant Program funds.

Project Time Period

Awarded projects may begin on July 1, 2021 and must end by June 30, 2022. No time extensions will be provided. Expenses incurred outside of the Project Time period are ineligible for grant funds.

Project Location(s)

All projects must occur in Pennsylvania and engage audiences located within the state.

Project Audiences

Projects may deliver both formal and non-formal education programs targeting *any* audience, including, but not limited to, youth, teachers, municipal officials, farmers, developers, site designers, businesses, and homeowners or other community residents. People living and working within Environmental Justice areas are considered priority audiences.

Grant Proposals shall include a project narrative reflecting:

- The credentials of the applying Organization, Project Leader and others, including partners and subcontractors, involved with the project's implementation.
- One or more of the DEP EE Grant Program priorities;
- The project's goals and expected outcomes;
- The target audience(s) and the project's location(s);
- The type of project (Formal or Non-Formal education);
- A project timeline, with specific project benchmarks;
- An assessment strategy, including metrics, designed to evaluate audience changes;
- How the project will be promoted at the applicable local, state, and national levels;
- Reflects a strong technology component that integrates use of social media, web-based applications, and/or other appropriate technological tools and resources (General Grants); and
- A plan to sustain the project after grant funds end.

Additionally, General Grant Level II projects will:

- Provide a non-formal environmental education program designed to widely* engage teachers and youth at the county, state and national levels. (**Teachers and students from at least 60 Pennsylvania counties will directly participate in the project*); and
- Demonstrate that at least 30% of program participants live, work, or attend school within an Environmental Justice area.

Multiple Applications

Multiple applications may be submitted from the same organization. Each project application will be viewed as an independent proposal and evaluated accordingly.

Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted electronically through the Single Application for Assistance at https://dep.pa.gov/EE_Grants by 11:59 PM on **December 11, 2020**. Applications submitted by ineligible organizations, past the deadline, or through mail, or fax, will not be considered.

Award Announcement

Awarded projects will be announced in Spring 2021, barring unforeseen circumstances which may result in delays.

Environmental Education Guiding Principles

The goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry, prepared to make informed decisions and take positive actions to help insure the state's natural resources are available for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Environmental Education:

- Is a lifelong learning process involving human interrelationships with the natural world. Key to this process is an awareness and understanding of ecology and human-driven processes, such as agriculture, mining, energy production, economics, legislative procedures, and more.
- Includes a vast array of conceptual learning, critical thinking, values clarification, issues investigation, effective leadership, group interaction, environmental research methods, and general problem solving.
- Provides opportunities for participants to engage in meaningful, hands-on experiences.
- Promotes positive environmental actions that may be private, involving subtle changes in an individual's lifestyle, or collective efforts at the community, state or national levels.
- Programs are most effective when they are learner driven, presented in a sequential framework, and address the learner's needs and concerns. For instance, young children may excel at programs that emphasize awareness and incorporate simple skill-building activities. Older youth, having mastered fundamental concepts, are able to participate in meaningful group actions on behalf of the environment.
- Non-formal programs can provide a path for citizens to make informed decisions that balance the needs of their communities with environmental protection.
- Formal programs should emphasize science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, a nationally recognized cornerstone of K-12 education. STEM has also become a primary focus of many higher education institutions.

Non-Formal and Formal Environmental Education Projects

Non-formal Environmental Education Projects

- Environmental education programs implemented outside of formal, K-12 school settings.
- Non-formal projects can be designed to reach any target audience including, but not limited to, youth, and may occur through a variety of venues such as afterschool activities, summer camps, 4-H programs, FFA, faith-based forums, and community workshops and special events.

Formal Environmental Education Projects

- Environmental education programs implemented within the formal, K-12 school setting.
- Projects must relate to the [State Academic Standards](#) in Environment and Ecology, and/or Science and Technology. Applicants are encouraged to integrate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) concepts.
- Projects will:
 - Occur within the local context (i.e. schoolyard, neighborhood, town, or community);
 - Be learner-driven, whereby students define a local issue and potential solution(s);
 - Reflect student participation in one or more outdoor field experiences;
 - Provide for student led Stewardship and/or Civic Action projects;
 - Introduce students to potential career opportunities involving environmental sciences and related fields;
 - Provide opportunities for teacher collaboration and professional development, including Act 48 credit, whenever possible;
 - Promote diverse partnerships involving local municipalities, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, businesses, etc.; and;
 - Encourage the use of technology by utilizing and integrating social media, mobile applications, web tools and/or other appropriate tools.

Sustainable Schools: Coordinate programs to develop green, sustainable K-12 schools. Applying organizations will focus on reducing environmental impact, school health or outdoor classrooms, including energy efficiency and conservation, water quality and conservation, sustainable school transportation, waste and recycling, climate change, air quality, radon/improving indoor air quality or integrated pest management.

- Schools may form and enhance an energy team with teachers, students, building facility managers and administrators with the goal to reduce the school building's energy use by first benchmarking with Energy Star's Portfolio Manager. Schools may develop and implement school-centered energy conservation plans, including student-led energy audits. Schools may partner with colleges or universities, non-profit environmental education centers, STEM organizations, math and science collaborative or other organizations.

- **Curriculum Integration Projects:** Articulate the Academic Standards for Environment and Ecology into the formal K-12 curriculum for the entire school district, private school, charter school or cyber school. Schools may coordinate workshops to be attended by representatives from all schools and grade levels within the school district or private school. The goal of the project is permanent curriculum change. Any tentative workshop dates must be included in the application.
- **Curriculum Revision Projects:** Applying schools will use their district's fully-aligned matrix to revise or write new lesson plans to integrate the Environment and Ecology Standards into the school's curriculum. Assessment of the integration is required. The district's fully-aligned matrix must be submitted with the application.

2021 DEP EE Grant Program Award Categories

Two types of awards are available for projects addressing the 2021 Environmental Education Grants Program priorities described on pages 2-3.

General Grants may be awarded in amounts ranging from \$3,001-\$20,000 (LEVEL I) for implementation of large scale regional or statewide environmental education projects or in amounts ranging from \$20,201-\$85,000 (LEVEL II), for non-formal projects engaging youth and teachers at the local, state and national levels. **Mini Grants**, of up to \$3,000, may be awarded for local (school, county, municipality or other defined area) environmental education projects.

Regardless of the type of award, the grantee will be designated as the legal entity, solely responsible for implementing the Grant Agreement. The grantee will manage the project, maintain records and submit all required documentation including mid-term progress and final reports, associated deliverables and requests for reimbursement.

GENERAL GRANTS (Projects awards ranging from \$3001-\$20,000 or \$20,001-\$85,000)

General Grant Payments

Funds are provided to General grants on a reimbursement basis and are *not* eligible to receive advance payments. A completed Reimbursement Request form, including details of any match contributions, must be submitted by January 15, 2022 and July 15, 2022, accompanied by the applicable midterm Progress report or a Final Report.

General Grant Match

General grant projects are **required** to provide a 20 percent (20%) project Match (cash or in-kind contributions), documented on the Detailed Budget Sheet. Project Match may be provided by the applying organization and/or one of its partners.

With the exception of People Costs, ineligible expenses (see list on pages 10-11), other state agency money, or state agency-supplied services or materials may not be designated as Match.

General Grant Partners

Partners are required of General grant awards. Partnerships can be made among school districts, private schools, universities, county conservation districts and other organizations to draw on the strengths of each entity. The Partners' contribution must be substantiated on a completed and signed Partnering form.

General Grant Longevity

Project proposals must reflect a plan for sustaining the project after grant funds expire.

General Grant Project Promotion

General Grant project proposals must have a plan for promoting the project and sharing lessons learned at a statewide conference or other far-reaching event.

MINI GRANTS (Projects awards up to \$3000)

Mini Grant Payments

Funds are provided to Mini grants on either a full **reimbursement** or a full **Advance** payment basis. **Reimbursement** requests must be submitted July 15, 2022, accompanied by the Final Report.

Requests for **Advance** payment must be submitted in writing, following full execution of the Grant Agreement. Requests must include a justification, stating the need for the Advance payment. Advance payments must be maintained in a separate, interest-bearing account. Financial institution documentation verifying the Advance account ending balance and account closure must be submitted, along with any remaining account funds, by July 15, 2022.

Mini Grant Match

Mini grant applicants are encouraged, **but not required**, to provide Match cash or in-kind contributions. Match, including the match source, must be documented on the Detailed Budget Sheet.

With the exception of People Costs, ineligible expenses (see list on pages 10-11), other state agency money, or state agency-supplied services or materials may not be designated as Match.

Mini Grant Partners

Partners are encouraged, but not required of Mini grant awards. The Partners' contribution must be substantiated on a completed and signed Partnering form.

Mini Grant Longevity

Project proposals must reflect a plan for sustaining the project after grant funds expire.

Mini Grant Project Promotion

Mini-grant project proposals must have a plan for promoting the project and sharing lessons learned with a local constituency.

2021 Environmental Education Grant Categories At-a-Glance

2021 DEP Environmental Education Grants	General	Mini
Project period July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022	X	X
Grant funding up to \$3000		X
Grant funding from \$3001-\$20,000 (Level I)	X	
Grant funding from \$20,001-\$85,000 (Level II)	X	
Priorities: Climate Change, Water, Environmental Justice	X	X
Funding requirements:		
Detailed Budget Sheet	X	X
Eligible to request one full Advance payment		X
20% Project Match (in-kind or cash) <i>required</i> Note: Ineligible project expenses (see pages 10-11), such as Indirect costs, may not serve as project Match	X	
Signed Partnering form(s) reflecting project match <i>required</i>	X	
Signed Partnering form(s) reflecting project match <i>encouraged</i>		X
Scope of Work requirements:		
Project benchmarks with anticipated dates of completion	X	X
Reflects a strong technology component (integrates use of social media, web-based applications, and/or other appropriate technological tools and resources)	X	
Engages a local audience (school, community, county, etc.)		X
Engages a regional or statewide audience (General Grant Level I)	X	
Engages teachers and youth (from at least 60 counties) at the County, State levels and National levels (General Grant Level II)	X	
Plans to promote project at a local event		X
Plans to promote project at a statewide or regional conference or other appropriate event	X	
Plans to sustain project after grant funds expire	X	X
Midterm draft evaluation tool or assessment plan due for review by January 15, 2022	X	X
Midterm Progress report reflecting benchmark accomplishments due January 15, 2022	X	X
FINAL Progress report reflecting benchmark accomplishments and deliverables due July 15, 2022	X	X
Reimbursement and reconciliations:		
General Grant midterm request for reimbursement due January 15, 2022	X	
FINAL request for reimbursement due July 15, 2022	X	X
Mini-grant unspent Advance payments returned by July 15, 2022		X

Additional Pertinent EE Grant Program Information

Eligible Grant Expenses

People Costs (up to 35% of grant funding)

- Wages and benefits directly related to project implementation, including project director, staff and clerical support.
- Private consultants, including wages/benefits and/or contractual fees for service.
- Stipends for school teachers and administrators for work done outside the normal work day.
- Substitute teacher pay, at the current daily rate.

Travel Costs

- Personal mileage at the current GSA rate. For more information, visit <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>.
- Transportation costs at a flat fee rate.

Resource Costs

- Educational resources such as books, library/research resources, software, test kits, and field guides.
- Supplies such as native plants and trees, mulch, shovels, hoes, garden trowels, gloves, building materials, signage, nets.
- Equipment such as microscopes, binoculars, handheld GPS units, weather stations, structures and equipment, such as energy audit equipment.
- Laboratory equipment (details are required). If more than \$1,500 is proposed for equipment, proposal must designate where the item(s) will be located and how the item(s) will be used after the project ends.

Other Costs

- Photocopying, printing, binding, graphic layout
- Project-specific phone charges
- Facility rental
- Advertising/marketing
- Website
- Postage

Ineligible Grant Expenses

- Food or beverages
- Lodging
- Airfare
- Computer hardware for general office use (i.e., laptops, iPads/tablet computers)
 - No more than 10 percent of the entire grant can be used to purchase program-specific technology.
- People costs greater than 35 percent of the total amount of grant funds requested.
- Out of state travel

- Award items (certificates, plaques)
- Indirect costs, including general operations or overhead charges, such as rent, utilities, monthly phone or website hosting charges
- Boats, kayaks, paddle boards and canoes (to purchase or rent)
- Cameras, including go-pros and drones.
- Clothing (t-shirts, hats)
- Lawn mowers and other power equipment
- Furniture for general office use
- Grants, scholarships or fellowships to be given by the grant recipient to a third party.
- Grant funds may not be used to pay for graduate or other continuing education credits
- Pass-through of cash or incentive prizes to project participants, e.g. grant funds may not be used to provide services (such as septic system cleanouts) to project participants at a discounted cost.
- Reimbursement for expenses prior to the July 1 effective start date.
- Promotional items, such as stress balls, laser pointers, magnets, pins, etc.

Subcontracts

Different than a project partner, a subcontractor is a company or person, hired by the grantee to perform specific task(s) as part of the overall project. The name of the subcontractor and the subcontractor's FEIN must be provided to DEP for vetting prior to the subcontractor beginning work. DEP retains the right to approve the subcontractor.

Grant Nullification and Reconciliation

Grant agreements are legally binding contractual agreements. Grantees must notify the Department (Department of Environmental Protection), in writing and on letterhead, should they wish to nullify the agreement due to unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, the Department retains the absolute and sole right to determine the final reconciliation of grant funds. As a guide:

- If no disbursements were provided to the Grantee, and the Grantee is not requesting an expense reimbursement, then the agreement will be nullified.
- If the Grantee completed some of its required benchmarks, a partial reimbursement of grant funds may be considered. An Expense Reimbursement Request must be submitted, accompanied by a Final report, reflecting the project's accomplishments and deliverables. The report must also provide a full explanation of uncompleted benchmarks and the specific reason(s) for abandoning the project.
- If the Grantee received a 100% Advance payment, the Grantee may be required, at the Department's sole discretion, to fully or proportionally reimburse the Department for uncompleted benchmarks. An Expense Reimbursement Request must be submitted, accompanied by a Final report, reflecting the project's accomplishments and deliverables. The report must also provide a full explanation of uncompleted benchmarks and the specific reason(s) for abandoning the project.

Additionally:

- In the event of an audit, should it be revealed that benchmark deliverables were not met in accordance with the scope of work, at the sole discretion of the Department, the Grantee may be obligated to return grant funds, in part or in full, to the Department's Environmental Education Fund.
- In the event the Grantee fails to adequately document its required match, the Grantee may be required to return grant funds or its request for reimbursement may be disapproved.
- A grantee's failure to comply with the obligations contained in the Grant Agreement, may deem the Grantee ineligible to receive future Environmental Education Grant Program funds.

Grant Acknowledgement

Grantees will provide DEP Environmental Education Grant Program acknowledgement on press releases, program advertisements and announcements, brochures, products and other pertinent grant information as follows:

"Financial and other support for the TITLE OF PROJECT has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection's 2021 Environmental Education Grants Program."

Project Proprietorship

Any educational materials, curricula, training manuals, technology tool or other products developed with the use of EEGP funds, must be made available in the public domain. DEP will retain electronic copies of all materials produced with grant funds. Copyrighting is discouraged, but if proved necessary, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will hold the copyright.

Proposal Disclosure

Grant applications and supporting documents may be subject to public disclosure through the Pennsylvania Right to Know Act. Any information included in the grant proposal that the applicant views as proprietary, must be clearly marked and submitted as an individual attachment at the time of application.

Grant Application Review and Feedback

Grant rater names, score sheets, comments, and other identifiable information are considered confidential and will not be released to applicants. Applicants wishing feedback and general guidance may contact the EE&IC after the final grant awards are announced.

Award Announcement and Agreement

Please retain this manual and a copy of the application for future reference.

The project period for the 2021 DEP Environmental Education Grants Program is July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. Work performed prior to July 1, 2021 is not eligible for grant funds.

Awarded projects will be announced in Spring 2021, barring unforeseen circumstances which may result in delays. Following the announcement, DEP's Grants Center will email instructions and required documents (Scope of Work Benchmarks and Detailed Budget Sheet) to the Project Director noted on the Grant Application. Upon satisfactory submission of all required documents, the DEP Grant Agreement (contract) will be forwarded to the project's authorized Grant signatory and Grant witness for electronic signature.

After the grantee's electronic signatures are returned, it takes approximately six weeks for the agreement to become fully executed. Therefore, it is possible that awarded organizations will not have an executed agreement in place until late summer of 2021. Additionally, Advance payments will be considered only after the grant agreement is fully executed.

Please note: While work may begin on July 1, 2021 without a fully executed agreement in place, the grantee does so at its own risk. Please check your organization's policy for performing work without an executed agreement.

General questions about the 2021 Environmental Education Grants Program may be directed to:

Department of Environmental Protection
EE Grants Program
Email: RA-epEEgrants@pa.gov

2021 DEP Environmental Education Grants Program Appendix

Act 48 Requirements for Teachers (Act 48)

Act 48 requires teachers to obtain 180 professional development hours in a given five-year period. Organizations interested in teacher professional development may become an approved Act 48 provider, which will greatly enhance program recruitment. For information on Act 48 Providers, visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov; type "Act 48" in the search box.

Act 168 Requirements (Act 168)

Act 168 pertains to grantees holding field trips or events where hired staff may be in direct contact with children or minors. Staff must be sure to complete the employment history review process related to Act 168. For information on Act 168, visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov; type "ACT 168" in the search box.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Passed by Congress in 1990, the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) is the nation's first comprehensive civil rights law addressing the needs of people with disabilities, prohibiting discrimination in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Applying organizations are responsible for compliance with the ADA, as applicable to the proposed project.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

The Department of Environmental Protection's mission is to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment. We will work as partners with individuals, organizations, governments and businesses to prevent pollution and restore our natural resources.

DEP Environmental Education Grants Program (EEGP)

Pennsylvania's Environmental Education Act of 1993 established the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Education Grants Program. The act mandates setting aside five (5) percent of the pollution fines and penalties, collected annually by the DEP for environmental education, providing the only consistent source of environmental education funding within the state.

DEP Environmental Education and Information Center (EE&IC)

Located on the first floor of the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg, the EE&IC works collaboratively to carry out the objectives of DEP's environmental education program. The EE&IC staff administer the DEP's environmental education grant program; collaborates with partners to promote environmental education efforts at public and private schools, higher education facilities, and non-formal environmental education centers; and manages a full-service environmental education center that provides resource and educational materials to educators, the community, and the general public.

Environmental Education (EE)

Environmental education is a lifelong process. The goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry, prepared to make informed decisions and take positive actions to help insure the state's natural resources are available for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Environmental Education Principles

Environmental Education Principles encourage the public to promote a healthy environment; foster an understanding of the natural world functioning; and promote an understanding of the necessity for environmental protection and sound resource management.

Pennsylvania State Academic Standards

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education has adopted academic standards in 12 subject areas. The standards which are benchmark measures that define what students should know or be able to do at specified grade levels beginning in grade 3. The standards are promulgated as state regulations. As such, they must be used as the basis for curriculum and instruction in Pennsylvania's public schools.

Existing Environmental Education resources to consider before creating new materials:

[Bay Backpack](#) is an online resource that supports hands-on environmental learning.

Visit: <http://baybackpack.com/>

[An Educator's Guide to the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience \(MWEE\)](#): A guide for creating meaningful outdoor experiences from the Chesapeake Bay Program. Information is applicable to watersheds throughout Pennsylvania.

Visit: <https://www.cbf.org/document-library/education/teachers-guide-to-meaningful-watershed-education-experience.pdf>

[Project WET](#) (Watershed Education for Teachers) is a curriculum and Activity Guide with 64 interdisciplinary water-related lessons. Its activities are broad-reaching and can be used to deliver both Non-formal and Formal environmental education programs.

Visit: <https://www.projectwet.org/what-we-do/publications/guides>

[Project WILD](#) is a curriculum designed to help students learn *how* to think, not *what* to think, about wildlife and the environment. Materials represent the work of many professionals within the fields of education and natural resource management. Visit: <https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild>

[Project Learning Tree \(PLT\)](#) is an award-winning, environmental education program for educators working with students from Pre-K through 12th grade. Through hands-on interdisciplinary activities, PLT uses the forest as a "Window on the world" to help young people learn *how* to think, not *what* to think, about complex environmental issues.

Visit: <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Education/ProjectLearningTree/Pages/default.aspx>

[Watershed Education \(WE\)](#), developed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, WE is an inquiry-based, interdisciplinary curriculum that is geared for students in grades 6 through 12. Blending hands-on classroom and field investigations, students participate in data collection and analysis, community networking and partnerships, and stewardship and service learning activities. Visit: <http://www.watersheded.dcnr.state.pa.us/index.html>