



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 7, 2010

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State's First Environmental Education Curriculum Receives Approval from the State Board of Education

SACRAMENTO – Today, Linda Adams, Secretary for Environmental Protection, announced that the Agency's Education and the Environment Initiative's (EEI) environmental curriculum received final approval from the California State Board of Education for use in California classrooms beginning this year.

"This nation-leading initiative will educate our next generation of workers in environmental preservation and protection and will help catapult California's growing green economy," said Governor Schwarzenegger. "Protecting our environment and preserving California's natural beauty for future generations is a top priority for my Administration. This curriculum will further our deep commitment to high academic standards while balancing environmental preservation and protection and helping to develop a well trained workforce to continue growing California's economy."

"This curriculum will expand environmental literacy at a time when protecting our environment is paramount. This will be the benchmark for the nation, likely stretching to foreign countries. The curriculum will help prepare today's students to become future scientists, economists and green technology leaders, said Adams."

The curriculum includes 85-units of environment-related education in the traditional subjects of Science and History/Social Science for grades K-12th. It was developed in partnership with business, non-profits, state agencies and education partners. Seventy-six of the 85 units were approved today, with the remaining nine units to be approved in the Spring. The curriculum will be available online this year and EEI hopes to be able to provide printed versions and teacher training in the coming years. The EEI curriculum has no fiscal impact. To see draft versions of the units, visit www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI/Curriculum/Default.htm#CurriculumUnits.

"This first-in-the-nation environmental curriculum will help change the way we look at solving our environmental problems. Today's environmental issues are integrated into everyday life, and this curriculum gives us the opportunity to help shape our future leaders and educate them about preserving our environment through their everyday academics," said Senator Fran Pavley, who introduced the law in 2003.

"This ground-breaking initiative builds on our state's high academic standards and positions California to lead the nation in environmental literacy and education," added Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell. "I look forward to working with our partners to bring this important curriculum into classrooms across the state."

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The curriculum has already been both field and pilot tested in 19 California school districts over the last two years, providing invaluable feedback and rave reviews from participating teachers and students. The EEI curriculum also underwent a comprehensive review by State Board of Education-designated independent reviewers in the Summer of 2009.

The California Environmental Protection Agency is actively engaged in the implementation of EEI pursuant to AB 1548 (Pavley, Chapter 665, Statutes of 2003-PDF) and AB 1721 (Pavley, Chapter 581, Statutes of 2005-PDF). These landmark laws mandate the development of a unified education strategy to bring education about the environment into California's primary and secondary schools. The 2003 law was sponsored by Heal the Bay, a non-profit environmental organization in Southern California, who has been an active partner in the EEI curriculum's development. Other current key partners include the State Board of Education, the Office of the Secretary of Education, the Curriculum and Supplemental Materials Commission, the State Department of Education (CDE), and the California Natural Resources Agency.

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