

Environmental Education Memorial

Environmental Education Memorial 2016 – NM Rep. Kelly Fajardo and Senator Michael Sanchez will sponsor a joint memorial acknowledging importance of environmental education (EE) and asking the governor to declare an environmental education week.

What is EE?

The North American Association for Environmental Education defines environmental education:

Environmental education teaches children and adults how to learn about and investigate their environment, and to make intelligent, informed decisions about how they can take care of it.

EE is taught in traditional classrooms, on school campuses, in communities, and in settings like nature centers, museums, parks, and zoos. Learning about the environment involves many subjects—earth science, biology, chemistry, social studies, even math and language arts—because understanding how the environment works, and keeping it healthy, involves knowledge and skills from many disciplines.

EE works best when it is taught in an organized sequence. In schools, EE often reflects state and national learning standards. EE not only leads to environmentally literate people, but also helps increase student academic achievement.



Why do we need it?

- Promotes student engagement in their learning both inside and outside of school environment.
- Provides opportunities for project-based learning that benefit schools and community.
- Restores and protects the natural heritage and environmental health of our state through service learning.



- Prepares students for complex environmental challenges as they become adults.
- Can be taught with existing resources.
- Provides a theme for Common Core and other standards.
- Much of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) is environmental education.
- Supports health and wellness initiatives by getting kids outside and teaching about food production and nutrition.

How does it connect to other efforts?

- NM PED Strategic Plan supports environmental education.
- Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards – 4 of the 8 awards were programs at schools or nonprofits who work with schools in a variety of ways – classroom visits, field investigations, and school greening activities.
- Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights 2012 – State agencies directed to create more opportunities for children outdoors.
- Recreation – enjoyment of natural resources leads to conservation and stewardship; recreational activities promote health and fitness.
- Healthy Kids Outdoors Act (introduced) US Sen. Martin Heinrich; implementation includes environmental education in school settings.
- Framework for 21st Century Learning – emphasis on critical thinking, collaboration; includes themes of global awareness and environmental literacy; multiple learning environments.

