



**naaee**

North American Association  
for Environmental Education

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NAAEE Releases Guidance for School Reopening: How Environmental Educators and Learning Outdoors Can Help!**

- Environmental educators and programs can help support and transform teaching and learning in challenging times
- Outdoor classrooms offer opportunities for newly-reopening schools and districts
- Classroom capacity can be expanded with environmental education programming

**Washington, DC, July 1, 2020** – The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) today released *eeGuidance for Reopening Schools*, a new publication that offers support for schools and districts as they find ways to safely and equitably reopen for students this fall. Developed in collaboration with members of its state Affiliate Network, the guidance offers dozens of specific recommendations for schools and districts. Solutions include using the school grounds for outdoor classroom spaces as a strategy for adhering to physical distancing guidelines, engaging community environmental and outdoor education programs as alternative resources for learning, tapping into the expertise of environmental educators to support teaching and learning, creating healthier learning environments, and supporting at-home learning. The recommendations were developed based on more than 65 community feedback calls conducted by NAAEE Affiliate organizations with hundreds of environmental and outdoors learning providers from around the country during the spring of 2020.

Engaging environmental and outdoor education programs will help schools reopen equitably. The *eeGuidance* states, “Environmental and outdoor education programs offer some solutions to challenges schools face now and in the future. These organizations can and should be essential partners in supporting schools and families as states begin to reopen schools. Environmental and outdoor education programs present some promising tools for schools and districts throughout the U.S. and are essential partners in creating a more just and sustainable future for all.”

According to Judy Braus, Executive Director for NAAEE, “States are approaching plans to reopen schools according to their own unique circumstances and timelines. NAAEE is excited about linking thousands of environmental education programs across the country with schools and districts to help support students, teachers, and families as schools make plans to reopen in the coming school year. Our goal is to share a range of recommendations that can be adapted for use at the state and local level by our Affiliate organizations in partnership with schools to create a win-win for everyone during a very challenging time.”

View the eeGuidance document online: <https://naaee.org/eepr/resources/eeGuidance-reopening-schools>

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### **About NAAEE**

For almost five decades, the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) has served as the professional association, champion, and backbone organization for the field of environmental education (EE), working with EE professionals across United States, Canada, and Mexico, as well as globally, to advance environmental literacy and civic engagement to create a more equitable and sustainable future. NAAEE is the only national membership organization dedicated to strengthening EE and increasing the visibility and effectiveness of the field. NAAEE’s work aims to provide professional development, access to learning networks and collaborative partnerships, tools and resources to promote effective practice, and leadership and capacity building. NAAEE is also involved in a number of field-building activities and signature programs, including the Natural Start Alliance to advance environmental education in early childhood and the Global Environmental Education Partnership—a global network dedicated to building capacity at the country level (see [thegeep.org](http://thegeep.org)). For more information on NAAEE, visit <https://naaee.org>.

### **About the NAAEE Affiliate Network**

NAAEE and its 56 Affiliate organizations form the largest network of environmental educators in the U.S. Together, we are a driving force for creating a more environmentally literate and engaged citizenry. We have been working together for decades to build a robust and dynamic community of EE professionals and partners who understand the value and power of EE to ensure a more just and sustainable world. Find your Affiliate: <https://naaee.org/our-partners/affiliates>.