



Senate Bill 720

Approved by Governor Brown on September 13, 2018.

Filed with the Secretary of State on September 13, 2018.

Senate Bill 720 (SB720) authored by Senator Ben Allen, co-authored by Assemblymember Tony Thurmond, and sponsored by Ten Strands, is legislation that strengthens California's commitment to ensuring that all public school students have the opportunity to become environmentally literate. SB720 was officially signed into law by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. on September 13, 2018. SB720 includes changes to Education Code and Public Resources Code as described below.

Summary of Legislative Counsel's Digest

This bill states that the California Legislature...

1. has approved California's Environmental Principles and Concepts (EP&Cs), which are embedded into curriculum frameworks adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE),
2. intends for the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to provide leadership to further goals of environmental literacy,
3. encourages the governing boards of school districts to take action to promote instruction in environmental literacy for grades 1-6 and 7-12, and
4. provides that the EP&Cs may be updated every 4 years in cooperation with the SPI, the SBE, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the Natural Resources Agency, pursuant to a specified process.

It is the intent of the Legislature that the SPI... (Section 1b)

1. assist in providing professional development to educators in environmental literacy,
2. assist in building and supporting partnerships that support the advancement of environmental literacy,
3. ensure that environmental literacy curriculum and learning experiences are made available on an equitable basis to all students, and that the environmental literacy curriculum and learning experiences reflect the linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of California,
4. encourage the incorporation of the EP&Cs into the credential requirements for both teachers and school administrators,
5. encourage the incorporation of the EP&Cs in the development of statewide assessments,
6. assist in the incorporation of the EP&Cs into curriculum and instruction for career and technical education, and
7. engage with other branch agencies and departments, including CalRecycle's Office of Education and the Environment, to obtain technical assistance.

The Legislature encourages the governing boards of school districts to do all of the following with respect to study in grades 1-6 and grades 7-12 (Sections 2b and 3b):

1. embed environmental literacy in local control and accountability plans, local priorities, and goals,
2. provide professional development for educators in environmental literacy,



3. build partnerships with other local educational agencies, community-based organizations, informal education providers, and other environmental content providers,
4. ensure that environmental literacy curriculum and learning experiences are made available on an equitable basis to all pupils and that environmental literacy curriculum and learning experiences reflect the linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of California, and
5. link environmental literacy content and principles to career pathways and to career technical education curriculum and activities (grades 7-12 only).

The following is added to the Education Code (Section 4).

- A. The Instructional Quality Commission shall ensure that the EP&Cs are integrated into the content standards and curriculum frameworks in English language arts (ELA), science, history-social science, health, and, to the extent practicable, mathematics whenever those standards and frameworks are revised.
- B. The EP&Cs shall be incorporated, as the SBE determines appropriate, in the criteria developed for textbook adoption.

Public Resources Code is amended to read (Section 5):

- A. As part of the unified education strategy, in cooperation with the Secretary for Environmental Protection, the Natural Resources Agency, the State Department of Education, and the SBE, the EP&Cs shall be developed for elementary and secondary school students.
- B. The EP&Cs may be updated every four years beginning July 1, 2008 based on current scientific and technical knowledge, and incorporate input from the SBE, the SPI, other executive branch agencies and departments, NGO science and education consultants and organizations with relevant scientific and technical knowledge, and currently employed public school classroom teachers with experience in education related to the environment. A minimum of two public meetings should be held for the public to provide input on the modifications.
- C. The EP&Cs shall be aligned to the academic content standards adopted by the SBE in the subjects of ELA, science, history-social science, health, and, to the extent practicable, mathematics, and shall not conflict with any academic content standards. The EP&Cs shall be used to do the following:
 - direct state agencies that include environmental education components for elementary and secondary education in regulatory decisions or enforcement actions, and
 - align state agency environmental education programs and materials developed for primary and secondary education.
- D. The EP&Cs shall include concepts relating to: air, climate change, energy, environmental justice, environmental sustainability, fish and wildlife resources, forestry, integrated pest management, oceans, pollution prevention, public health and the environment, resource conservation, waste reduction, and recycling, toxics and hazardous waste, and water.