



Press Release

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CONTACT: Lindsay VanLaningham
(916) 324-9670

State Joins Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District to Announce its Implementation of Environmental Curriculum *District receives a private grant for teacher materials and training*

SANTA MONICA, Calif. – Today, Linda Adams, Secretary for Environmental Protection, along with SMMUSD representatives and Hollywood Actor Ed Begley, Jr. joined officials in a kick-off event announcing that SMMUSD will begin implementing the State's first-in-the-nation environmental curriculum in its District with the help of a \$50,000 grant from Sempra Energy Foundation.

"This landmark curriculum will expand environmental literacy at a time when protecting our environment is paramount. I applaud SMMUSD for being an early adopter of this curriculum and hope that ultimately we'll be able to provide this up-to-date, environment-based education to every school in California. This will help prepare today's students to become future scientists, economists and green technology leaders," said Adams.

"Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District teachers are excited to be some of the first in the state to implement this curriculum with assistance from the Sempra Energy Foundation. This validates the commitment from the Santa Monica-Malibu community to provide an environment-based education to provide students with up-to-date lessons and information," said District representative Bertha Roman.

"We are proud to support the local district in its efforts to develop educational programs that encourage students to protect and conserve Southern California's natural landscape," said Beatriz Palomino Young, executive director of Sempra Energy Foundation. Sempra's goal is to reach 100 teachers and thousands of students in the district with the help of the \$50,000 grant.

The curriculum includes 85-units of environment-based education in the traditional subjects of Science and History/Social Science for grades K-12. The curriculum is available online at www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI/Curriculum/Default.htm#CurriculumUnits and the state aims to implement the Education and the Environment Initiative (EEI) curriculum statewide, including teacher training, in the coming years with the help of public-private partnerships such as the one with Sempra.

The curriculum comes at a time when there is five-year moratorium on the adoption of new textbooks in the state, making the EEI curriculum the only new State Board of Education approved instructional materials available to students for years to come.

"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.

"As air quality, dependence on foreign oil and safe drinking water become issues of great importance in our lives, it's essential that our students have some level of environmental literacy so they can have a chance of dealing with them. The EEI Curriculum provides the tools to tackle those weighty matters. We need it now, more than ever," said Begley.

"With this innovative curriculum, California is leading in the greening of the future. We are also giving our students a head start in the new green jobs of tomorrow," added Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson.

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The curriculum has already been both field and pilot tested in 19 California school districts, where it received invaluable feedback and rave reviews from participating teachers and students. The EEI curriculum also underwent a comprehensive review and received unanimous approval by the State Board of Education.

The California Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for the implementation of EEI pursuant to AB 1548 (Pavley, Chapter 665, Statutes of 2003) and AB 1721 (Pavley, Chapter 581, Statutes of 2005). 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, which has been an active partner in the EEI curriculum's development. Other current key partners include the California Department of Education, the State Board of Education and the California Natural Resources Agency.

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