

ICYMI: DEP Announces Online Library to Help K-5 Educators Incorporate Climate Change Lessons and Solution-Based Concepts Into All Subject Areas

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TRENTON – New Jersey early grade educators and their pupils will gain a better understanding of the importance of climate change and the opportunities to address it with help from a new online library unveiled as part of Earth Week that provides guidance on how to seamlessly weave climate change education into multiple school subject areas, Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette announced today.

The library of resources

([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/b6wovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!OQGPcT03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-I2B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SsiOXJhOtG1\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/b6wovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!OQGPcT03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-I2B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SsiOXJhOtG1$)) from the Office of Environmental Education includes curated resources from environment-focused nonprofit organizations, government agencies and academic institutions. These materials will help K-5 teachers more easily find climate change resources and lesson plans they can plug into current required units in subject areas such as math, language arts, social studies, science, art, physical education and more. The launch of the library aligns with the Earth Week 2025 theme of Our Power, Our Planet.

As it continues to evolve, the library will be updated continuously to incorporate insights from the New Jersey Department of Education to reflect New Jersey's best available climate science as well as additional no-cost teaching resources from environment-focused nonprofit organizations, government agencies and academic institutions.

"Our educators are shaping the minds of the next generation of strategic, innovative leaders who will drive the green economy forward," said **First Lady Tammy Murphy**. "This online library is a vital tool to support our nation-leading teachers as they bring climate change education into their classrooms in inspiring and exciting ways. I've had the extraordinary pleasure of visiting K-12 classrooms across our state to see some of these incredible lessons in action, and I look forward to witnessing the creative and thoughtful ways this library will help prepare our students to understand and tackle the impacts of climate change."

"It is imperative that New Jersey educate today's children about climate science, because they will one day be the leaders of our state and our country, and on the front lines of working toward solutions to a changing climate," said **Commissioner LaTourette**. "The materials in this new library will teach our youngest residents about the positive contributions they can make to protect our environment for future generations, while preparing them to become environmental stewards as adults."

"Empowering our youngest learners with climate education is essential to preparing them for the future," said **Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer**. "This online library provides K-5 educators with the tools to seamlessly integrate climate literacy into everyday lessons, helping students understand both the challenges and solutions to a changing environment."

Both the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and New Jersey Department of Education are aligned in their commitment to advancing climate education goals, underscoring the importance of equipping both students and teachers with the knowledge to understand and address climate change effectively.

Education Empowerment

The library already contains hundreds of valuable resources. Its current focus is on the youngest grades, K-5, which currently have the fewest resources, compared with climate change education resources for students in middle school and high school. Research shows that teaching the youngest grades about sustainability and the potential for positive change is a critical step toward finding solutions to slow climate change. The library is also unique in that educators can search for lessons or resources by precise unit or topic of study.

The library has been designed to ensure that its resources seamlessly supplement existing curricula, enabling teachers to stay focused on achieving New Jersey Student Learning Standards while feeling more comfortable weaving environmental education into subject areas.

Library resources for pupils in grades K-2, for example, are focused on raising awareness of a relationship with nature, as well as the importance of loving and caring for the Earth. Information for children in grades 3-5 ask students to consider humans' impacts on the environment and learn how to make positive changes.

By putting climate change education into classrooms, educators are implicitly demonstrating that adults care about the environment in which children will grow up, and solutions exist to improve the world around them. Research has shown that this message helps reduce climate anxiety for young people. According to a [2022 Youth Climate Survey](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/ryxovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!OQGPcT03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-I2B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SsiOTtkO5UK$) ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/ryxovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!OQGPcT03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-I2B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SsiOTtkO5UK\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/ryxovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!OQGPcT03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-I2B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SsiOTtkO5UK$)) by Blue Shield of California, three in four youth say they have experienced at least one mental health-related issue as a result of consuming climate change-related news, including feeling anxious, stressed, or overwhelmed.

Active Learning

Using these materials, teachers may focus on literacy by selecting picture books that include age-appropriate environmental themes. For older children, educators may develop a service project that touches on collective efforts to reduce air pollution in the community, which simultaneously improves health and reduces carbon emissions.

In addition, lessons and concepts available in materials in the library aim for hands-on activities that get young minds thinking and include background information for teachers to help build their confidence teaching about climate change.

The library's resources also include lessons that vary in time commitment required, from brief videos to multi-week projects, allowing teachers to tailor resources to unique or specific needs and goals for students.

Further, the library will include resources emphasizing New Jersey-related topics where possible, whether it's about how used or discarded Christmas trees can be recycled by shoring up dunes from erosion to lessons on how climate change is impacting New Jersey crops, creating spotted lanternfly traps, or showcasing how severe storms impact different communities.

New Jersey's commitment to climate change education

([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/7qyovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOTR_oWVL\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/7qyovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOTR_oWVL$)) is rooted in a legacy of Murphy Administration policies and forward-thinking initiatives focused on student success. With the introduction of climate change education alongside the [New Jersey Student Learning Standards](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/njzovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOTB5JoiI$) ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/njzovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOTB5JoiI\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/njzovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOTB5JoiI$)) and the establishment of the Climate Change Education Unit within the Department of Education, the state is poised to build on its national reputation to equip students and educators with the knowledge, skills and perspectives necessary to address the complex challenges posed by climate change and take on the jobs of the future green economy.

View the library [here](#)

([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/3b0ovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOU6soOC0\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/3b0ovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOU6soOC0$)), as well as a brief instructional video to help users best utilize the library's resources and search functions.

For more information about climate change education resources in New Jersey,

[visit \[nj.gov/education/climate/index.shtml\]\(http://visit.nj.gov/education/climate/index.shtml\)](http://visit.nj.gov/education/climate/index.shtml)

([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/j40ovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOZeJC0pA\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jo8z4m/nrddit/j40ovbb_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtBA!OQGpCt03e29xvUYxXuk9IL6G4CxLQ1Ux9qL2v-12B1yYf-x0BYbMMReVW2z2PS1GSe8aTaipSREcB76F1SslOZeJC0pA$)).

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