

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 89

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 6, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Designates April 22 of each year as Environmental Education Day in NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating April 22 of each year as
2 Environmental Education Day in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, April 22 of each year is Earth Day, an annual celebration
5 of the environment and the importance of environmental protection;
6 and
7 **WHEREAS**, Since 1970, the year of the first Earth Day, environmental
8 education has been taught at many schools across the United States
9 and has produced many academic and physical health benefits
10 among students; and
11 **WHEREAS**, Environmental education builds emotional and social skills
12 including self-esteem, character development, teamwork and
13 leadership skills, and climate literacy by encouraging students to
14 research and think critically about complex environmental issues;
15 and
16 **WHEREAS**, Schools that have integrated environmental education into
17 their curriculums have seen improvements in students' overall
18 academic performances through elevated test scores and in the
19 further development of students' critical thinking skills such as data
20 analysis, problem-solving, and developing conclusions; a skillset
21 that can be applied to many other disciplines such as social studies,
22 language arts, mathematics, engineering, fine arts, and technology;
23 and
24 **WHEREAS**, Environmental education emphasizes the use of
25 experimental learning and hands-on activities, which contributes to
26 greater long-term retention of academic material among students
27 and improves morale and enthusiasm among teachers by allowing
28 teachers to utilize more innovative instructional strategies within
29 the classroom; and
30 **WHEREAS**, Outdoor learning, frequently utilized in environmental
31 education, has been found to improve students' physical health by
32 promoting healthy lifestyle choices while also improving various
33 health issues such as obesity, asthma, and attention-
34 deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); and
35 **WHEREAS**, Students who have been taught environmental education
36 are also better prepared for careers in science, technology,
37 engineering, and mathematics, commonly referred to as STEM
38 industries, which are currently in high demand and are expected to
39 grow in the future; and
40 **WHEREAS**, Environmental education promotes civic engagement and
41 environmental awareness among students, which better equips
42 students to participate in lifelong environmental decision-making
43 and stewardship; and
44 **WHEREAS**, Environmental education continues to gain support from
45 individuals, educational institutions, non-profit organizations,
46 government entities, and commercial enterprises across the world;
47 now, therefore,

SJR89 DIEGNAN

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1 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
2 *State of New Jersey:*

1. April 22 of each year is designated as Environmental Education Day in New Jersey.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation calling upon New Jersey schools and educators to observe “Environmental Education Day” with appropriate events and activities.

12 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

17 This joint resolution designates April 22 of each year as
18 Environmental Education Day in New Jersey.

Integrating environmental education within school curriculums has produced significant academic and physical health benefits among students, while also preparing students for future careers. Environmental education boosts students' test scores, increases long-term retention of academic material, and further develops students' critical thinking skills, social skills, and leadership skills. Outdoor learning, commonly utilized in environmental education, encourages healthy lifestyle choices and improves asthma, obesity, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) among students.

Teaching younger generations about complex environmental issues fosters greater civic engagement and environmental awareness among students, which increases students' ability to participate in lifelong environmental stewardship and decision-making. For these reasons, schools should encourage environmental education within their curriculum and observe "Environmental Education Day" on April 22 of each year.