



Earth911[®]

More Ideas, Less Waste

[How to Recycle](#)

[Where to Recycle](#)

Inspire & Motivate

Reading time: 3 mins

Investing in Climate Literacy



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

MAR 24, 2022 [Climate Change](#), [climate literacy](#), [Earth](#)

[Day](#), [education](#)



Overcoming climate change will require a global transformation to a green economy based on renewable energy and sustainable technologies. Individual activism cannot achieve it alone. It will require governments, businesses, and individuals to all [invest in the planet](#).

“We need to pull together, get a grip, and get it done as a team,” says Kathleen Rogers, president and CEO of EarthDay.org. But to build the team, people have to [understand the problem](#) and its solutions. Climate literacy is too important to leave out of kids’ basic education.

What Do You Think?



Are you considering moving because of climate change?

- No
- I'm researching my options to decide
- Yes

NEXT

[Westlake Home – Luxury Organic Bedding](#)

window width : 1263 px

Climate Literacy

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce), [climate literacy means](#) understanding your influence on climate and climate's influence on you and your society. A climate-literate person:

- Understands the essential principles of Earth's climate system,
- Knows how to assess scientifically credible information about climate,
- Communicates about climate and climate change in a meaningful way, and
- Is able to make informed and responsible decisions regarding actions that may affect climate.

Climate Literacy Campaign

Like many environmental organizations, EarthDay.org usually works in nonformal educational settings like online [Earth Day Live](#) seminars and outdoor events.

"At the end of the day, it has made a marginal difference. We all have a little bit of interest in protecting nature, maybe based on movies about koalas or whatever. But 60 years of non-formal education is not the same as having assessed, integrated climate literacy in education," said Rogers. So EarthDay.org's [climate literacy campaign](#) works for universal compulsory, assessed climate and environmental education with a strong civic engagement component.

"This is not about burdening children with scary climate facts, but instead painting a picture to kids just like we do with technology. Do look at the wonders of your little screen; the wonder of nature is fabulously cool, like technology. But it has a greater impact on our health, our well-being, and the well-being of everybody else," said Rogers.



Unfortunately, the American school system has been slow to join the climate literacy

window width : 1263 px

movement.

Global Literacy

Rogers says about 45 countries are currently considering the full integration of climate literacy into their educational systems.

“The equity issue is really important. There’s no reason Botswana or Nigeria or Bolivia couldn’t be making their own solar panels. Countries like China and the U.S. are gathering all the resources they’ll need to own the economy for decades, and a lot of Global South countries are letting them – Chile, Congo. They’re giving away these very specific minerals that you cannot build a green economy without – lithium, copper. That’s why our theme applies to everybody. It can’t be for a handful of companies and governments,” said Rogers.

EarthDay.org’s climate literacy project has a particular focus on developing nations and the Global South.

“We’re really pushing global climate literacy and jobs training in Africa right now because we’re starting to see them being utterly ripped off. They need to build their own green economy and not give away the store,” said Rogers.

So far, the climate literacy project has signed on 32.6 million teachers through partnerships with [Education International](#), teachers’ unions, and faith groups.

American Literacy

Unfortunately, the American school system has been slow to join the movement.

“Sadly, no, we’re not very far with the Department of Education. It probably has its own political considerations. The U.S. has 50 different education systems basically, so getting it together in the U.S. is going to be a little more difficult,” said Rogers.

Those systems [vary dramatically](#). Twenty-nine states and Washington, D.C., have state science standards that include human-caused climate change. Fifteen states require climate change but don’t specify its cause. Five states only require climate change to be taught in elective high school science courses. Pennsylvania’s standards do not address climate change at all.

Forty states and the District of Columbia have social studies standards that broadly address environmental issues – such as

sustainability and human impacts on the environment. Insufficient as the standards are, pre-pandemic [testing](#) indicated between 25% and 33% of students achieved competency in their state's standards.

What You Can Do

Look up your state's science and social studies [standards](#), and write to your [representatives](#) in support of better ones (usually Next Generation Science Standards). Pay attention to your local school board elections, and which climate change curriculum your child's school uses. Supplement your kids' learning by offering them books from the [summer environmental reading list](#). And keep exposing them to nature and encouraging them to learn science of all kinds.

advertising

[Edit](#)



Reading time: 3 mins

[Raising Chickens: Free
Kindle Copy of New Guide](#)



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Gemma Alexander has an M.S. in urban horticulture and a backyard filled with native plants. After working in a genetics laboratory and at a landfill, she now writes about the environment, the arts and family. See more of her writing [here](#).

Related Post

[Home & Garden](#) [Inspire & Motivate](#)

[Raising Chickens: Free Kindle Copy of New Guide](#)

🕒 [Mar 24, 2022](#) 👤 [Earth911](#)

[Inspire & Motivate](#) [Quizzes](#)

[Earth911 Quiz #56: Does This Go in the Blue Bin?](#)

🕒 [Mar 24, 2022](#) 👤 [Earth911](#)

[Health & Beauty](#) [Inspire & Motivate](#)

window width : 1263 px