

## News Release

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### No Child Left Inside Coalition to develop Environmental Literacy Plan for Wisconsin

MADISON — In an effort to ensure that every child graduates with the environmental skills and knowledge needed to build Wisconsin's economy and a sustainable future, the Wisconsin No Child Left Inside Coalition will develop the state's first environmental literacy plan.

"Wisconsin's long history of supporting environmental quality helps to make our state a great place to live, work, play, and learn," said State Superintendent Tony Evers. "The No Child Left Inside Coalition is uniquely qualified to develop an environmental literacy plan that will help our schools provide innovative environmental education programs and help our teachers integrate these concepts into their curriculum."

Evers asked the group to develop an Environmental Literacy Plan for Wisconsin that will address the environmental education needs of Wisconsin's pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade schools and will pay special attention to creating more opportunities to get children outside. The Department of Public Instruction also is in the process of hiring an environmental education consultant, which was approved through the 2009-11 state budget. The funding for the position is being provided by the state's Board of Commissioners of Public Lands.

"We must renew our commitment to teaching our students about environmental responsibility," said Evers. "We are grateful for the efforts of the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands, and its Executive Secretary Tia Nelson, for their support and recognition of the environmental education needs of our students."

"Wisconsin schools need robust environmental education programs that not only teach environmental science, but that also stress the need for citizen involvement and solving problems through critical thinking and collaborative working relationships," said Jesse Haney, coordinator of the Wisconsin No Child Left Inside Coalition. "We look forward to developing Wisconsin's Environmental Literacy Plan."

The Wisconsin No Child Left Inside Coalition includes representation from the following groups:

- Milwaukee Public Schools
- National Environmental Education Training and Partnership

(more)

- Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education
- Wisconsin Environmental Education Board
- Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation
- Wisconsin Environmental Science Teacher Network
- Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

At the federal level, the No Child Left Inside Coalition and other education advocates are supporting an effort that would include environmental education in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (previously known as the No Child Left Behind Act). The legislation makes new funding available for the development of rigorous standards, teacher training, and environmental literacy programs. When the legislation is signed into law, states that have environmental literacy plans will be eligible for more funds.

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**NOTES:** More information about environmental education in Wisconsin can be found at <http://www.eeinwisconsin.org/>. This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2009\\_44.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2009_44.pdf).