

C2E2 History

Within North Dakota there are numerous agencies, organizations, and individuals involved in some form of environmental education. They recognize that a clean and healthy environment is critical to the quality of life and economic vitality of our state. The responsibility to provide environmental education to stewards of all ages is shared by the district and local school boards of education, the chief state school officer, and state natural resource agencies.

C2E2 was established in 1995 as a public/private partnership made up of representatives from governmental agencies, organizations and individuals with an interest in supporting conservation and environmental education. The Coalition for Conservation and Environmental Education (C2E2) formed a nonprofit 501(c)(3) with a mission to "*prepare stewards of all ages with the skills to make informed decisions that maintain a sustainable environment.*" Today, there are more than forty organizational and individual members of C2E2 that represent governmental agencies, business and industry, colleges and universities, schools and school districts, and other non-profit organizations.

The interest and need for environmental literacy has been growing in recent years. Effective environmental education does not advocate any particular viewpoint on environmental issues. Rather, environmental education promotes a full understanding of environmental issues through the education process. The focus of environmental education is on the processes that enhance critical thinking, problem solving, and effective decision making. Through these processes, individuals can better understand the complexities and interrelatedness of environmental issues and weigh the various sides to make informed, balanced and responsible decisions as an individual or collectively.

Many of the skills emphasized in effective environmental education are the same skills fostered in the North Dakota State Education Standards for Science and Social Studies; Next Generation Science Standards; as well as through the requirements of the Title IV "Every Student Succeeds Act—21st Century Schools." This calls for a "well-rounded education" utilizing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities, including "hands-on learning" and "field-based or service learning." By utilizing the environmental education materials sponsored by C2E2, Scouts, 4-H, clubs, schools and school districts can meet all the requirements and provide stimulating, challenging, and fun activities for their PreK-12 students.

It's essential North Dakota's state agencies, organizations, and individuals continue to offer quality conservation and environmental programs for use in classrooms until all students, all schools or school districts have an opportunity to develop an environmental literacy program. C2E2 can apprise teachers – formal and nonformal – schools, and districts of what unbiased materials and training are available, as well as offer technical guidance on integration.

We would welcome your support and participation in our efforts. Join us today!