



Advocacy Support for How “AB 185 - Section 56 Arts, Music, & Instructional Materials Block Grant Funding” Can be Spent on Environmental Literacy Efforts

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Purpose and Overview: On September 27, 2022, Governor Newsom approved AB 185, which revised the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant, and allocates **\$3,560,885,000** to LEAs for five purposes, one which **includes explicit reference to Environmental Literacy** - to see detail on the five purposes visit [Appendix A - Summary of AB 185](#).

These funds are distributed as an allocation (based on reported P-2 ADA for 2021–22, which is approximately \$666.08 per student) to entities eligible for funding, which include: County offices of education, school districts, charter schools, and state special schools.. Apportionment (payments) are scheduled for release in two equal payments: 1) The first is planned for December 2022, and the second the second in May 2023.

To be compliant with spending funds, LEAs need to develop plans that will be heard in a public meeting of the Governing Board of the LEA. *As of November 2022*, the bill does not have a date or timeframe of when they have to submit the plan to the local board. Additionally, there is not a required template for this plan. **As LEAs have internal meetings, and host public meetings, there is a window of opportunity for different constituents to advocate for the inclusion of environmental literacy.**

This document provides a quick guide to how constituents can advocate (and what they can advocate for) to their Local Education Agencies (LEAs) about including Environmental Literacy efforts as part of their spending plans for this block grant. Use the links below to navigate quickly to different sections of the document:

I. [Top Five+ Ways to Spend Funds on Environmental Literacy Efforts](#): A list of recommendations, from members of the California Environmental Literacy Initiative (CAELI), for possible ways to spend these funds on Environmental Literacy efforts.

II. [How to advocate for LEAs to spend funds on Environmental Literacy](#): This section includes ideas for how different constituents can advocate for portions of the allocated funding to be spent on Environmental Literacy efforts.

III. [Resources and Timeline Information from the CDE](#): This section includes the resources that have been put together by the CDE, as well as a number of resources and a timeline for funding distributions.

[Appendix A - Summary of AB 185](#): Includes detail on the five purposes of how funding can be spent, and shows the explicit reference to Environmental Literacy.

I. TOP FIVE+ WAYS TO SPEND FUNDING ON ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY EFFORTS

An overview to the five purposes enumerated in Section 134(a) of Chapter 52 of the Statutes of 2022) can be found in [Appendix A - Summary of AB 185](#). Connections to Environmental Literacy for each of these five purposes can be found below.

A. Professional Learning

- Professional learning on the Environmental Principles and Concepts.
- Professional learning focused on analyzing adopted instructional materials for core subject areas and their alignment with environmental literacy, climate literacy, and outdoor learning opportunities.
- Professional learning for outdoor educational strategies that support all subject areas, and initiatives for social emotional learning and equity - *good starting point is the BEETLES project, Sharing Nature, John Muir Laws, Nature Journaling, etc.*
- Professional learning for integrating climate change and environmental justice into core subject areas.

B. **Diverse library offerings focused on environmental justice and climate change** (e.g., [Solutionary and Environmental Book Recommendations](#), Braiding Sweetgrass, The Lakota Way, Looking Closely Book Bundle, 4H- Jr. Master Gardener Book List- Literacy in the Garden, [FUSD summer school K-6 EE themed books](#)).

C. **Outdoor classrooms and learning spaces as a strategy for “other things to keep people safe from COVID-19 at school”, “learning through play”, and “transformative social and emotional learning”**: This could include, but is not limited to:

- Operational costs for staffing school gardens and outdoor learning spaces for academic, and social and emotional programs;
- Infrastructure improvements for implementing school gardens and outdoor spaces for learning and nature based play;
- Additional ideas for ways to spend funding for outdoor classrooms and learning can be found in the Lawrence Hall’s [Outdoor Learning Guidance](#) and [Outdoor Learning Menus](#), and at the [National Outdoor Learning Learning Library](#).

D. **Support for integration of environmental justice and climate change education into additional critical subject areas and programs**, including but not limited to:

- Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) programs and classes
- Ethnic Studies, in particular connections to local environmental justice topics
- Update CTE pathway programs to include industry-based, environmentally-sustainable practices and green career labor market data (LMI)
- California State Seal of Civic Engagement (juniors and seniors)
- Health and wellness initiatives (including nature based wellness initiatives)
- Counseling programs focused around reducing student anxiety, in particular eco and climate anxiety efforts
- Youth leadership and agency empowerment programs

E. Experiences with environmental related Community Based Partners

- Science and environmental field trips (walking field trips from school AND bus field trips for all day outdoor learning, museums, parks, aquariums, etc.)
- Bring push in content focused environmental programs from community based partners to schools
- Send classes to residential outdoor school

II. HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR AN LEA TO SPEND FUNDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

To be compliant with spending funds, LEAs need to develop plans that will be heard in a public meeting of the Governing Board of the LEA. *As of November 2022*, the bill does not have a date or timeframe of when they have to submit to the local board. Additionally, there is not a required template for this plan. As LEAs have internal meetings, and host public meetings, there are opportunities for different constituents to advocate for the inclusion of environmental literacy.

A) Site Level faculty, staff, or administration:

- School Site Council meetings provide an opportunity for constituents to work with school site leaders on how funding is spent, and prioritizing different areas of focus.
- Departments and grade level teams develop a vision around prioritizing environmental literacy, and share vision with site and district administration.

B) District educational leaders:

- Support AB 185 Plan and LCAPs writing teams to include content specific professional learning for environmental and climate literacy.
- Support district leadership team to elevate the prioritization of environmental and climate literacy into planning process, and initiatives focused around social and emotional learning and equity.

C) **County educational leaders:** Support districts AB 185 Plan and LCAPs writing teams to integrate environmental literacy and climate education.

D) **Community Partners and Families:** Show up to public forums and provide input and support for environmental literacy and climate action, and support youth voice in the process.

III. RESOURCES AND TIMELINE INFORMATION FROM THE CDE

Resources and Key Information:

- The full text of the bill is available here: [AB 185](#)
- [CDE Guidance](#) to assist local educational agencies (LEAs) regarding AB 185
- [AMIM Block Grant Webinar PowerPoint Slides, October 14, 2022\(PPTX\)](#)
- [Resources, October 14, 2022 Webinar](#)

- Section 134(c) provides that LEAs “are encouraged, but not required” to “proportionally use” their allocation for the five purposes enumerated in Section 134(a)(1)–(5)
- SACS Resource Code: 6762: Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant

Eligibility and Average Funding:

- Entities eligible for funding include: County offices of education, school districts, charter schools, and state special schools.
- Funding Formula: Proportional allocation is based on reported P-2 ADA for 2021–22. The average daily attendance (ADA) shall be deemed to be 97 percent of the enrollment as reported in the CALPADS as of the 2021–22 Fall 1 Submission. The per-ADA funding rate is approximately \$666.08.

Timeline:

- These funds are distributed as an allocation (posted in early October 2022). Apportionment (Payments) are scheduled for release in two equal payments: 1) The first is planned for December 2022, and the second the second in May 2023.
- Funding Availability: Funds are available for encumbrance through June 30, 2026.

Appendix A - Summary of AB 185

On June 30, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom approved AB 181. Among other things, the bill established the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials (AMIM) Discretionary Block Grant. On September 27, 2022, Governor Newsom approved AB 185, which revised the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant. The grant allocates **\$3,560,885,000** to LEAs for five purposes enumerated in Section 134(a) of Chapter 52 of the Statutes of 2022), which may be briefly summarized as:

1. **Obtaining standards-aligned professional development and instructional materials** for specific subject areas: Visual and performing arts (VAPA), World languages, Mathematics, Science, **including environmental literacy**, English language arts, including early literacy, Ethnic studies, Financial literacy, Media literacy, Computer science, and History–social science;
2. **Obtaining professional development and instructional materials for improving school climate**; including but not limited to: Training on de-escalation and restorative justice strategies, Asset-based pedagogies, anti-bias, Transformative social-emotional learning, Media literacy, digital literacy, Physical education, and Learning through play;
3. Developing **diverse, culturally relevant and multilingual school library book collections**;
4. **Operational costs**, including retirement and health care cost increases;
5. **COVID-19-related costs** necessary to keep pupils and staff safe and schools *open for in-person instruction*.