



Presented by:

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Teaching Outdoors to ALL
Learners)

Connecting Community
to Foster Outdoor
Classroom Support:
*Creating Systems Change
in How We Teach
Environmental Education
for a Healthier
Environmental for ALL*

What is Environmental Education?

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► a process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment.

What is environmental education?

Environmental education (EE) is a process that helps individuals, communities, and organizations learn more about the environment, and develop skills and understanding about how to address global challenges. It has the power to transform lives and society. It informs and inspires. It influences attitudes. It motivates action.

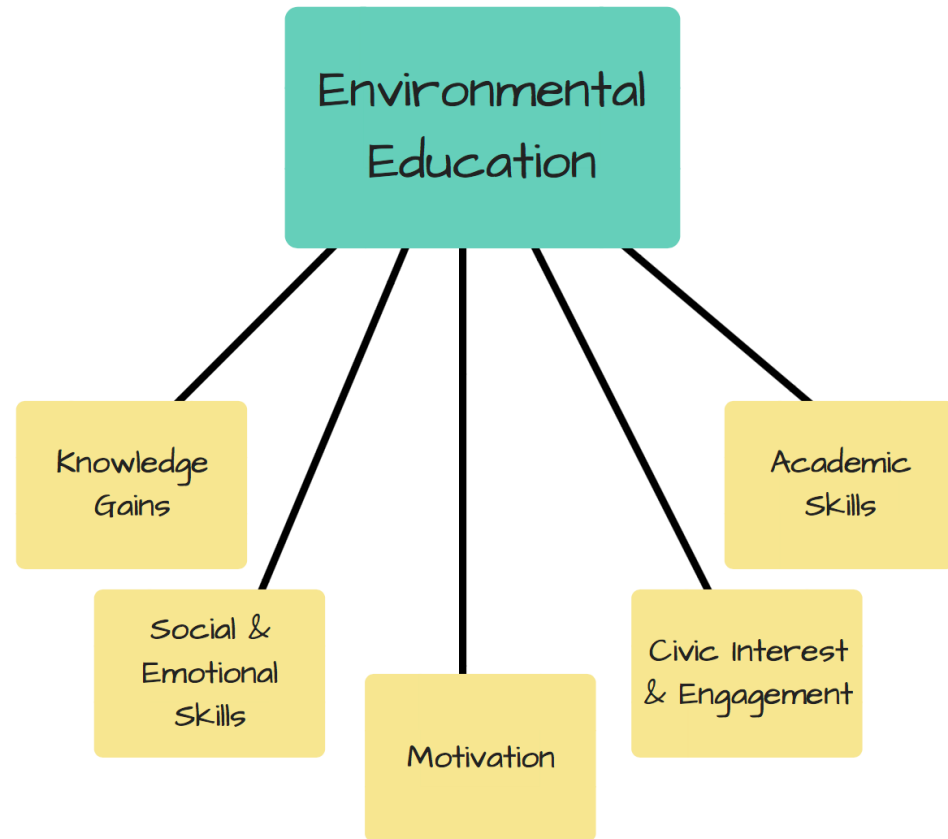
► **Key Underpinnings of the Field**

- Critical thinking
- Lifelong learning: cradle to grave
- Equity & Inclusion
- Focus on sound science
- Built on a sustainability platform
- Interdisciplinary
- Sense of place
- Reflects best practice in education (learner-centered, experiential, and project-based learning)
- Informed decision making

-Information from NAAEE:

<https://naaee.org/about/ee>

Why Environmental Education?



Ardoin, Bowers, Roth, & Holthuis, 2016.



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What environmental education **is not**

Learning **ONLY**
outside

Separating
subjects

Creating
inequities in
learning

Restrictive

Separate than
“regular”
education

Only taught one
way
(pedagogical
shift in teaching)

It IS:

Connected,
inclusive, and
relativeness





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Learning Outside Benefits

Social and emotional skills

Prior Knowledge Connections

Place-Based Hands-On Learning

Individualism

Student lead/Teacher Facilitated

Multiple Subjects Connection

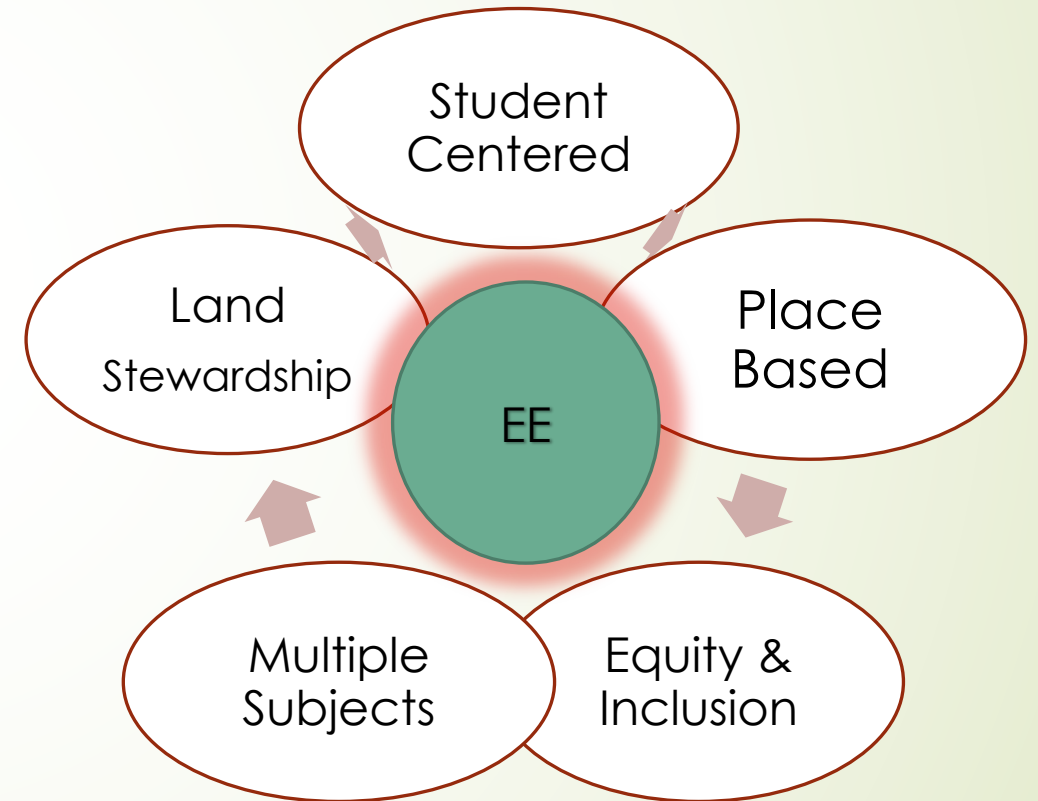
Equity and Inclusion

Cultural Relativeness

Real world knowledge

Why Environmental Education as a Focus?

- **Student Centered:** Students feel valued, holistic approach, connected
- **Place Based:** Hands on, experiential learning,
- **Equity & Inclusion:** All students can access, be included, connected, relatable
- **Multiple Subjects:** Cross cutting concepts, NGSS incorporated, curriculum supported
- **Land Stewardship:** Creating future stewards to help protect these sacred spaces and places for all life.



A top-down view of a wooden desk. In the upper left, a yellow mug with coffee sits next to a black smartphone. In the center, an open notebook shows sketches of a hexagonal lattice and a cube. A black notebook and two pens are also on the desk. To the right, a white architectural model of a building is visible. The text 'Activity: Start with what you have: Learning through Observation and Connection' is overlaid in white, with an orange arrow pointing right from the left edge.

Activity: Start with what you have: *Learning through Observation and Connection*

What an Outdoor Space might look like (Activity) 15 minutes

Group 1: [Grassy Hill Landscape](#)

Group 2: [Playground](#)

Group 3: [Buildings/Concrete Area](#)

Questions to Answer:

1. How can you incorporate multiple subjects/content area using this space as it is?
2. How can you enhance this space to make it more inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all students?





Systems Change: Creating the I, We, IT Transformational Model

- What do I Need from this? What is MY goal?
- What do we, as a school or group of educators, want to see come out of this? What are our collective goals?
- What can we do together going forward (thinking about collaboration and partnerships with others) to create opportunities for outdoor classrooms?

Creating Transformational Leadership through Partnership Building in Environmental Education

The Process

- ▶ Having Conversations
- ▶ Collecting the data
- ▶ Getting the team together
- ▶ Creating the products (outdoor spaces), policies, and work



Thinking Through the Process

- ▶ Equity
- ▶ Community Voices
- ▶ Connecting with indigenous schools and other cultural perspectives
- ▶ Creating spaces and places for students to be heard
- ▶ Working together not against
- ▶ Having MANY hard conversations with a variety of perspectives

Some Resources to Get Started

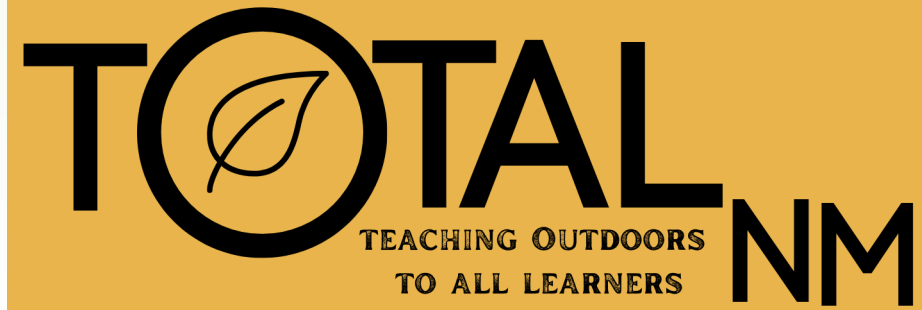
-More resources for administrators and educators available from [NAAEE \(North American Association for Environmental Education\)](https://Naaee.org)
<https://Naaee.org>

-Creating Inclusive, equitable, and accessible spaces:
[Inclusive Outdoor Classroom Design](https://www.greenschoolyards.org/inclusive-design)(for schoolyard designs)
<https://www.greenschoolyards.org/inclusive-design>



Thank you!!

*You are the
FUTURE to
keep the
learning going
and growing!*



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