

Public Law 91-516

AN ACT

October 30, 1970
[H. R. 18260]

Environmental
Education Act.

To authorize the United States Commissioner of Education to establish education programs to encourage understanding of policies, and support of activities, designed to enhance environmental quality and maintain ecological balance.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Environmental Education Act".

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

SEC. 2. (a) The Congress of the United States finds that the deterioration of the quality of the Nation's environment and of its ecological balance poses a serious threat to the strength and vitality of the people of the Nation and is in part due to poor understanding of the Nation's environment and of the need for ecological balance; that presently there do not exist adequate resources for educating and informing citizens in these areas, and that concerted efforts in educating citizens about environmental quality and ecological balance are therefore necessary.

(b) It is the purpose of this Act to encourage and support the development of new and improved curricula to encourage understanding of policies, and support of activities designed to enhance environmental quality and maintain ecological balance; to demonstrate the use of such curricula in model educational programs and to evaluate the effectiveness thereof; to provide support for the initiation and maintenance of programs in environmental education at the elementary and secondary levels; to disseminate curricular materials and other information for use in educational programs throughout the Nation; to provide training programs for teachers, other educational personnel, public service personnel, and community, labor, and industrial and business leaders and employees, and government employees at State, Federal, and local levels; to provide for the planning of outdoor ecological study centers; to provide for community education programs on preserving and enhancing environmental quality and maintaining ecological balance; and to provide for the preparation and distribution of materials by mass media in dealing with the environment and ecology.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental
education office,
establishment.

SEC. 3. (a) (1) There is established, within the Office of Education, an office of environmental education (referred to in this section as the "office") which, under the supervision of the Commissioner, through regulations promulgated by the Secretary, shall be responsible for (A) the administration of the program authorized by subsection (b) and (B) the coordination of activities of the Office of Education which are related to environmental education. The office shall be headed by a Director who shall be compensated at a rate not to exceed that prescribed for grade GS-17 in section 5332 of title 5, United States Code.

Anfo, p. 198-1.
"Environmental
education."

(2) For the purposes of this Act, the term "environmental education" means the educational process dealing with man's relationship with his natural and manmade surroundings, and includes the relation of population, pollution, resource allocation and depletion, conservation, transportation, technology, and urban and rural planning to the total human environment.

Grants and
contracts.

(b) (1) The Commissioner shall carry out a program of making grants to, and contracts with, institutions of higher education, State

and local educational agencies, regional educational research organizations, and other public and private agencies, organizations, and institutions (including libraries and museums) to support research, demonstration, and pilot projects designed to educate the public on the problems of environmental quality and ecological balance, except that no grant may be made other than to a nonprofit agency, organization or institution.

Prohibition.

(2) Funds appropriated for grants and contracts under this section shall be available for such activities as—

Funds, availability.

(A) the development of curricula (including interdisciplinary curricula) in the preservation and enhancement of environmental quality and ecological balance;

(B) dissemination of information relating to such curricula and to environmental education, generally;

(C) in the case of grants to State and local educational agencies, for the support of environmental education programs at the elementary and secondary education levels;

(D) preservice and inservice training programs and projects (including fellowship programs, institutes, workshops, symposiums, and seminars) for educational personnel to prepare them to teach in subject matter areas associated with environmental quality and ecology, and for public service personnel, government employees, and business, labor, and industrial leaders and employees;

(E) planning of outdoor ecological study centers;

(F) community education programs on environmental quality, including special programs for adults; and

(G) preparation and distribution of materials suitable for use by the mass media in dealing with the environment and ecology.

In addition to the activities specified in the first sentence of this paragraph, such funds may be used for projects designed to demonstrate, test, and evaluate the effectiveness of any such activities, whether or not assisted under this section.

(3) (A) Financial assistance under this subsection may be made available only upon application to the Commissioner. Applications under this subsection shall be submitted at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Secretary shall prescribe by regulation and shall be approved only if it—

Financial assistance, application.

(i) provides that the activities and services for which assistance is sought will be administered by, or under the supervision of, the applicant;

(ii) describes a program for carrying out one or more of the purposes set forth in the first sentence of paragraph (2) which holds promise of making a substantial contribution toward attaining the purposes of this section;

(iii) sets forth such policies and procedures as will insure adequate evaluation of the activities intended to be carried out under the application;

(iv) sets forth policies and procedures which assure that Federal funds made available under this Act for any fiscal year will be so used as to supplement and, to the extent practical, increase the level of funds that would, in the absence of such Federal funds, be made available by the applicant for the purposes described in section 3, and in no case supplant such funds.

(v) provides for such fiscal control and fund accounting pro-

Reports and
recordkeeping.

cedures as may be necessary to assure proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds paid to the applicant under this title; and

(vi) provides for making an annual report and such other reports, in such form and containing such information, as the Commissioner may reasonably require and for keeping such records, and for affording such access thereto as the Commissioner may find necessary to assure the correctness and verification of such reports.

(B) Applications from local educational agencies for financial assistance under this Act may be approved by the Commissioner only if the State educational agency has been notified of the application and been given the opportunity to offer recommendations.

(C) Amendments of applications shall, except as the Secretary may otherwise provide by or pursuant to regulation, be subject to approval in the same manner as original applications.

Federal share,
limitation.

(4) Federal assistance to any program or project under this section, other than those involving curriculum development, dissemination of curricular materials, and evaluation, shall not exceed 80 per centum of the cost of such program for the first fiscal year of its operation, including costs of administration, unless the Commissioner determines, pursuant to regulations adopted and promulgated by the Secretary establishing objective criteria for such determinations, that assistance in excess of such percentages is required in furtherance of the purposes of this section. The Federal share for the second year shall not exceed 60 per centum, and for the third year 40 per centum. Non-Federal contributions may be in cash or kind, fairly evaluated, including but not limited to plant, equipment, and services.

Advisory Council on Environmental Education; establishment; membership.

(c) (1) There is hereby established an Advisory Council on Environmental Education consisting of twenty-one members appointed by the Secretary. The Secretary shall appoint one member as Chairman. The Council shall consist of persons appointed from the public and private sector with due regard to their fitness, knowledge, and experience in matters of, but not limited to, academic, scientific, medical, legal, resource conservation and production, urban and regional planning, and information media activities as they relate to our society and affect our environment, and shall give due consideration to geographical representation in the appointment of such members: *Provided, however,* That the Council shall consist of not less than three ecologists and three students.

Duties.

(2) The Council shall—

(A) advise the Commissioner and the office concerning the administration of, preparation of general regulations for, and operation of programs assisted under this section;

(B) make recommendations to the office with respect to the allocation of funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (d) among the purposes set forth in paragraph (2) of subsection (b) and the criteria to be used in approving applications, which criteria shall insure an appropriate geographical distribution of approved programs and projects throughout the Nation;

(C) develop criteria for the review of applications and their disposition; and

(D) evaluate programs and projects assisted under this section and disseminate the results thereof.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

SEC. 4. The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, in cooperation with the heads of other agencies with relevant jurisdiction, shall, insofar as practicable upon request, render technical assistance to local educational agencies, public and private nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, agencies of local, State, and Federal governments and other agencies deemed by the Secretary to play a role in preserving and enhancing environmental quality and maintaining ecological balance. The technical assistance shall be designed to enable the recipient agency to carry on education programs which are related to environmental quality and ecological balance.

SMALL GRANTS

SEC. 5. (a) In addition to the grants authorized under section 3, the Commissioner, from the sums appropriated, shall have the authority to make grants, in sums not to exceed \$10,000 annually, to nonprofit organizations such as citizens groups, volunteer organizations working in the environmental field, and other public and private nonprofit agencies, institutions, or organizations for conducting courses, workshops, seminars, symposiums, institutes, and conferences, especially for adults and community groups (other than the group funded).

Limitation.

(b) Priority shall be given to those proposals demonstrating innovative approaches to environmental education.

(c) For the purposes of this section, the Commissioner shall require evidence that the interested organization or group shall have been in existence one year prior to the submission of a proposal for Federal funds and that it shall submit an annual report on Federal funds expended.

Report.

(d) Proposals submitted by organizations and groups under this section shall be limited to the essential information required to evaluate them, unless the organization or group shall volunteer additional information.

ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 6. In administering the provisions of this Act, the Commissioner is authorized to utilize the services and facilities of any agency of the Federal Government and of any other public or private agency or institution in accordance with appropriate agreements, and to pay for such services either in advance or by way of reimbursement, as may be agreed upon. The Commissioner shall publish annually a list and description of projects supported under this Act and shall distribute such list and description to interested educational institutions, citizens' groups, conservation organizations, and other organizations and individuals involved in enhancing environmental quality and maintaining ecological balance.

AUTHORIZATION

SEC. 7. There is authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971, \$15,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1972, and \$25,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1973, for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

Approved October 30, 1970.