

Quantifying a Relationship Between Place-based Learning and Environmental Quality

The Context

Many place-based learning (PBL) projects and programs involve students in activities that relate directly or indirectly to efforts to improve environmental quality. A growing body of evidence shows the link between such activities and the development of positive environmental attitudes and behaviors. Until now, however, research-based evidence exploring the link between PBL and direct measures of environmental quality has not been aggregated or synthesized to any significant extent. This two-year project, “Quantifying a Relationship Between Place-based Learning and Environmental Quality,” aims to add to the existing literature by reviewing the evidence for a direct connection between PBL and environmental quality.

The Project

The project is harvesting data from existing PBL projects that have measured changes in air quality and is developing a protocol for quantitatively analyzing those data as a dependent variable of PBL implementation. Our goal is to ascertain the extent to which any large PBL programs have gathered usable outcome data on air quality; whether these programs have demonstrated effects on outcomes; the magnitude of these effects; and whether greater effect sizes have been shown to be associated with specific PBL approaches.

Who We Are

The partner organizations for this EPA-funded research project are the National Park Service’s Conservation Study Institute and its Center for Place-based Learning and Community Engagement; Shelburne Farms; Program Evaluation and Educational Research Associates, Inc.; Adopt-A-Watershed; Massachusetts General Hospital; Harvard Medical School; and Antioch University New England.

For More Information

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Photo: Matt Batchelor