

EcoRise

TEEA 2019 Winner: Education

Texas Sustainability Education Project



EcoRise is a nonprofit organization working to infuse sustainability, design innovation, and social entrepreneurship through project-based curriculum. The curriculum created by EcoRise introduces students to current problems and solutions surrounding water, food, energy, transportation, public spaces, air quality, and waste. EcoRise works to bridge the gap between theory and practice, helping students understand science and math concepts as they develop solutions to sustainability challenges related to their community.

The Texas Sustainability Education Project is an innovative curriculum that mobilizes students to action, encouraging them to develop solutions like conserving water or reducing energy on their school campus. In addition to the curriculum designed by EcoRise, the schools that participate have access to teacher training and support, an online platform, business and environmental industry connections, and micro-grants for students.

Students can apply for environmental project-based micro-grants, working to achieve tangible efficiency goals on their campus such as building gardens, installing water filling stations, and adding recycling bins. This encourages the students to educate themselves on a problem and achieve real results in their environment.

Their online platform enables teachers to access resources from anywhere at any time, reducing the need to travel and train the teachers at participating schools across the state.

The program is unique in that it is woven into the regular school day and aligns with academic standards. The materials are designed to be flexible and can be integrated into core classes or taught independently, providing different strategies and methods to connect the students.

The Texas Sustainability Education Project teaches students how to become aware of sustainability-related issues that impact their environment, and teaches them how to design solutions to those problems. This curriculum empowers the younger generation to become environmental stewards and make choices that reduce their environmental footprint throughout their lives.

Since 2008, EcoRise has served over 68,000 students in 517 schools across Texas and aims to bring programs to as many schools as possible.