



MEMORANDUM

TO: Environmental Board

FROM: Susan Wall, Conservation Program Coordinator
Watershed Protection Department

DATE: July 30, 2014

SUBJECT: Watershed Protection Youth Education, 2013-2014 School Year

The City of Austin Watershed Protection's school education programs are models of success for partnering with local districts, getting students in the field, and real-world water quality science. I look forward to presenting to the Environmental Board about these programs: Earth Camp www.austintexas.gov/EarthCamp, Earth School www.austintexas.gov/EarthSchool, Clean Creek Campus www.keepaustinbeautiful.org/CleanCreekCampus, Watershed Detectives www.austintexas.gov/WatershedDetectives, Hydrofiles www.austintexas.gov/departments/hydrofiles, and our participation in other youth focused events like career days.

As in the past years, I have attached the Earth Camp and Earth School Annual Reports for the 2013-2014 school year. It is wonderful to have successful educational programs that benefit our city, the schools, and kids!

Susan Wall, Watershed Protection Department
www.austintexas.gov/watershed/YouthEd

cc:

Victoria Li, P.E., Director, Watershed Protection Department
Joe Pantaloni, P.E., Deputy Director, Watershed Protection Department
Jessica Wilson, Environmental Conservation Program Manager, Watershed Protection Department



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2013-2014

Earth Camp Final Report





EARTH CAMP 2013-2014

Background

Earth Camp began in 1997 as a City of Austin Watershed Protection Department field science study program to promote water quality protection. www.austintexas.gov/earthcamp Video about the program - www.youtube.com/watch?v=5m_Br6GgUaU&feature=player_embedded

Earth Camp targets fifth-grade students attending Title I schools in AISD. Students attend during school hours, and all content is correlated to Texas schools standards. Participating schools attend Earth Camp for free. Teachers receive 6 hours of Continuing Professional Education credit, classroom curriculum, and assist students during Earth Camp field investigations. The City of Austin provides the environmental expertise, teacher training, field trips, tours, lessons, and equipment that make Earth Camp a success.



"The students were excited to see the weathering and erosion of the rocks at McKinney Falls. Also they got to see all the deposition from what the rainstorm brought in and it made them want to clean up the pollution. Then the students enjoyed looking for macros and sharing their findings" -teacher

Results

Total number of students reached: **533**

Participating Schools:

- 1) Andrews; 2) Barrington; 3) Becker; 4) Blazier; 5) Brooke; 6) Cook;
- 7) Dawson; 8) Galindo; 9) Joslin; 10) Langford; 11) Norman; 12) Overton;
- 13) Pecan Springs; 14) Reilly; 15) Rodriguez; 16) Travis Heights; 17) Walnut;
- 18) Wooten



TEACHER LED EARTH CAMP 2013-2014

Background

Teacher-led Earth Camp encourages Earth Camp trained and mentored teachers to lead Earth Camp with the support of the City of Austin. This allows more classes to participate in Earth Camp than could otherwise be reached by City staff. The City pays for transportation, schedules the field trips, provides materials and hires trained teachers to lead part of the class in order to maintain the small group size necessary for hands-on learning in the field.



"All the students loved the caving in a recharge feature. Reading about caves and seeing pictures is one thing, but to actually experience it by crawling through one was an experience my students will never forget" -teacher

Results

Total number of students reached: 911

Participating schools:

- 1) Andrews; 2) Barrington; 3) Blazier; 4) Blackshear; 5) Galindo; 6) Govalle;
- 7) Guerrero-Thompson; 8) Joslin; 9) Langford; 10) Ortega; 11) Pecan Springs;
- 12) Reilly; 13) Ridgetop; 14) Rodriguez; 15) Sims; 16) St. Elmo; 17) Sunset Valley;
- 18) Walnut; 19) Winn; 20) Wooten; 21) Zavala





2013-2014 HIGHLIGHTS



Teacher Comments:

"This is a **wonderful experience** and I hope Earth Camp will continue to be a part of the AISD curriculum. Thank you!"

"I liked the Scavenger Hunt because we were able to see juxtaposed a hill with and without plant roots to retain the soil. We **saw lots of examples** of runoff and erosion and the students really were able to connect real life actions to what happens to the water."

"I had the opportunity to **teach outside** the classroom and see students take what was taught in class and use it to interact with the environment. The students really enjoyed and learned a lot!"

"The students still **refer back** to something they remember from Earth Camp!"

28 schools participated in Earth Camp and Teacher-Led Earth Camp

Total Rate of Improvement from Pre to Post Test:

EARTH CAMP 39 %

TEACHER-LED Earth Camp 59%



AWARDS



- 2013** *Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin*
John F. Ahrens Award for Environmental Education
Awarded for Earth Camp
- 2012** *Keep Texas Beautiful*
Best Off Campus Youth Education Award
Awarded for Earth Camp, Earth School, and Clean Creek Campus
- 2006** *Keep Austin Beautiful Education Award*
Awarded for all the City of Austin's water quality education programs, including Earth Camp.
- 2005** *Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer*
Conservation District Conservation Award
Awarded for all the City of Austin's water quality education programs, including Earth Camp.
- 2003** *Texas Nonpoint Source Pollution Report and Management Program*
Highlighted as an exemplary program.
- 2000** *Austin Independent School District*
Board of Trustees Recognition
For prestigious accomplishment that brings enrichment to the educational experience of AISD students.
- 1999** *Environmental Protection Agency*
Regional Administrator's Environmental Excellence Award
For environmental education projects and programs in the southwest (Region 6).



EARTH SCHOOL 2013-2014

Background

Earth School was established in 2003 to reach fifth graders in Austin that do not receive Earth Camp. Earth School provides a one-hour classroom presentation that covers customized information about Austin's watersheds, the Edwards Aquifer and local water quality issues. Students identify pollution threats in their own neighborhood and model how water and pollution can flow across a watershed and through an aquifer. The curriculum is correlated with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and is presented in a concise, efficient format. This program is provided free of charge by the City of Austin to fifth-grade classes in the Austin and Eanes Independent School Districts. www.austintexas.gov/departments/earth-school

This school year, 5,476 fifth graders received Earth School at the following Austin and Eanes* Independent School District campuses and the Austin Discovery School (ADS)**:

ADS**	Forest Trail*	Norman
Allison	Graham	Oak Hill
Baldwin	Gullet	Oak Springs
Baranoff	Harris	Odom
Barton Creek*	Hart	Palm
Barton Hills	Highland Park	Patton
Blanton	Hill	Pease
Boone	Houston	Perez
Bridge Point*	Jordan	Pickle
Bryker Woods	Kiker	Pillow
Campbell	Kocurek	Pleasant Hill
Casey	Langford	Sanchez
Cedar Creek*	Lee	Summitt
Clayton	Linder	Travis Heights
Cook	Maplewood	Valley View*
Cowan	Mathews	Williams
Cunningham	McBee	Woolridge
Davis	Menchaca	Wooten
Doss	Metz	Zilker
Eanes*	Mills	

Teacher Evaluations:

"This is an extremely relevant presentation for 5th grade topics and the presenter was absolutely wonderful with the students."

"The presentation was great and I think it helped them make a connection with the water cycle!"

"This is directly related to our curriculum as we all study watersheds, environmental responsibility, and natural cycles."

"The students really understood it and enjoyed the hands-on aspect of it"

"Great resource for Austinites."

"We are so lucky to have had this opportunity."

"The presenter was amazing with the kids. They enjoyed the presentation."



CONTACTS

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Earth Camp is a City of Austin Watershed Protection Department

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We would like to express our deep gratitude to the following contributors for their generous support:

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

McKinney Falls State Park

Parks and Recreation Department

The Green Classroom

Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District

AISSD

