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## **ecodads Supports CAL\EPA and CalRecycle State-Approved Curriculum by Launching Crowdfunding Program to Produce FREE Apps for Classrooms**

*San Francisco, California (November 26, 2012)* - The California educational non-profit ecodads® today launched a Kickstarter crowdfunding project seeking support for the creation of two technology applications that would make California's landmark Education and the Environment Initiative curriculum available via Apple® iPads®.

The "Environmental Edutainment Apps Project" will develop apps that adapt the State Board of Education-approved curriculum into flexible, deeply engrossing interactive lessons for use in classrooms. A short video and full description of the project can be found here <final\_kickstarter\_url\_bitly>

The first-generation apps will deliver two sixth-grade units requested by educators in both the Calaveras and Manteca School Districts. Once completed, the apps will be free to interested educators and home-schooling parents and caregivers. Successful completion and evaluation of this ecodads project is part of a larger effort to make the EEI curriculum available to all 150,000 of the state's science, social studies, and history educators and all 6.2 million California students.

The EEI curriculum, set in motion through state legislative action, resulted from a dynamic multi-agency education and environmental partnership, which included the California Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the California Natural Resources Agency, and over 100 representatives from state and federal agencies, universities, NGOs, and educators. The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) oversaw development of the curriculum, which is now administered by the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). The K-12 curriculum is comprised of 85 units teaching select science, history and social science academic standards – (<http://www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI/default.htm>).

The apps are being designed to use the collaborative interaction of the iPad to enhance the way the EEI curriculum can support the state's [Common Core Standards](#) and [Next Generation Science Standards](#), which emphasize inquiry-based, hands-on learning and cross-cutting, interdisciplinary teaching.

"Not only will these apps link classrooms to a deeply robust set of resources, databases, and activities, but these touch-based and interactive apps will bring the curriculum to life for students and teachers," said Michael Leifer, ecodads co-founder and executive producer of the Environmental Edutainment Apps Project. "We can deliver active, not passive, student-engagement with these next generation learning tools. They will also support a system of community-based knowledge-building that will ultimately allow great ideas and solutions from students themselves to filter back into the curriculum for the benefit of succeeding generations of students."

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson spoke of the need for greater use of technology in education in a California Department of Education's news release dated March 17, 2012 (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr12/yr12rel25.asp>), when he said, "Technology is changing nearly every aspect of our lives. But in California—home to Silicon Valley and the world's leading technology companies—many schools have been all but left out of the technology revolution. If we're serious about providing our students a world-class education, we need a plan that leaves no school and no child offline."

"As the first standards-based, K-12 environmental education curriculum to be approved by the State Board of Education, EEI is helping to break down the historic barriers between everyday classroom education and environmental education," said Bryan Ehlers, Cal/EPA assistant secretary for education and quality programs. "It gives educators a wonderful way to merge experiences in the classroom with enriching activities in school gardens, parks, aquariums, and science centers."



According to CalRecycle Director Caroll Mortensen, “Our biggest challenge in bringing the EEI to teachers and students is the high cost of printing and distribution. The proposed EEI apps will significantly reduce costs and give students an improved and interactive environment-based curriculum.”

Manteca Unified Superintendent Jason Messer voiced his support as well. “It is imperative that the students of Manteca Unified and the State of California learn about the precious resources of this great state and our impact upon them as human beings,” Messer said. “We need to get students ‘virtually’ outside of their classrooms. During our modern digital gold rush here in California, I hope that there are companies who will provide innovation and generous support for apps like the ones that ecodads are developing. This is after all, about our students and our collective future.”

Calaveras Unified Superintendent Mark Campbell also backs the effort. "Any endeavor that seeks to effectively facilitate the active engagement of students is worthwhile and it is clear that the Environmental Edutainment Apps Project aims to do just that," Campbell said. "From my experience with EEI, which has been nothing but positive, I fully believe that the educational objectives here will only serve to greatly benefit student learning."

Will Duggan, executive director of ecodads concludes, "ecodads is involved because we believe the mash-up of this exquisite EEI K-12 curriculum and the fantastic new tools being innovated right here in California can help teachers and parents develop the kind of informed and engaged citizens that we hope for for California’s future.”

#### About ecodads.org

ecodads is a next-generation parenting movement that is: (1) Fixing Education (2) Creating a New Economy, and (3) Producing Environmental Stewards. A growing group of sustainably-minded dads, we don't support a lot of BS, refuse to spoon-swallow media sound-bites, like to offer our kids a sense of context and discernment while teaching them how to think on their feet, roll-up their sleeves, and get things done. Active Group Members are from array of different industries: media, education, transportation, scrap metal, the restaurant industry, the arts, technology, agriculture, real estate, sports, ice cream, advertising, finance, and more. For more information, visit <http://www.ecodads.org>.

#### About CalRecycle

The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) is the state's leading authority on recycling, waste reduction, and product reuse. CalRecycle plays an important role in the stewardship of California's vast resources and promotes innovation in technology to encourage economic and environmental sustainability. For more information, visit <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov>.

#### About CAL/EPA

The California Environmental Protection Agency is charged with developing, implementing and enforcing the state's environmental protection laws that ensure clean air, clean water, clean soil, safe pesticides and waste recycling and reduction. Our departments are at the forefront of environmental science, using cutting-edge research to shape the state's environmental laws. Cal/EPA is home to the California Air Resources Board, State Water Resources Control Board, Department of Pesticide Regulation, Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment.