

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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CAL FIRE RELEASES HISTORIC GREEN SCHOOLYARDS GRANT GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

(Sacramento)— The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection’s (CAL FIRE) Urban and Community Forestry Program announced today \$117 million will be available for Green Schoolyard grants in 2023. The Green Schoolyard grant guidelines are now open for public comment through January 13, 2023.

The public comment period is to solicit feedback and constructive comments that will help the Urban and Community Forestry Program improve its grant making efforts. Potential grant applicants and the public are invited to review the grant guidelines and submit their comments by January 13, 2023 at the [Urban and Community Forestry Grants Program webpage](#).

This will be the first time in state history that CAL FIRE has funding designated to improve nature and tree canopy cover on California K-12 public school campuses and nonprofit childcare facilities. California has approximately 10,000 public schools, of which the majority have very low canopy cover and a high degree of impervious surfaces. This leaves children, who are already disproportionately impacted by extreme urban heat, in even healthier environments than the surrounding urban areas. The lack of nature, exposure to extreme heat, and associated number of indoor-only days to avoid the heat do not just affect children’s physical activity and health, but their mental health and wellbeing as well.

Green Schoolyards grant projects include the planting of trees and other vegetation, converting pavement to green spaces, and other activities on California public school campuses and nonprofit childcare facilities to help alleviate extreme heat, improve the immediate environment for students, and improve accessibility to nature and nature-based learning. Projects are also intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve functionality of urban forests, arrest the decline of urban forest resources, address climate change resilience, improve the quality of the environment in urban areas, and optimize co-benefits to school children and surrounding urban residents.

The grant application period will open in January 2023 after the public comment period has closed. Two grant options will be available: a Planning Grant and an Implementation Grant. For more information on CAL FIRE’s Green Schoolyard Grant and Urban and Community Grant Programs visit: <https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/urban-and-community-forestry-grant-programs/>.

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