

# ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY GOAL

## Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome



2025 PROGRESS  
**ON COURSE**

**OUTCOME:** Each participating Bay jurisdiction should develop a comprehensive and systemic approach to environmental literacy for all students in the region that includes policies, practices and voluntary metrics that support the environmental literacy Goals and Outcomes of this Agreement.

**PROGRESS AS OF 2021:** The [Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome](#) is on course. The indicator for this outcome looks to increase the number of school districts that are well-prepared to implement environmental education programming. The [Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool](#) (ELIT) is distributed to all school districts in the watershed every two years. The indicator shows that the percentage of well-prepared districts has increased slightly each year since 2015: 19% in 2015; 22% in 2017; 27% in 2019. Digging deeper into the data, 47% of the districts showed some increase in their total score, even if they did not move to a new category of preparedness, which indicates strong progress. The 2021 ELIT was delayed due to COVID-19 considerations and it is very likely that the results will show a decline due to school districts shifting their priorities due to the pandemic response and recovery.

**BACKGROUND:** It has been over 20 years since the Chesapeake Executive Council adopted Directive 98- 1: [Chesapeake Bay Program Education Initiative](#), formally recognizing the importance of education to the Chesapeake Bay Program. In June 2012, the Education Workgroup released a strategy that outlined how the federal government should support state efforts to advance environmental literacy. The priorities identified in the strategy served as the basis for including the Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome in the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. The Education Workgroup coordinates with school districts and state agencies to provide the needed resources and training, as well as measure each school's level of preparedness to meet environmental literacy goals.

**BASELINE:** In 2015, among the local education agencies who responded to the ELIT, 26% reported being "Not prepared," 55% reported being "Somewhat prepared" and 19% reported being "Well-prepared."

**DATA SOURCE:** Data for this outcome is self-reported through the ELIT, which is administered biennially to all school districts in six of the seven watershed jurisdictions: the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.