



**We Plant.
We Celebrate.**



“Student engagement is improving and student discipline issues are decreasing as a result of the children interacting with nature, which satisfies their curiosity and allows them to solve problems in a real-world setting.”

Lisa Lovato, Principal,
Dan D. Rogers Elementary School



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TEXAS TREES
FOUNDATION



Cool Schools Program

**Bringing Outdoor
Classrooms to
North Texas Schools**



**We Plan.
We Educate.**

Cool Schools connect students and teachers to nature by planting trees and creating fun and engaging outdoor experiential learning areas. These spaces cultivate children's knowledge and awareness of the natural environment.





Research shows outdoor time can result in academic and health benefits for children. According to the University of Champaign Urbana of Illinois, kids who spend more time outside end up paying more attention inside. Trees and nature lower aggression and symptoms of ADHD, and are better able to concentrate, complete tasks and follow directions. Cool Schools promotes hands-on outdoor environmental activities with a STEM-based/TEKS-aligned curriculum, so no child is left inside!



COOL SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK




-  **Establish a Green Team of teachers and staff.**
This group will lead environmental projects at their school.
-  **Create landscape plan tailored to each school.**
Students and teachers contribute their ideas during the design process.
-  **Provide educational resources to teachers and students.**
Texas Trees Foundation leads a curriculum workshop for teachers and presents a tree class to students.
-  **Organize Planting Day with students, faculty, volunteers, and partners.**
From "mulch-kins" to 5th graders, everyone participates to plant and mulch the new trees at their school.
-  **Monitor and water new trees until established.**
We care for the new trees until they can care for themselves.
-  **Measure short and long-term educational and environmental impacts.**
We check on participation in the curriculum and record tree growth.
-  **Promote Celebration Day.**
Everyone celebrates their hard work and achievement with an event at the school featuring student activities, art, and music.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

-  **Resources:** STEM-based/TEKS-aligned curriculum, educational resources, and hands-on learning activities provided to engage students in Cool Schools outdoor learning areas.
-  **Behavior:** Research shows that kids who spend more time outside pay more attention inside. Trees and nature lower aggression and symptoms of ADHD, and children are better able to concentrate, complete tasks, and follow directions.
Findings from a 2019 research review indicate student experiences with nature lead to:
-  **Academics:** increased retention of subject matter, higher standardized scores, better grades, better math, reading and writing skills, and higher graduation rates.
-  **Development:** better leadership skills, better communication skills, more resilience, better critical thinking and problem solving, and better spatial skills.

BENEFITS FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Cool Schools increase tree canopy cover from 7% or less to 20% or more, aiding in environmental conservation and financial savings through shading of the school. Research supports the following benefits:

-  **Cooling:** Up to 15°F of cooling on hot summer days. A young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.
-  **Energy Savings:** Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30% and can save 20–50% in energy used for heating.
-  **Return:** The return on investing in trees provides a 3:1 return on investment. For every \$1 on tree planting and maintenance, there are ~\$5.82 in health, ecosystem, and environmental benefits for the school and surrounding community.

ABOUT US

COOL SCHOOLS HISTORY AND FUTURE

The Texas Trees Foundation's award-winning program, Cool Schools, launched in 2016 with Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) featuring two pilot schools, where 176 trees were planted. This resulted in \$227,290 of ecosystem services over a 40-year period, that includes: carbon sequestration, air pollution removal, energy savings, and stormwater savings.

Texas Trees Foundation's goal is to enhance the landscapes and outdoor learning opportunities of 150+ elementary school campuses in Dallas ISD, and expand the Cool Schools model to surrounding regional school districts and across the state of Texas.

ABOUT TEXAS TREES FOUNDATION

The Texas Trees Foundation (Texas Trees) serves as a catalyst in creating a new green legacy for North Texas through transformational, research-based plans that educate and mobilize the public to activate the social, economic, environmental, and health benefits that trees and urban forestry provide.

GET INVOLVED WITH COOL SCHOOLS

Sponsorship/Partnership opportunities are available through the sponsorship of Cool School campuses. Cool Schools are an investment in our children's health, education, and overall quality of life based on research. This program also positively impacts the surrounding community and environment.

Volunteer and team building opportunities for individuals, groups, and businesses are available at Cool School planting days and celebration days. Volunteers learn proper tree planting techniques for future volunteer opportunities or in their own personal lives.

Contact Texas Trees Foundation at (214) 953-1184 or info@texastrees.org to learn more about how to get involved!