

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is the South Coast AQMD?

South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) is the regulatory agency responsible for improving air quality for large areas of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, including the Coachella Valley. South Coast AQMD's mission is to clean the air and protect the health of all residents in the South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction through practical and innovative strategies. The region is home to more than 17 million people, about half the population of the entire state of California. Air pollution has far ranging effects on the health of Southern Californians, causing or contributing to asthma and lung damage, respiratory and cardiac diseases, cancer, birth defects, and premature death.

2. What is the purpose of the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (CAPES)?

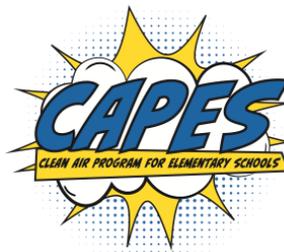
Since 2019, South Coast AQMD has partnered with elementary schools in communities that are disproportionately impacted by air pollution. South Coast AQMD aims to increase awareness of air quality issues and empower youth to drive positive change during a time when they are developing and forming their own habits. CAPES features videos, lesson plans, and worksheets that provide examples on how students can be Clean Air Heroes.

3. How are elementary schools selected to participate?

South Coast AQMD will implement CAPES in 20 schools per year in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Elementary schools are prioritized based upon their location within or proximity to a community impacted by environmental justice issues. If a school is not included in the initial priority list, they can still participate by contacting South Coast AQMD. (See #10.)

4. What does the CAPES curriculum consist of?

Partner schools are provided access to a series of three videos for one school year. As students engage in distance learning, sharing educational videos is a great way to reach them. The first series of videos will focus on air quality topics such as Air Quality 101, the Air Quality Index (AQI) and becoming a Clean Air Hero. For the following school year, additional videos will be provided on other important air quality topics. Provided with each video are lesson plans, worksheets, and answer keys that align with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The goal is to get students introduced to air pollution concepts at a young age and continue to engage them on air quality issues as they grow older.



5. How do I implement the CAPES program?

South Coast AQMD will provide the videos with corresponding curriculum. It is at the educator's discretion on how the curriculum is to be shared with students, whether it be daily or over a period of time. Additionally, educators are provided the opportunity to conduct a Question & Answer session with South Coast AQMD staff. One-on-one assistance is also available upon request.

6. How much class time is needed to deliver this curriculum?

Each video is approximately 3 - 5 minutes in length and together with the accompanying curriculum, the approximate lesson time is about 15 - 20 minutes. South Coast AQMD understands the different needs of schools and classrooms and leaves it up to the educators on how in depth they would like to teach the curriculum.

7. How will the effectiveness of CAPES be evaluated?

An evaluation survey is included in the materials for all participating educators to answer upon the completion of the program. The survey provides an opportunity for educators to offer feedback concerning the program. This information is shared with South Coast AQMD's staff to better enhance the learning experience for students in the coming years, especially as it relates to distance learning.

8. What materials will I need, and will I need to purchase them?

South Coast AQMD provides partner schools or educators with a curriculum kit that contains everything educators need to successfully implement the program. The materials include: online videos, lesson plans, worksheets, answer keys, and staff support to answer questions. CAPES is free and no long-term commitment is required.

9. What if my class meets virtually?

CAPES is designed with intended flexibility and provides the learning tools necessary to accommodate class and student needs including distance learning.

10. I have more questions about the program and/or curriculum. Where can I get more information?

For additional information on South Coast AQMD's CAPES, please contact Alicia Lizarraga at EJCP@aqmd.gov or (909) 396-2311. You can also visit www.aqmd.gov/capes.