

AFTER 3: Eradicating Erosion in the Schoolyard

Background: Your field investigations at Blandy can be a launch into an action project in your schoolyard! Below are some general ideas and an example of an action plan. We leave this open ended so you and your students can drive the inquiry and project goals.

Standards Addressed: Will vary with project. Activity can pull from many content areas.

Instructional Strategy:

Hook: What evidence of soil erosion did you observe during the field investigations at Blandy?

Student Work:

1. Outside, student groups find and take notes on erosion in the schoolyard. Possible places to explore are the playground, near the parking lots, front entrance, etc.
2. Once students have made their observations, discuss: Are any of the erosion areas large enough that something should be done to lessen or stop the erosion? As a class, brainstorm ideas then vote on one to pursue. What can be done to reduce or stop the erosion?
3. Class develops a plan for erosion control around their school.

Sample plan:

- Scenario: Over time, a path formed between two buildings on a school's campus. The grass has been worn down and now every time it rains, the path becomes a mud pit, erosion is occurring, washing soil down to a nearby stream.
- Students investigate the path and the erosion that is occurring, taking field notes and taking photographs or drawing what they see.
- In the classroom, students research the impact of the erosion on the stream closest to their school and research ways to mitigate (reduce or stop) the erosion. Either in groups or individually, students come up with a plan to reduce or stop the erosion. In this example, a solution might be to put in a walkway (stone tiles or something similar), seed the area with grass or moss, and then put up a temporary barrier to allow the plants to establish.
- If possible, bring in a soil scientist or expert to discuss soil, erosion, and soil management.
- Students vote on a potential solution and then write a persuasive letter to the school administration for their plan.

