



SEAL Program Description:

Clean Ocean Action's **Student Environmental Advocates and Leaders (SEAL)** program aims to empower students to become mindful and resourceful leaders, with a focus on current, local environmental issues. While collaborating with peers all over Monmouth County, SEAL students will identify and implement environmental projects in their own communities. Students will serve as ambassadors to their high schools, as they engage their school community in the issues and solutions. They will also become role models in their school communities by presenting their campaigns and results to district middle schools. Clean Ocean Action (COA) uses a point-based system to award for leadership, collaboration, and cohesiveness, and also community outreach to classmates, middle schoolers, and town councils. SEAL impacts will be tracked by staff notes, surveys, reports from SEALs, and media.

SEAL Eligibility:

The program is open to high school students from Monmouth County schools (with priority given to sophomores and juniors). Depending on the level of interest, the program may be limited to two to four students from each school. Participation is free; students will be responsible for arranging transportation. Small travel stipends may be available based on need.

SEAL Requirements:

- To apply, students must fill out a [Student Interest Form](#) and upon acceptance will be required to submit completed paperwork to be approved by COA and the school environmental/science teacher, advisor and/or principal.
- Students will be required to have written/signed parental/guardian approval to participate, as well as written/signed permission to travel to attend site visits.
- Students will sign an agreement of participation with COA.
- SEAL students will meet twice per month on Wednesdays and/or Thursdays, from 6:30 – 8 pm, at COA's office at 49 Avenel Boulevard, Long Branch, NJ.
- Bi-monthly meetings will be held from October 2023 to May 2024 and will be facilitated by members of the COA staff.
- To enhance understanding of environmental issues, SEALs will take field trip(s), led by COA Staff. Field trips will be at key and issue-related locations (e.g., NJ state capital, recycling facility, landfill) with COA staff members and chaperones; and
- SEAL students will be required to keep track of their chosen projects' impacts, actions, and successes and report on these at SEAL meetings and in brief reports to COA.

(continued)

SEAL Actions:

- ✓ During the first few meetings, SEALs will identify an environmental problem in their local communities.
- ✓ SEAL representatives from each high school will determine the specific actions they will take to address the identified problem and provide solutions in their communities.
- ✓ SEAL students will keep fellow SEAL students and COA regularly informed of their projects' progress.
- ✓ SEAL students will work within their own school to take actions on the chosen issue.
- ✓ SEALs will share successes and failures of their projects as a group and collaborate on how each can improve or enhance their projects while learning civic processes.
- ✓ Students will present their efforts to one middle school in their own district; and
- ✓ SEAL students have the option to present results of their projects to their municipality, whether it is to an Environmental Committee or Commission, or the Town Council.

SEAL Impacts & Benefits:

Students can become mindful, caring, and critical thinkers and leaders by engaging in meaningful social interaction tied to problem-solving on issues of mutual concern. The SEAL students will:

- Research factual information and solutions;
- Share and discuss complex issues with peers, family, and their community;
- Collaborate with peers from other communities;
- Identify workable solutions;
- Organize and perform outreach;
- Develop effective campaigns for success;
- Educate middle school students;
- Make powerful motivational presentations;
- Implement campaigns; and
- Monitor success and failures.



SEAL students will impact district middle school students in the following ways:

- Inform them about important issues;
- Serve as role models within their community;
- Offer solutions to inspire them to take action;
- Engage and empower by becoming a part of the solution;
- Motivate future participation in SEAL and in continuing efforts and actions; and
- Inspire to share what they have learned with family and friends.

For more information about the SEAL program, or to discuss your school's participation, contact Kristen Grazioso, Clean Ocean Action's Education Coordinator at KGrazioso@cleanoceanaction.org or 732-872-0111.

Prepared by Clean Ocean Action, Updated 4/1/2023.

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