




Belleville-Nutley Patch

## Unique 'Outdoor Classroom' Coming To Nutley's Yanticaw Park

Having class outside on a nice day is about to become a reality for Nutley's students.

By Eric Kiefer (Patch Staff) - July 20, 2016 11:01 am ET | 



NUTLEY, NJ — “Let’s have class outdoors today.”

It’s tough to sit indoors in school on a beautiful day. But when students in Nutley hear the above phrase when they return to school for a new year in the autumn, it won’t be an idle suggestion.

On Tuesday, local and state officials gathered in Yanticaw Park to hear about plans for a unique “outdoor classroom” located near the bank of the Third River within walking distance of Nutley High School.

According to officials, the learning space will include “stadium-style” seating for up to 30 students and an instructor’s podium nestled in a small grove of trees.

Nutley Public School District Science Coordinator Kent Bania, John H. Walker Middle School science teacher Lynn Zazzali, and Walker Middle School Principal Tracy Egan were recognized for spearheading the idea, a collaborative effort between Essex County, the Passaic Valley Sewage Commission (PVSC) and the Nutley Educational Foundation (NEF), [NorthJersey.com wrote](#).

The group of Nutley educators reportedly [came up with the idea a few years ago](#), and after reaching out to the NEF and PVSC, gained permission to use the space from Essex County which owns and maintains the property.

Nutley Superintendent Julie Glazer opined that the project would “extend the school beyond the four walls, beyond what’s traditional.”

“The Greeks did this thousands of years ago... now we're bringing it back,” New Jersey Assemblyman Ralph Caputo (D-28th) added.

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While officials didn't elaborate on how the classroom may be used, a news release from Essex County stated that the space will be utilized “to inspire students in the middle and high schools to learn about science and the environment.”

“Dozens of schools throughout New Jersey have developed and maintain on-site outdoor classrooms that are used by students throughout the day as part of their coursework - not just in science, but in social studies, language arts, mathematics and art,” the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection [states on its website](#).

“Imagine students being actively engaged in learning while using outdoor trails, butterfly and flower gardens, man-made ponds and wetlands, observation decks, bird blinds, amphitheaters and diverse wooded areas. Such sites are both popular as well as possible on most school properties, including very built urban and suburban environments.”

Want to bring an outdoor classroom to your area? [Check out these online resources](#) from the NJ DEP.