

## PEAS

Partners for Education, Agriculture & Sustainability



PARTNERS FOR EDUCATION,  
AGRICULTURE & SUSTAINABILITY

Media contact:

Amber Moak

peas@carvecom.com

512.296.0660

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PEAS Receives Largest Urban Forest Grant Ever Awarded by the City of Austin**

***Nonprofit Plans to Use Over \$172,000 of new Funding to Teach Forest Ecosystem Concepts to over 6,000 Austin-Area Students at 20 Schools***

**AUSTIN, TX -- March 23, 2022 -- [PEAS \(Partners for Education, Agriculture, and Sustainability\)](#)**

is proud to announce that it is a recipient of the largest Urban Forest Grant ever awarded by the City of Austin, over \$172,000. The Urban Forest Grant strengthens Austin's urban forest by funding stewardship activities like tree planting, tree care, education, and disease control projects. The funding will be used over the course of this year through the spring of 2023 to allow PEAS to deliver unique tree lessons and embed forest ecosystem concepts into its existing outdoor education programming at more than 20 Title 1 Austin-area schools.

“Research shows that repeated exposure to nature and green spaces is more influential than one-time experiences for building appreciation and stewardship habits. And a lack of repeat exposure is associated with the development of fear, discomfort and dislike of the environment,” said Emily King, Urban Forester at the City of Austin. “PEAS is the only organization in Central Texas that provides year-round, facilitated outdoor education and support for public schools. We are excited to partner with PEAS and see AISD students learn and grow to appreciate the great outdoors through the programming funded by this grant.”

The hands-on outdoor lessons taught by PEAS will expand upon the organization's existing programming at participating school campuses that cultivate joyful connections with students and the natural world through outdoor learning and food education. The organizations' educators will partner with classroom teachers and their students to integrate applied science, math, and writing skills to build an understanding of the roles trees play and how to effectively care for them. The program will have touch points twice a month throughout the school year to keep teachers and students enthusiastically learning about the interconnected relationships trees have in our environment. By exploring these relationships, students will understand their campus ecosystems and how they are impacted by the greater Austin environment.

The funding will also be used during PEAS' 2022 Summer Camp where the first two weeks will include unique tree-themed education days. Additionally, PEAS will host a tree education and community art workshop series at the PEAS Farm & Urban Orchard location on Cunningham Elementary campus. More information will be shared on PEAS' website as plans solidify.

"We are grateful to the City of Austin for this generous grant, which is allowing us to expand our programming and immediately impact the over 6,000 local area students participating in our programs," said Lauren Maples, Founder & Executive Director at PEAS. "We're excited to start implementing new cross-curricular urban forest education as part of our holistic environmental education program as a way to further engage students and teachers in learning about trees as integral parts of urban ecosystems and help them become more knowledgeable stewards of their local environment."

All programming taught with this funding will follow AISD's needs and district goals and will be planned in collaboration with AISD. Additionally, PEAS will utilize the City of Austin's Community Tree Priority Map, which identifies high priority areas for urban forest stewardship and planting investments. To learn more about PEAS visit [www.peascommunity.org](http://www.peascommunity.org) or follow the organization on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

**ABOUT PEAS:**

PEAS (Partners for Education, Agriculture and Sustainability) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Austin, TX. Founded with the mission to cultivate joyful connections with the natural world through outdoor learning and edible education, PEAS offers unique, project-based learning curriculum to participating school campuses, operates and maintains a community farm and leads professional development to help teachers bridge key science, nutrition, math and health concepts from the garden to the classroom. Delivering programming year-round, PEAS provides trained outdoor specialists who partner with educators at each school's campus to co-teach outdoor and kitchen lessons, increasing students' time spent learning in an outdoor, hands-on environment. PEAS currently works with 19 schools in Austin ISD and other surrounding school districts, engaging more than 3,200 students in outdoor learning.

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