

Timeline of the Chesapeake Bay Program Education Commitments

1987: Original Chesapeake Bay Agreement establishes an objective to “provide curricula and field experiences for students”.

1998: Education Directive 98-1 establishes:

- formal role for state departments of education as partners,
- interagency workgroups that report progress to their state department of education
- expectation that state departments of education report progress to the CBP Executive Council
- biennial education summits

2000: Executive Council (PA, VA, MD, DC) includes MWEEs (a pedagogical student experience that includes classroom preparation, outdoor learning, and reflection on the outdoor learning experience as part of a comprehensive unit of study) as keystone commitment.

2001: Education Workgroup establishes formal definition for the MWEE

2002: NOAA B-WET begins providing multi-million dollar funding for MWEE implementation across region

2005: Executive Council signs MWEE Endorsement

- Recognizes the importance of local education agencies and other administrators
- Recommits to department of education involvement, jurisdictional workgroups, and biennial summits

2005-2009: Progress toward MWEE tracked by state departments of education and the DC Department of the Environment. At last count, approximately 81% of elementary, 81% of middle, and 80% of high school students were reported as receiving MWEEs. Tracking was discontinued in 2009 in recognition of the inconsistency of the data resulting from non-uniform methods and rigor used to gather MWEE numbers.

June 2012: In response to federal Executive Order 13508, the federal government releases the *Mid Atlantic Elementary and Secondary Environmental Literacy Strategy* (MAEELS) on behalf of the Education Workgroup.

- Represents goals and outcomes for a broad range of constituents – including nonformal educators, universities, and government – who each have specific roles in helping to achieve the vision.
- Builds on the MWEE by broadening the audience (from students to students, educators, schools, and education community) and scope (from watershed education to environmental education). The expanded audience recognizes the essential role that educators and schools play in delivering student MWEEs, and the broadened scope is more consistent with state plans for environmental education.

August 2012: The CBP Science and Technical Advisory Committee supports a Best Practices Workshop focused on the MWEE. Makes recommendations for revisions to the definition.

November 2012: Workgroup begins discussion of new metrics and tracking system for the MWEE based on MAEELS and informed by the best practices recommendations. The metrics will replace the previous reporting requirement for the CBP that was discontinued in 2009.

April 2013: Chesapeake Bay Program begins negotiations on a new Chesapeake Bay Agreement. Education Workgroup works to ensure that the essence of MAEELS is included in the new agreement and clarifies that the process for states indicating their formal support for shared work will be through the new Bay Agreement.

June 2014: New Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement includes Environmental Literacy Goal and associated outcomes.

Environmental Literacy Goal: Enable every student in the region to graduate with the knowledge and skills to act responsibly to protect and restore their local watershed.

- *Student Outcome: Continually increase students' age-appropriate understanding of the watershed through participation in teacher-supported, meaningful watershed educational experiences and rigorous, inquiry-based instruction, with a target of at least one meaningful watershed educational experience in elementary, middle and high school depending on available resources.*
- *Sustainable Schools Outcome: Continually increase the number of schools in the region that reduce the impact of their buildings and grounds on their local watershed, environment and human health through best practices, including student-led protection and restoration projects.*
- *Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome: Each participating Bay jurisdiction should develop a comprehensive and systemic approach to environmental literacy for all students in the region that includes policies, practices and voluntary metrics that support the environmental literacy Goals and Outcomes of this Agreement.*