

MINUTES

Education Workgroup Meeting

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.



Upcoming Meetings:

- August 27-28, 2012: Research Based Best Practices Workshop
- September 20, 2012: Executive Committee Meetings
- November 14-15, 2012: Full Membership Meeting

Action Items:

- **Workgroup leadership** will synthesize notes from this meetings working sessions into a draft *Education Workgroup 2012-2013 Action Plan* and circulate it to workgroup members for review.
- **Workgroup Members** whose organizations have social media accounts will email their Twitter and Facebook handles to Sarah Brzezinski at Sarah_Brzezinski@partner.nps.gov – Sarah will compile a list of this information to promote regional collaboration and communication.

Welcome, Workgroup Structure, & Membership

The mid-Atlantic region is looked to as an example of environmental education (EE) excellence with a strong collaborative approach. With the adoption of the new Education Workgroup structure and membership, the team has reaffirmed its collaborative nature by including broader representation from the major EE organizations and agencies at the national, regional, state, and local levels.

Members agreed that it is important for the Education Workgroup to:

- Increase collective and individual efficiency through strategic leveraging of resources
- Provide a forum for networking and cross-jurisdictional communication, coordination, and collaboration
- Provide a strong, unified voice to continue the momentum of EE efforts at the state and regional levels
- Be engaged in the development of environmental literacy strategies and policies and assist in translating those documents for on the ground implementation

Highlights from Partner Environmental Literacy Efforts

Federal, affiliate, and state delegation representatives provided updates on the status of the development of their environmental literacy plans and informed the workgroup of progress towards implementing other major initiatives. Please refer to power point presentations for additional information:

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/18256/>

Update on Status of Education Workgroup Projects

Bay Backpack 2.0

- www.BayBackpack.com is the Chesapeake Bay Program - Education Workgroup teacher resource website
- User review sessions and stakeholder focus groups have allowed the website development team to identify key near and long-term opportunities for improving site content and functionality
- Website build-out may begin as early as this fall!

Research Based Best Practices Workshop

- This workshop will convene members of the academic community to identify common qualities of education programs and practices that lead to increased environmental literacy in K-12 students.
 - The best practices identified at this workshop will inform the development of associated metrics to track environmental literacy of students in the mid-Atlantic region
-

Action Plan Development

Afternoon break-out sessions produced a wealth of information that Workgroup leadership will use to develop a *draft Education Workgroup Action Plan for 2012 – 2013*. Throughout these sessions, multiple comments acknowledged that the ability to speak with the collective voice of the workgroup and to have projects recognized as “mid-Atlantic efforts” lends credibility to our collaborative work. The Action Plan that will be developed as a result of these sessions will be centered around the four key areas called out in the federal and affiliate environmental literacy strategies:

- **Education Community**

The education community in the region functions in a unified manner and coordinates with key national, regional and state programs to represent the full suite of information and opportunities available to PK-12 audiences.

Action Plan suggestions included:

- Expanding and improving Bay Backpack
- Develop a suite of research based best practices for environmental education
- Promote and create buy-in for the Best Practices document that will be developed from the STAC workshop – when the metrics come out there will already be support for them
- Revise the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience indicator and/or create new metrics related to environmental education
- Discuss interest in convening issue based conference calls. These calls could potentially:
 - o Be convened by the affiliates
 - o Feature presentations by experts, then break into state-specific NAAEE conversations
 - o Be coordinated with green strides US Dept of ED webinars
- Conduct an analysis of the common challenges to the implementation of our ELPs
- Coordinate a day in the field for administrators
- Commit to nominating 2-3 people to take the place of an Education Workgroup member when they leave – need to make sure we have the right people come into the workgroup when someone leaves

- **Educators**

All educators in the region responsible for instruction about or in the environment are provided with sustained professional development, tools, and resources that support their role in providing students with high-quality environmental education.

Action Plan suggestions included:

- Host a targeted conference call to discuss informal educators certification programs, such as the Virginia Watershed Education Institutes, and the potential for a regional/mid-Atlantic certification program
 - NASA is mapping all current resources to Next Generation Science Standards and will be creating an online portal for their resources - workgroup members could help review the resources and the website
 - Expand Bay Backpack:
 - o Incorporate more NASA content into Bay Backpack once new portal is developed
 - o Create a rubric for vetting content that goes onto Bay Backpack
 - o Develop some sort of structure for sharing best practices and research (and for disseminating that information to principals and educators)
 - Develop a suite of research based best practices for educators and/or environmental education professional development
 - Have a conference call to brainstorm ideas for how to get administrators engaged in and supportive of environmental education. Outcomes could include the development of a mid-Atlantic product that can be circulated and used for regional/state/local presentations – having a mid-Atlantic stamp to lend credibility
-

- **Students**

Every student in the region graduates with the knowledge and skills to make informed environmental decisions.

Action Plan suggestions included:

- Develop an inventory of speakers for the Bay Backpack speakers bureau
- Promote the integration of environmental education across all subjects (not just science)
- Help provide stronger connections between EE and Common Core, STEM, etc
- Create/Promote internship/job shadowing opportunities for students
- Work to create a student environmental congress
- Advocate for having a student representative on the Chesapeake Bay Program management board, chosen through competition

- **Schools**

Every school in the region maintains its buildings, grounds, and operations to support positive environmental and human health outcomes.

Action Plan suggestions included:

- Discuss potential for a regional certification program/award/recognition
 - Develop a Green Schools section/resource on Bay Backpack
 - Potential new metric - track the number and location of green schools throughout the mid-Atlantic region
 - Host focused conference calls to discuss green school topics, including:
 - o Key components of green schools (develop associated best practices)
 - o Challenges to developing/maintaining green schools
 - o Variations between program standards for achieving green school status
-

Attendance – In Person:

- Barb Young – VA DOE
- Suzie Gilley – VA DGIF
- David Christopher – National Aquarium, MAMEA
- Julie Diegues – MD No Child Left Inside Coalition
- Laura Collard – MAEOE
- Britt Slattery – MD DNR
- Grace Manubay – DDOE
- David Ruble – VA DEQ
- Steve Barry – Anne Arundel County Public Schools
- Lisa Deaton – VA Dept of Forestry
- Susan Cox – US FS
- Ashley Peebles – DE Forest Service
- Gary Hedges – MSDE
- Sarah Bodor – National No Child Left Inside Coalition
- Tonyea Mead – DE Dept of Education
- Karen Kelly Mullin – US FWS
- Jack Farster – PA DEP
- Kacey Wetzel – CBT
- Ellie O’Brien – CBT intern
- Frank Rodgers – Cacapon Institute
- Libby Campbell – Alice Ferguson Foundation
- Ann Faulds – PA Sea Grant
- Rebecca Davis – Environmental Education consultant, DCEEC
- Anita Davis - NASA
- Sarah Brzezinski – CRC
- Shannon Sprague – NOAA
- Kevin Schabow – NOAA

Attendance – On the Phone:

- Barbara McGuinness – US FS
 - Bart Merrick – NOAA
 - Andrew Larkin - NOAA
 - Bronwen Rice – NOAA
 - Chris Petrone – DE Sea Grant
 - Daria Blom – Friends of the Rappahannock
 - Ruth Roperti - PAEE
 - Tamara Willis – Mary Baldwin College
 - Jennifer Holmes – NERRS, DE Project WET Coordinator
 - Andrea Falken – US Department of Ed
 - Ann Regn – VA DEQ
 - Jamie Baxter – CBT
-
-