

**CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM EDUCATION WORKGROUP
FULL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

December 7, 2020

10:00-12:00 and 1:00-3:00

This meeting will be recorded for internal use and to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.

[Link to Meeting Recording](#)

[Link to Meeting Materials](#)

10:00-10:10 Welcome & Introductions

10:10-10:30 Bay Backpack (Olivia Wisner)

This session included a review of the current Bay Backpack website and introduced a prototype of the updated site that was developed in partnership with the Web Team at the Bay Program. This session also covered future plans for updating content on Bay Backpack.

- Updates to Bay Backpack are expected to go live before the end of the year
- Education Workgroup has secured a software to identify/ fix broken links

Discussion Questions

- What are the strengths of Bay Backpack?
 - Funding Page is useful
 - Useful information on the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) for new and experienced educators
 - One-stop shop for environmental literacy resources
- What are the weaknesses of Bay Backpack?
 - Name can confuse people
 - Broken links
 - Need explicit process for how to update resources
 - Lack of shared ownership
 - Appears science and Maryland focused
 - Overwhelming amount of information
 - Not reaching teachers
 - Action Project pages are confusing

Action Items:

- Contact Olivia Wisner (wisnero@chesapeake.org) if you're interested in being part of a team of volunteers who will conduct an audit on the Teaching Resources currently hosted on Bay Backpack, update the Action Project Pages and build out the sites included on the Field Studies page
- Share baybackpack.com within your networks
- Contact Olivia Wisner if your organization has a funding opportunity that you'd like advertised on the [Funding page](#)

10:30-12:00 Strengthening MWEE Implementation

MWEE Resources (Krysta Hougan/Bart Merrick) - 1 hour

This session provided an overview of the ecosystem of MWEE support resources. During the session Bart and Krysta highlighted existing resources,

shared models describing how resources are being used, and discussed where there are gaps and opportunities in this ecosystem. [See their presentation for more details](#) and the [results of the Mentimeter](#) questions about how people are using current resources.

- MWEE Support Ecosystem (Developed): Bay Backpack, MWEE 101 and MWEE 201 on [Chesapeake Exploration](#), Facilitator's Guide to MWEE Training
- Most participants/ their organizations identified MWEE 101 as a tool incorporated during professional development
- Most participants have used some elements of the Facilitator's Guide in their MWEE trainings
- Most participants have supported awareness of the Facilitator's Guide with their networks (either formal or nonformal partners)

Discussion Questions:

- *Thinking back to trainings you hosted or attended, what are some approaches or aspects you plan to keep using in support of MWEE trainings even after we're able to return in-person?*
 - MWEE 101 as prework for professional development, paired with hands-on experience during professional development
 - Using the Environmental Literacy Model (ELM) tool for visualizing and organizing a MWEE
 - Using the "Issues" categorization as a way to engage people at the beginning of a training
 - Micro-focus on practitioners using their local environments for environmental study
 - Balancing synchronous and asynchronous learning
- *What else exists in this ecosystem and should be shared broadly? And how to share it?*
 - Sharing success stories/ models from successful grantees
 - More examples of ELM and ELit Plan examples
 - State EE certification programs (NAAEE affiliates)
 - More sharing of MWEE trainings
- *What is missing and would be helpful to develop?*
 - Case studies of successful systemic partnerships
 - More resources connecting the terrestrial environment with water
 - Maps with geospatially referenced information so that environmental health issues can be visualized
 - List/ Mapsof local agencies that can assist with MWEE Development and coordination of action projects
 - Process for bringing fresh content to Baybackpack
 - Examples of MWEEs beyond earth science (Physics, Chemistry, Social Studies, Math, and ELA)
 - More support for pre-service educators
 - Research detailing the benefits of MWEEs
 - Connecting to the 5 C's

Action Items:

- From Tara Drennan: Many of these slides have been helpful in visually understanding the purpose, audiences, and uses of all these great MWEE

resources. It may be helpful to have some of these visuals on the new Bay Backpack to help describe each of these resources.

2021 Forum (Tom Ackerman/Elise Trelegan) - 30 min

This session recapped the goals of the 2020 Environmental Literacy Forum before engaging participants in a brainstorm-session around what topics or themes should be explored during the next forum, planned for Winter 2021-22. [See the slides from their presentation for details.](#)

Discussion Questions:

- *What new issues or themes do we want to focus on? What are the most important issues to dedicate our time to during the next Forum?*
 - How to make sure virtual environmental education (EE) doesn't become an acceptable replacement for being outside while recognizing virtual EE can be useful to overcome barriers/ pandemic recovery
 - MWEEs in support of environmental Justice (DEIJ)
 - Connections to higher education audiences
 - Systemic MWEE Implementation and it's sustainability
 - Raising underrepresented voices
- *Who should our audience be (practitioners, new partners, science supervisors, geographic clusters of partners, etc)?*
 - Higher education representatives
 - School systems and their partners
 - Regional working groups (give them time to connect)
 - Facility managers
 - Science supervisors (broaden to other supervisors too)
 - Engage new partners (teachers/ schools who have never attended)

12:00-1:00 BREAK

1:00-2:45 Strategic Engagement to Support Systemic Environmental Literacy

Multi-Level Regional Network

(Tara Drennan/Karen Mullin/Shannon Sprague) - 45 min

This session introduced two exciting network building efforts currently underway and discussed how they relate to and build off of one another. The Regional Outdoor Learning Network (ROLN) is a new effort to better understand the relationships among existing people/networks supporting environmental literacy in the Mid-Atlantic region, and where there are still gaps. The Outdoor Learning Network Initiative (OLNI) is focused on developing new networks at the school district level through targeted capacity building. [See the slides from the presentation for more details.](#)

Regional Outdoor Learning Network (ROLN) Discussion Questions:

- *What role should state networks play in a regional partnership?*
 - Funding support
 - Promotion of success stories
 - Promotion of important information/ professional development opportunities

- Provide connections and a flow of information from the region to local levels
- Identify gaps and direct resources to underserved communities
- Engage more stakeholders
- State networks are in a position to serve as a conduit between the regional and network layers
- *How can we as a community support this vision?*
 - Share news coming out of ROLN with our own networks
 - “Good faith” sponsorship of each other's work during high profile events
 - Endorsements from state networks of regional networks and vice versa
 - Alignment of goals
 - Encourage representation from groups that haven't been historically included
 - Leveraging our existing relationships to join people and other networks together
- *How can we better engage school district leadership?*
 - Have more evidence to support MWEs and student achievement
 - Consistency in messaging from all state networks with goals clearly delineated and relevant to education policy
 - Tailor messaging to school district leadership
 - Engage school district leadership early in the process
- *What level of the network makes most sense for them to engage in (e.g. Education Workgroup, state networks, local networks)?*
 - School district leadership should be engaged in state or local networks

Outdoor Learning Network Initiative (OLNI) Discussion Questions:

- *What elements of the collective impact model do you think are most important for building trust?*
 - Respect what each partner needs
 - Being transparent and dividing tasks
 - Acknowledge that one size does not fit all but it can still be helpful to have a common agenda
 - Regular, transparent communication
- *What have you seen work well?*
 - Promoting each others' strengths
 - Regularly scheduled meetings between local EE providers
 - Sustainability plan to encourage continual engagement

New BMP and Environmental Literacy Decision making GIS Tools (Steve Kerlin) - 30 min

This session will be an initial walk-through of decision making tools and methods, particularly a new GIS tool. Through a CBT grant, Stroud Water Research Center in collaboration with Chesapeake Bay Program partners created a process and tools for prioritizing school districts and school sites that have greatest need and potential for installation of best management practices and other environmental literacy efforts. The designed methods include the use of a new [CBW Public School Stream BMP Evaluation Tool](#) in ArcGIS Online and Model My

Watershed[®]. Worksheets are also available for comparing environmental site-based data, ELIT survey data, and equity data for school districts, stormwater runoff at school sites, modeling results of installing BMPs, use of the National Stormwater Calculator for cost comparisons.

Discussion Questions:

- *How can these GIS-based tools be used to prioritize funding, initiatives, and other efforts for school districts and school building sites?*
 - Crossover environmental hazard data with socio-economic data
- *What criteria may be most important in making decisions and how should they be weighted when statistically comparing school districts and school building sites?*
 - Identify low income schools

Sustainable Schools (Erin Sullivan) - 30 min

This session will begin with a (re)introduction of the Sustainable Schools lead, Erin Sullivan, EPA - Region 3. The session will continue with a high-level review of sustainable school actions for 2021-2022, focusing on the opportunity for renewed collaboration. The session will also focus on how changes in physical school environments may impact sustainable school efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic and a discussion on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) efforts in the Chesapeake Bay. [See the slides from the presentation for details.](#)

- Erin Sullivan shared efforts from [Johns Hopkins Health Education and Training \(HEAT\) Corps](#) to educate young people about the dangers of COVID-19.

Discussion Questions:

- *With the adoption of virtual and hybrid learning, how have schools continued making progress with sustainability practices in the school environment? How have schools been working towards certification/recertification? What success stories or challenges have been encountered? Have school grounds been used in place of field trips? If so, how?*
 - PA Healthy Schools Workgroup has been meeting every two weeks
 - Baltimore City has a new Outdoor Classroom Initiative
 - DC did a field test of new state level green school certification
 - VA reviewing US Green Ribbon applications
 - Connection with national groups (ex. [Children and Nature Network](#))
 - Green School actions at home (ex. home audits)
 - More educators attending virtual PD
 - Schools developing outdoor learning spaces that can be used after the pandemic
 - More parent involvement in the curriculum
 - More interest in connections to human health (ex. Green cleaning, indoor air quality, integrated pest management)
 - Big ask to have teachers do anything beyond virtual learning right now
- *What examples of DEIJ practices can we share for work done in the watershed? What can the workgroup do to better integrate DEIJ practices*

in the school and learning environment? Share examples, successful practices, etc.

- Connecting EE providers to community based organization in BWET NOFO
- EJ Screen
- Sharing internship/ opportunities to all communities
- Incorporate systemic issues throughout the MWEE

2:45-3:00

Announcements

- Upcoming [ESTC Workshops](#)
 - [Virtual Field Experiences Workshop](#) December 2, 9, 16, and January 6, 13, 20 (six sessions, each an hour and a half)
 - [Green Careers for a Changing Climate](#) January 19 and January 21
- [B-WET Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) deadline March 1st, 2021. Point of Contact: elise.trelegan@noaa.gov
- Virginia EE will be holding 4 regional conferences in 2021: <https://vae.wildapricot.org/VAEE2021>
- MAEOE Conference registration opening this week, maybe today
Climate, Nature, People, and Education: It's all connected (Feb 3-7)
<https://maeoe.org/professional-development/maeoe-conference-2021>
- PAEE Conf March 22-23 <http://www.paee.net/paee-conference.html>
- Climate Interactive just released a new En-Roads version
<https://www.climateinteractive.org/analysis/en-roads-updated-with-new-baseline-scenario/>
- The PA DEP EE Grants Program application deadline is December 11
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/EnvironmentalEducation/Grants/Pages/default.aspx>
- Chesapeake Bay Trust Environmental Education Grant Program (up to 40k for up to 3 years) - Maryland only:
<https://cbtrust.org/grants/environmental-education/>
- Chesapeake Bay Trust Mini Environmental Education Grant Program (up to 5k) - Regional and for schools so please share through your networks!:
<https://cbtrust.org/grants/environmental-education-mini/>
- School project implementation through Caring For Our Watersheds (open to the entire watershed)
<https://caringforourwatersheds.com/usa/chesapeake-bay/>
- Making the Link MWEE development professional development opportunity in MD: contact Cassie Doty at cdoty@umces.edu