



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC)
Interagency Subcommittee on Environmental Education Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2015

Meeting Location: Room C109, Transportation Cabinet, 200 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY

Meeting Time: June 25, 1:00 p.m. Eastern

Committee Members in Attendance: Elizabeth Schmitz, Chad Von Gruenigen, John Eisiminger, Steve Meredith, Arnita Gadson, April Haight, Johnna McHugh

Staff in Attendance: Wesley Bullock

Review of final EE Master Plan. Ms. Schmitz distributed copies of the EE Master Plan goals and reviewed them with the committee. She pointed out the goals that were emphasized by ISEE members at the December 2014 meeting.

Goal 2, strategies A, B & C. Ms. Schmitz reviewed the logic model to be used for brainstorming implementation strategies for the goal. First, she asked the committee to identify a problem or issue for their agency and work through the logic model on their own. Then the group came together to compile and discuss their results.

Problem/Issue

- Lack of understanding about personal impact of political/environmental decisions, policy/funding
- Making education a legitimate best management practice
- Quantifying the results of EE
- Difficulty in reaching urban audiences (conservation districts have better reach with rural schools)
- Teachers “in a rut” – don’t want to take kids outside for gardening class/administrators don’t see benefit
- Classroom management in outdoor settings
- Going outside considered a privilege for “advanced” kids not everyone
- Teacher have to fight to take kids outside
- Adult environmental illiteracy is real
- Interagency collaboration hindered by lack of communication/networking between agencies

- Lack of support from political forces/decisionmakers/cabinet officials
- Lack of influence on policy decisions/implementation
- K-20 and public officials and community need real world/project/place-based learning, but teachers don't have skills to implement it
- Environmental Justice seen as a standalone issue

Desired Result

- A. Forum for sharing resources/information (within ISEE or ISEE+), and better marketing
- B. Kids educating parents
- C. Environmentally literate teachers; EE in pre-service teacher ed. (C/D) Ready-made, standards-based curriculum
- D. Short-term, more students involved in Environment & Art/Writing Contest; Long-term, kids have more knowledge about how landowner decisions impact natural resources
- E. Outdoor classrooms with seating (+field trips) utilized/built/maintained; making outdoor experiences part of the norm
- F. Funding for education as a BMP for NPS pollution; mechanism to assess learning gains/impact from EE; increased outreach re: benefits of EE/outcomes based EE results publicity
- G. Support for Environmental Justice programs/problem-solving from Gov/Cab Sec.
- H. Environmental Justice not seen as a separate issue

Organization Needs/Assets

- A. Sharing resources
 - a. Assets
 - i. Agency newsletters
 - ii. KAEE newsletter
 - iii. KEEC newsletter
 - iv. ENRI
 - v. UK Extension newsletter
 - vi. KERA Listservs
 - vii. Social media
 - viii. Wizness
 - ix. ISEE committee
 - x. State networks
 - 1. Conservation
 - a. Soil and Water Conservation Commission
 - b. Division of Conservation (serves the commission)
 - c. Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (501c3)
 - 2. Certified Professional Environmental Educators
 - xi. Schools have funds for service learning that aren't being used
 - b. Needs

- i. Connect urban and rural organization and resources
 - ii. Connect formal and non-formal educators
 - D. Getting students involved in Art/Writing contest and Envirothon
 - c. Assets
 - i. Good relationship with state agencies
 - ii. Relationship with FFA
 - iii. Relationship with Farm Bureau
 - iv. National network
 - v. Rewards for participation
 - d. Needs
 - i. Capacity
 - ii. Getting a foothold in the school system
 - iii. Systemic role rather than just one person
 - E. Outdoor classrooms and field trips
 - i. Assets
 1. Existing outdoor classrooms that are utilized
 2. Kentucky State Nature Preserves
 3. Corporate lands for learning (TMMK, Catlettsburg refining, Dow Corning in Carrollton)
 4. Ag Extension and camps
 5. State agencies
 - ii. Needs
 1. Rewards for participation
 2. Certification for Outdoor Classrooms and/or teachers/administrators/facilities people who get trained in outdoor classrooms/classroom pedagogy/maintenance (see California certification program)
 3. Database of outdoor classrooms
 4. Tools to help teachers manage their students in the outdoor classroom setting
 5. Funds to take field trips

Influential Factors

- A. Sharing resources
 - a. Competition
 - b. Organization
 - c. Time
 - d. capacity
- D. Getting students involved in Art/Writing contest and Envirothon
 - i. Demographics
 - ii. Preparing for standardized tests

- E. Outdoor classrooms and field trips
 - i. Lack of money
 - ii. Contractors/architects/designers

Strategies

- A. Sharing resources
 - a. More regular contact between committee members
 - b. Assigned roles and actions
 - c. Database/publication/newsletter/retreat
 - d. Add members to ISEE
 - e. Share list of committee members
- D. Getting students involved in Art/Writing contest and Envirothon
 - i. Demonstrate relevance to as many tested items as possible
 - ii. Increase outreach/engagement from private schools
 - iii. Reach out to Tresine Logsdon and other EE coordinators in urban areas
- E. Outdoor classrooms and field trips
 - i. 319 funds for model/state/demonstration outdoor classrooms
 - ii. SEPs could fund outdoor classrooms (talk to Jeff Cummins, director)
 - iii. KHLCF
 - iv. Sower Blvd
 - v. Show examples (Munich) of how to utilize non-mowed greenspaces
 - vi. UK demonstration farm