



Maryland Outdoor Learning Partnership (OLP) Environmental and Climate Literacy Working Group Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: Thurs, July 24, 2025, 10:00 – 12:00

Attendees

Stephanie Tuckfield, Melanie Parker, Bart Merrick, Sarah Haines, Laura Collard, Anna Davis

10:00 – 10:05 Welcome

Karen Mullin & Dana McCauley

- Update: Maryland UNITED Conference proposal

10:05 – 11:30 Recommendations Discussion

1. Update the State's Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) and incorporate climate change education.

Feedback/discussion:

- It's this a recommendation or an action?
- Needs to be updated regularly (every 5 years)
- Model after past plan but expand Opportunities for members of OLP to contribute
- Update the tool to gather other information that is not currently collected
- Make it more widely available
- MD wide tool- OLP focus
- Summary featuring highlights how each agency is approaching E. Lit
- "Plan" is not the best term, document should serve more like an ecosystem analysis and integrated approach model to ELit & Climate Literacy work
- Could the highlights be integrated in? For example, NAAEE has the guidelines of excellence but has highlights along the way.
- Include terms with corresponding stories, there is alignment with upcoming virtual EL Forum this winter
- Unit of change is the district level in order to advance environmental literacy
- Needs to include metrics and mechanisms
- Ask for goals (1, 3, 5 years- short, med, long) from school districts
 - Leverage the state-based assessment to set goals (5 year); expand and make it more useful
 - What's the plan, reported to state, made public
 - Maybe make it a showcase like green schools
 - Make and infographic specific to MD

2. Promote place-based community education / safe and healthy communities' through elevating storytelling and supporting communities through grant incentives.
 - a. Building the networks so it's not one school systems/organizations role to support E Lit
 - b. E. Lit is a community mindset- individual schools or cluster, not entire counties
 - c. Where are there community organizations present that can elevate E lit the stories
- Safe and healthy communities: Provide fiscal and technical support for schools/orgs/local communities to develop placed based networks to support local action for env. literacy

Feedback/discussion:

- Storytelling is tied to the grant program that supports localized networks to elevate E. Lit to a new level
 - In writing the grant they have to tell the story of their localized network
 - How to make it actionable
 - le: DNR has a pool of Money for 2 -year network building on planning (year 1) and implementation (year 2) to elevate e. lit
 - Pull together 5 partners as part of their safe and healthy communities which allows them to fund field trips and actions
 - Like a mini OLN (Outdoor Learning Network Initiative) for schools
 - Open up universities as well. Pre-service teacher training programs able to apply because often there may be K-12 only opportunities. Ideally there would be a community partner, district partner and university partner collaboration
 - Would need technical support to gather partners
 - Calling safe and healthy communities allow it to open up to a whole lot of people who wouldn't normally engage in E. Lit
 - If you focus on the wellness piece you open it up more stakeholders
 - Hyper localized implementation
 - Could it be focused on community schools pilot
 - Community schools are outlined in the blueprint
 - Is there an opportunity for CBT to help develop a network and provide technical support?
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3. Incorporate environmental and climate literacy into pre-service teacher training.
 - a. Trying to set up a meeting with Dr. Kent from MHEC on how to incorporate ECL into preservice. Meeting to be scheduled for future
 - i. What is the pathway for integrating it into the preservice?
 1. Examples: Criteria to integrate it into methods, Must take one course
 - b. EE cert is still listed as a specialized area through MSDE
 - c. MSDE E. Lit specialist but there should be one at MHEC

Summary:

1. Praxis/cert pathways
2. Methods/course integration strategies
3. Internship
4. MHEC ELit Specialist)

Feedback/discussion:

- Place based inquiry belongs broader than EE; methods on outdoor teaching
- Outdoor education as part of an internship experience (previously known as student teaching)
 - the Blueprint covers internships for pre-service teachers (post HS)
- Pre-service teacher now have to have 120 hours of full-tie classroom teaching according to Blueprint
- HEEL and outdoor education data can be leveraged to help shape them and to move forward
- Likes the idea of building on previous work
- With the internship idea- could we include some sort of guide to finding opportunities for finding outdoor ed opportunities.
 1. How many hours in outdoor based teaching & what year?
 2. Have teachers placed in an outdoor ed setting for certain number of hours (10? hours) to learn how to teach their content hour like math etc.
 3. 120 hours Has to be in partnership with a college/university so cant be done outside of school semester

11:50 – 12:00 Public Comment

- None

Meeting Closed at 12:00pm