

*The New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education (NJCEE)
and Inter-Agency Work Group (IWG)
Meeting Notes*

Monday, November 10, 1997

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

DEP Headquarters, Trenton

Present:

Mark Boyd, Anthony Cancro, Elaine Puzo-Castoro, Mimi Dunne, Joseph Eldridge, Joan Elliot, Frank Gallagher, Anne Galli, Vince Giampeitro, Patricia Hanratty, Toni Hendricksen, Lou Iozzi, Pat Kane, Christine Keresztury, John Kirk, Bruce Marganoff, Eileen McGinnis, Kathleen McLaughlin, Lawrence O'Reilly, Tanya Oznowich, Sam Race, Jim Shissias, Helen Skerratt, Suzanne Willis, Karen Wintress

Unable To Attend: Emile DeVito

Invited Speakers: Jane Kelly Brickner, Robert Shinn, Jr.

cc: Raymond Mueller, The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

Morning Session:

* A formal welcome to both groups was provided by ***DEP Assistant Commissioner Jane Kelly Brickner, Legislative and Program Coordination.*** She briefly shared her interests in environmental education and offered the continued support of her staff to the new statutorily created commission and the work group, as their activities move forward.

* Members of the NJCEE and the IWG introduced themselves by name, title, profession and employer or vocation.

* ***DEP Commissioner Robert C. Shinn, Jr.,*** addressed the group. Remarks focused on various priorities in environmental management and environmental protection, including GIS, watershed management, aquifer recharge, urban development and brownfields, and regional air quality efforts.

* Formal remarks were also provided by ***Eileen McGinnis, the Governor's designee to the commission and Chief of Policy and Planning in the Governor's Office.*** She stressed her interest in, and support for, the group and their work, and emphasized the Governor's interests in "early intervention and prevention" as one of her top ten tenets. She encouraged continued implementation of the Plan of Action. She also encouraged commission members to submit recommendations or resumes for persons interested in openings still on the commission; she wants to be kept apprised of such recommendations and recognizes that these openings still must be filled.

* ***Dr. Louis Iozzi, former chairman of the commission,*** provided a brief history of the commission, citing the role of the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) membership in getting the commission started and identifying the earlier executive and administrative orders that had convened the group. He also discussed earlier research and discussion efforts of the

groups, former plans and the public hearing process the past Plans of Action went through, and national recognition that the current Plan of Action has received. He complimented the members of the group that were with the former commission and welcomed the new members "on board."

* *Pat Kane, Education Director with the NJ Audubon Society*, provided an overview of the contents of the Plan of Action. She pointed out the lists of knowledge, values and attitudes, skills and behaviors that are contained in the plan and how they collectively provide us with goals or a description for an env. responsible citizen. She also reviewed the variety of recommendations contained in the plan and which have been accomplished or are close to being accomplished. She stressed that commission members should become familiar with the plan, incorporate it when possible into their own work, and help to distribute the plan to others.

* *Dr. John Kirk, Director of the NJ School of Conservation*, supplemented Pat's comments by stressing how well received the plan was internationally. He also described some of the current environmental activities going on through the United Nations and the past work of the Inter-faith community in bringing environmental education into various religious and spiritual forums.

* *Tanya Oznovich, Env. Ed. Specialist with the NJ Dept. of Env. Protection*, described (from her perspective as a committee participant) the development of the NJ Dept. of Education's Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS's), Frameworks and Assessment processes. She also distributed copies of Science CCCS 5.12 and Social Studies CCCS 6.9 and introduced some of the ways in which environmental education resources in NJ were already re-designing their efforts to become "standards-based." For example, the DEP has received a \$40,000 grant from EPA to create activity and master matrixes for Project Learning Tree, Project WILD, Aquatic WILD and Project WET, all nationally recognized supplement env. ed. curricula that are sponsored in NJ by DEP and the Wetlands Institute. The grant will also pay for the redesign and implementation of spring workshops and a summer training program.

* *Pat Kane* also discussed how the NJ Audubon Society is sponsoring a workshop for its own educators and some ANJEE members, designed to help nonformal educators to design programming that is more supportive of student learning skills, critical thinking, and helping to support the CCCS's. A summary of this will be provided at the January meeting.

* *Anne Galli, Director of the HMDC Environment Center*, also discussed an EPA grant received by HMDC Environment Center to develop live, interactive television programming via her center in Lyndhurst. Though the programming must target wetlands education, she is also using this forum to encourage discussion among teachers and environmental education professionals about integrating env. teaching into the standards. A video about this will be part of this project.

* *Frank Gallagher, President of the Alliance for NJ Environmental Education*, introduced the Alliance and its diverse membership and history of development, noting the # of ANJEE members that have historically been active on the commission. He also described the earlier work of the ANJEE Master Plan Committee and the work of the Alliance membership in collectively and cooperatively supporting the plan and the legislation when support was needed, primarily through writing letters, supporting text in the plan and in the CCCS's, and in providing public testimony in support of the legislation. Frank then distributed copies of the DRAFT Alliance "strategic plan" and described its contents - including its goals, objective and strategies that, in many instances, compliment the Plan of Action's recommendations and provide membership support to the work of the commission and work group. An invitation was

extended to all commission and work group members to attend the upcoming ANJEE conference in January.

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* *Tanya Oznowich* provided a brief update on the status and history of the commission's funds. About 3 years ago the commission rec'd \$50,000 from an environmental fine, ear-marked in a DEP special account for commission use. While the former commission was in existence, monies were put towards the purchase of resource materials, training, an Inter-faith "env. values" conference, and hardware and software equipment for the development of an environmental education home page. Since that time the hardware and software was delivered to the Center for Agricultural and Environmental Education at Cook College, Rutgers University, and while about 1/3 of the curriculum resources have been used sparingly, they were also "protected" until the commission was reconvened but they should be used now, before their contents become outdated. *The current amount in the commission budget is \$27,742.00*. This amount was carried forward into an FY98 account in August.

* *Frank Gallagher* provided a summary of the developing "Resource Information Center" and environmental education home page, to be housed in, and maintained primarily at, the Center for Agricultural and Environmental Education at Cook College, Rutgers University. An SSI Development grant had been obtained by ANJEE and the Center and the funds were used to host three regional workshops with environmental educators, to determine resource needs and the preliminary contents of the home page and linkages.

LUNCH BREAK

Afternoon Session:

* *Bruce Marganoff, Science Curriculum Coordinator with the NJ Dept. of Education*, provided a brief update on how school districts are receiving and incorporating the CCCS's into their curricula (mixed reviews, some have already correlated and incorporated, others are waiting), the status of the developing frameworks for all subject areas (math was first and science second; the draft science sampler was available this autumn and all subjects should be completed next year), and the practice fourth grade statewide test that was given this past spring (no conclusions yet). He also briefly discussed the teacher licensing program that DOE is proposing.

* *Conclusions from the NJ Commission on Environmental Education Break-out Group:*

- The commission will meet 4 times each year.
- Any commission sub-committees may meet more often.
- The commission meetings will be held in a central location.

- The former commission chair (Lou Iozzi) and the former co-chair (John Kirk) will continue to serve in these positions for at least one year or until their appointments are complete.

- The purpose of the commission is to implement *Environmental Education in New Jersey: A Plan of Action*. The plan must be re-examined - where do we stand, regarding tasks, dates and target audiences? What are our priorities? Use the inventory that was done for the env. ed. home page and resource center, to determine priorities.

- The commission should focus on process and not just product; much of the plan does not require money.

- Regarding funding, look ahead and down the road. Don't be too constrained. The commission should examine a 501(C) 3 status for a place to house their funding.

- Regarding the inventory, it should be done every two years; make it happen in 1998. Components of it should include library information and involvement, publication information officers, use of graduate students, and the Alliance network study.

** Conclusions from the Inter-agency Work Group Break-out Group:*

- The primary purpose of the work group is to provide networking support, expertise and advisement to the commission, regarding the commission's priorities and activities. The work group will also seek the advisement of the commission, when feasible. Basically, the work group is a "sounding board."

- The second purpose of the group, as per the legislation and the Plan of Action, is to conduct a survey of all of the environmental education and outreach resources at the state level. The survey would have to be carefully structured and should focus on three areas:

- A. The content area - The "what's" information - topics of information, issues, programs
- B. The liaison area - The "who" information - contacts, liaisons, networks, councils, etc.
- C. The tools area - The "how" information - programs, events, videos, seminars, etc.

- The work group membership should be expanded. Additional members should include the Division of Travel and Tourism, NJN, and the Board of Public Utilities, others TBA.

CLOSING and WRAP UP

*The next meeting will be January 21, 1998, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
It will be at DEP headquarters again in Trenton. (See letter for details.)*

"Wants and Needs" List (Anon., submitted in writing and worth reviewing):

- Need a better idea of our specific charge.
- Are we doing a 5-year plan? Most corporations, organizations and agencies are only planning for 2 - 3 years now. Need a better sense of a plan.
- Need a better understanding of the proposed electronic network idea and the resource center.
- Need a better understanding of my role as a commission member and what is expected of me. Need a better sense of the commission's responsibilities.
- Need continued content information relating to environmental education and legislation pertaining to it.
- Need to provide more support for env. ed. in southern New Jersey.
- Let's get started now - form committees and let them start working.
- Commission members should keep each other apprised of current activities, what types of priorities are receiving state, federal or private grants, who is receiving grants, etc.
- Need clearly defined objectives and more "teacher friendly" information. For example, need more information about the frameworks, assessment, etc.

** While the "Wants and Needs" are noted above, I did not list what specific individuals have to offer - those that were signed were kept and cc to the chair and co-chair.*

Submitted: T. Oznovich, 12/97