

**Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education
And Inter-agency Work Group**

AGENDA

Friday, September 29, 2000

9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

NJ Department of Environmental Protection Headquarters
Public Hearing Room, First Floor, Trenton, New Jersey

- 8:30 a.m. COFFEE AND TEA**
- 9:00 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions** Frank Gallagher,
Chair
- Review and approval of meeting notes
 - Introduction of membership and guests
 - Review agenda/Additions? New business?
- 9:15 a.m. **Opening Remarks for the “New Year”** Robert C. Shinn, Jr.,
Commissioner, DEP
- 9:45 a.m. **Update on NJDOE Activities** Arthur Mitchell,
NJDOE
- Standards revisions process
 - Professional development proceedings
- 10:00 a.m. BREAK**
- 10:15 a.m. **Inter-agency Work Group & EE Network Reports** George/Frank
- Update on survey and distribution plan
 - Update on progress of EPA grant and site development
 - Recommendations on dealing with EE and ed. guidelines
 - Future plans:
- 10:30 a.m. **Program Committee** Tanya Oznowich
- Summary of Joint Meeting (8/00)
 - Group discussions: Mini-grant decisions for 2000 - 01
 - The Legislative Forum
- 11:20 a.m. **Communications Committee** Karen/Anne
- Status of EE poster
 - Plan of Action revisions process
 - Status of Environmental Education Annual Report 1999
- 11:55 a.m. **Finance and Legislative Committee Report** Dave/Frank
- Update on sponsorship of draft bill
 - Funding initiatives being investigated
- 12:20 p.m. **New Business** Tanya Oznowich
Frank Gallagher
- Meeting logistics
 - Wrap-up
- 12:30 p.m. DEPARTURE**

Meeting Notes
**Joint Meeting of the NJ Commission on Environmental Education and Inter-agency
Work Group**
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Attendees: Rich Belcher, Bob DeCicco, John Dougherty, Marie Downes, Mimi Dunne, Fred Ellerbusch, Elizabeth Faircloth, Frank Gallagher, Anne Galli, Pat Kane, Lynn Keepers, John Lysko, Arthur Mitchell, Tanya Oznowich, Barbara Rich, Jim Shissias (11 voting members – no quorum)

Absent: Emile DeVito, Erin Dougherty, Joe Eldridge, Joan Elliot, Rob Groff, Don Haberstroh, Toni Hendricksen, Gracelynn Johnson, Paul Kaleda, John Kirk, Kathleen McLaughlin, Ray Mueller, David Nash, Sam Race, Helen Skerratt, Barry Schlegel, George Schlosser, Karen Wintress

Guests/Staff: Fran Dicarantonio, Janice Reese-Berardo, Marc Rogoff

Opening Remarks

- Chairman Frank Gallagher opened the meeting. He provided an overview of commission and work group activities, to date, and welcomed the members to the “new school year.”
 - Group members introduced themselves and Frank introduced DEP Commissioner Shinn.
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Highlights of Commissioner Robert C. Shinn, Jr.’s Remarks

- Commissioner Shinn’s remarks were varied. Much of his presentation focused on current environmental challenges, recent accomplishments, and how environmental education can and should fit into some of these initiatives. Topics referenced included watershed management, increased use of GIS software, greenhouse gas initiatives, ozone, nonpoint source pollution, and the Black Bear population.
- He sited the value of hands-on education and interpretation currently practiced at NJ parks and through the watershed outreach program. He also commended the group for working hard to get environmental content into the state’s current classroom standards. He emphasized the need for new work with schools, including re-emphasis on school recycling, water and energy conservation, and increased use of energy efficient technologies.
- The Commissioner stressed that “we’re in a new millennium. Environmental education is key in dealing with the issues of the future.” He also mentioned that he is aware of the commission’s need for additional and/or sustained funding, and he is going to work with Tanya and Frank to explore options.

Legislative Committee Report – Jim Shissias and Frank Gallagher

- Committee/commission members met with Assemblyman Coredemus this summer. The meeting went well and he agreed to sponsor the draft EE bill. The bill now has 2 sponsors in the Assembly.
- The EE bill should be introduced in the Assembly Education Committee hearing during the second week of October. Committee members hope to attend in order to communicate what the commission’s needs are, the role of the group, etc.
- The committee is also hoping to meet with Senator Latell, who heads up the Budget Committee. It is important to now get Senate sponsorship and to introduce a companion bill in the Senate.
- Individual meetings with Legislative members are always important. The committee is still exploring the other option of getting state funds yearly through the state budget process, a process that would ultimately create a line item for the group in DEP’s annual budget.

Meeting Notes - Joint Meeting of the NJCEE and IWG
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**Update on NJDOE Activities – Arthur Mitchell, State Science Coordinator,
and John Dougherty, State Social Studies Coordinator, NJDOE Office of
Standards**

- The NJDOE is currently beginning the review process of the State Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS's). The department will be putting together work groups that will develop final recommendations for the NJDOE/State Board of Education. The process will extend into 2002 and the final recommendations will be presented during the new administration. Short-term, the NJDOE will host theme and issue-specific focus groups in 2001 in various forums around the state.
- The review process will be an open and democratic process. It doesn't seem feasible that large changes would be recommended by anyone since getting to this point has already been a big investment (new curricula, training, final tests, etc.).
- Environmental content is perceived differently in Social Studies than in Science. There is a large history emphasis in New Jersey that can work against an emphasis on geography and civics, similar to a Language Arts discussion on use of phonics vs. whole language approaches.
- The NJDOE is recommending that the CCCS's be changed as little as possible but there is no way of predicting at this time what can actually happen.
- The establishment of any changes to the standards are approved by the NJ State Board of Education.
- The NJDOE staff have heard only strong support for EE in Science – it seems to be very well established in New Jersey already.
- The NJCEE and ANJEE should sponsor focus groups and submit recommendations regarding the current standards during this part of the process in 2001. The EE recommendations should also stress how "use of the environment" (EIC concept) in other subject areas is great in achieving student learning objectives, motivation, etc. Link it with economics and business interests as well.
- The NJDOE also recommends that the EE community NOT consider supporting inclusion in any way of the national (NAAEE) EE "stand alone" guidelines. From a NJDOE perspective this can make EE a political football and integration into the system, as it now stands, is a much more secure process. (The EE guidelines were introduced in Washington State and they are having problems.)
- **Regarding statewide assessment** (handout), EE programs should tailor their programs to also support assessment, along with the standards. Environmental content is included in 15 – 25% of the state tests (ESPA, GEPPA, HSPA). Student proficiency in Science goes down from elementary to secondary students – this needs support.
- **Regarding professional development**, the EE community should promote our offerings more – develop a community EE calendar and a tracking system for offerings, attendance, etc. This type of record helps to make a strong case for EE interest. We should develop more partnerships.
- **Regarding professional development**, we should include programming that would involve parents and utilize the community more.
- **The EIC Concept** (coined by SEER) is a good concept that will make using the environment palatable to the education community. How to make EE sustained and systemic in the current system is the key perspective to take.
- EE professional development providers should make sure they become registered with NJDOE (visit the NJDOE website for details). Also visit

Group Discussion:

- The NJCEE EE annual report could serve as some type of tracking mechanism.

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- ***The NJCEE and ANJEE should sponsor future focus groups. Frank requested that the commission vote to use money from the trust fund to support these at a later date.*** Separate EE focus groups focusing on Social Studies should also be pursued.
 - The NJCEE is willing to support these needs in any way.

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EE Network/IWG Committee Report – Frank Gallagher

- This winter, Marc Rogoff should be available to help input data and resources into the statewide EE directory. Current information that has been collected is with George.
- ANJEE has received the EPA grant funds (finally) from EPA and the RFP for a web site developer should go out soon.

Program Committee Report – Tanya Oznovich

- **Regarding a Legislative Forum**, the Commission had agreed this past June to host a Legislative Forum this autumn. Tanya did not have the time to prepare for this and little work has been done to support this initiative. The group suggested that the commission look at other strategies for reaching Legislators, since the original forum idea only brought in 2 Legislators and a couple aides. One suggestion was a display at the State House. Another suggestion was the development of an “EE Road Show.” Another suggestion was formal presentations and mailings to the key committees – Environment, Education and Budget. No final decision or recommendation was made on this activity.
- **Regarding what to do with the remaining Earth Day Grant Funds (\$15,000):** Tanya discussed the Summer Joint Meeting results and the recommendations of those present on how the funds should be spent (Joint Meeting handout, 11 areas of focus).
- Commission discussion and agreement focused on serving the timely need of professional development through in-service and pre-service offerings (Ideas C and G were most favored).
- Additional ideas offered that were not on the Joint Meeting “Areas of Focus” included a workshop for EE professionals on educational methods, trends, etc. Another idea was an outreach effort designed for school board members.
- The DEP recommended that the funds in this account not be saved for too long – that they should be used by the end of this fiscal year (June 30, 2001).
- NJCEE agreed that of the \$15,000 we should spend \$10,000 for professional development (for formal and non-formal educators) and \$5,000 for pre-service programs (through higher education classes, departments, etc.). The group agreed that professional development experiences are easier to get “takers” on vs. higher education experiences. The group also agreed that the monies should be offered in a fair and equitable way.
- Questions to be determined:
 - How much should go to formal vs. non-formals?
 - Should any funds go for non-formal professional development training in education?
 - How much for professional development for existing teachers vs. new teachers?
- A review committee was formed to address these questions – their input will be solicited by Tanya before the next joint meeting.

Publications Committee Report – Anne Galli

- The EE poster is at the DEP and is undergoing final design and photo changes. A distribution plan needs to be established. The DEP graphics staff are getting printing quotes. We can use the photos for future publications.
- We need a theme for the 1999 EE annual report. The first one (1998) was a sampling of EE activity in the state and the contents were too long. This next one can be shorter and should start including standard EE information and a standard format. We should also include a different “hot issue” each year as a sort of feature story.
- We should establish a tracking system now and start using it.

Meeting Wrap Up Notes

- Meeting dates will be established soon for January and March, 2001. NJDOE offered to host the January meeting. The spring meeting date will either be in late May or early June.