

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

AGENDA

Thursday, February 28, 2002

NJDEP Headquarters, Trenton

12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m., Public Hearing Room

- 11:45 a.m. Cold drinks and fruit**
- 12:00 noon Group Introductions and Welcome**
- Welcome by Chair
 - Review of agenda – changes, new business
 - Review of meeting notes from January meeting – changes, approval
 - Circulate attendance list and make appropriate corrections
 - 2002 meeting logistics – circulate revised copies, note June revision
- 12:15 p.m. General Remarks and Updates**
- Update on the draft classroom standards, public input, assessment, and emerging changes and needs in the New Jersey Department of Education
 - Art Mitchell, Office of Standards and Assessment
- 12:30 p.m. Committee Updates**
- Finance and Legislative Committee
 - Program Report
 - Network Committee
 - Publications Committee
- 1:30 p.m. Group Introduction to, and Discussion with, DEP Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell** – Brief greeting and remarks, Q/A and group discussion
- 1:50 p.m. Meeting Wrap Up**
- New business, if any
 - Logistics for next meeting and meeting highlights
 - Departure

**Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education
And Inter-agency Work Group – Meeting Notes – Page One**
Thursday, February 28, 2002

Present/NJCEE: Fred Ellerbusch, John Kirk, Kathleen McGlaughlin, Robert DeCicco, James Shissias, Frank Gallagher, Dale Rosselet, Karen Wintress, Anne Galli, Joan Elliot, Marie Downes, Tanya Oznowich, Art Mitchell, Evelyn Rusci

Present/IWG:Rodney Groff, Mimi Dunne, George Schlosser, John Dougherty, Elizabeth Faircloth, Marc Rogoff

Guests: Janice Reese-Berardo, Bradley Campbell, Marty Mchugh, Michael Skelly, Sr.

Frank provided opening remarks; thanked the group for coming with the schedule change; no changes to the agenda; the meeting notes from January were accepted by the group

General: Frank reported that he and Tanya had a pre-meeting with the new DEP Acting Commissioner Bradley Campbell; Conversation focused on funding and Earth Day implementation and it was a positive meeting; AC Campbell will join the meeting later in the afternoon; he has experience with environmental education through his work with EPA and as Chair of the board of an environmental education residential facility in MD; Frank also provided a brief update regarding CARA, the federal proposed bill – it is slow moving in Congress and needs support

Membership: Tanya provided a membership update, focusing on two commission openings that require nominations to go through the appointments process. The high school slot is open and we now have 1 candidate (Rich Wilczewski, a Chemistry teacher at Moorestown High School), who comes highly recommended by Barbara Rich and who has submitted a resume and letters of support. Pat Kane has resigned from the commission. It is her wish to have Dale continue in that slot.

Standards/NJDOE Update: John and Art provided an update regarding the NJDOE standards updating and revisions process. The draft standards, public meeting logistics and a feedback form are all available at the NJDOE home page. Most noteworthy at this time are changes in statewide performance assessment. As it stands, all grades will be tested in reading and math only. Social studies will not be tested but should be integrated back into the testing system in subsequent years. Science will be tested in the secondary grades but not in the elementary grades, though this may also change in subsequent years. This was done primarily to allow for classroom time for reading and writing. Also, the NJDOE is undergoing reorganization and the final structure is yet to be made final. The Office of Standards and Professional Development (Art and John's office) will be reorganized and the professional development element may move elsewhere. The new NJDOE Commissioner is supportive of the philosophy that school curriculum should be based on standards versus on assessment; and that New Jersey currently has quality standards in place but not a quality assessment program. The environmental content in Science has fared well. Standard 5.10 (formerly 5.12) was divided into strands but the content is about the same. Environmental content in Social Studies was further merged with Geography and 6.9 was eliminated. State review of the NJ standards, when compared to national and other state sets of standards, is one of the few states with environmental content included.

Q: Content regarding human impacts on the environment relates to natural catastrophes and not human impacts. Should our support provide verbiage to strengthen this aspect? A: *The content must be testable and environmental educators must be careful not to support advocacy-oriented content unless what is being proposed can be assessed and is considered environmental science.*

**Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education
And Inter-agency Work Group – Meeting Notes – Page Two**
Thursday, February 28, 2002

Q: What is the possibility of using the environment as an integrating theme? A: *That would not be covered in the standards, that is more of a curriculum issue. The NJDOE does not mandate curriculum. The closest it has come are the sample frameworks and the new standards having more specific grade clusters for content.*

Q: Could a more comprehensive listing of NJ environmental priorities or issues be included in this section? A: *The revisions process included many debates about any type of listing. It is tough, as once a listing is created you run the risk of leaving something out and people have a hard time agreeing to a completed list.*

Q: A middle school progress indicator is missing for this standard. Why? A: *The review team tried to not let this get any longer. This can be part of your comments though.*

NJDOE Standards/Conclusions:

- The commission, ANJEE and DEP will encourage EE professionals to SUPPORT the environmental content in SCIENCE and STRENGTHEN the environmental content in SOCIAL STUDIES. Each professional will use their expertise to suggest verbiage changes.
- The same partners will support a focus group in the Trenton area, which (in 1995) attracted primarily DEP employees.
- The same partners will encourage environmental educators to testify at NJDOE public meetings.

EPA Loss of Funding for Environmental Education: Frank, Tanya and Elizabeth shared details about the dilemma of funds (about 9 million) being shifted in the proposed EPA budget from EPA to the National Science Foundation (NSF). This change was made in the Office of Management and Budget and supposedly is related to political/conservative interests that environmental education is 'ineffective' and activist-oriented. The funds would be used for environmental science/classroom purposes through NSF. Frank (as Chair) and Elizabeth (as ANJEE President) will write a joint letter of support against this shifting of funds. The group agreed that it would eliminate the largest and one of the few funding sources for nonprofits that deliver environmental education services and expertise. Commission members are also encouraged to provide support, which is needed in March, as the appropriations committees will be conducting hearings and discussions throughout the spring.

Legislative/Finance Committee: There was mixed reaction to pushing strongly for re-introducing the environmental education bill (to keep some type of visible presence in the Legislature) or to wait (due to the state deficit and minimized spending to be going on). Another form of environmental education funding was introduced – using fine money from local enforcement problems and cases, in order to pay for local environmental education projects. Limitations include the project benefiting the geographic area impacted by the problem and the project focusing on the same media or natural resource as the problem (i.e., an oil spill fine should result in a nonpoint-source pollution or water quality environmental education-based project). The commission agreed that it would be their job to create a 'menu' or listing of potential projects that would include media-specific and geographic impact considerations. Internally, DEP staff would seek out specifics related to federal and state laws and details about how such funds can be spent and any barriers in existence that would prevent this from occurring. The group agreed that the bill should be kept in focus and that this other opportunity for funding should be pursued. The committee will reach out to the legislative aides of the bill's sponsors.

Publications Committee: Tanya shared copies of the draft annual report for final review; comments needed by the following Wednesday. She recommended that 1,000 copies be made. The estimated cost would be about \$700 and it will be done in-house; will come from the trust fund.

**Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education
And Inter-agency Work Group – Meeting Notes – Page Three**
Thursday, February 28, 2002

Network/Inter-agency Work Group Committees: The EE network web site still needs a logo and design; when completed, it will resemble a directory of resources. The Alliance is also building on the framework that Mike Skelly, Jr., developed last year and announced at the recent ANJEE conference. Janice is getting training regarding, and control over, the ANJEE web site, for which she will now be the webmaster. The commission still must decide where the network will be housed and hosted. Mike Skelly, Sr., offered to host it at his server at Starfyre, Inc. He will work up a monthly/annual fee for this along with related services for this amount. The current setup at Rutgers University needs an upgrade of equipment and software and Bob Bonja will be retiring soon. Frank and Tanya are clearing up the paperwork needs from EPA, regarding the closing of this regional environmental education grant from EPA.

Introductory Remarks by DEP Acting Commissioner Bradley Campbell: The Acting Commissioner expressed his strong belief in environmental education and his familiarity with it through his former position with EPA as Region III Administrator and as Chair of an environmental education board of directors of a residential facility in Maryland (that he frequented as a student). He stressed that Governor McGreevey has strong environmental standards and a big piece of his agenda is also formal education – so environmental education is extremely important. Part of AC Campbell's own philosophy is that the future depends upon the environmental sensitivities of students, which must be developed while they are in school. He shared his understanding of the EIC studies that have proven that environmental education, when properly done, improves a students' enthusiasm for learning and their own self esteem. He stressed that public support for environmental protection is at an all-time high; yet, their basic understanding of, and participation in, priority environmental issues is low – education is the key in closing this gap between attitude and involvement. He also understands that education is important towards the implementation of the department's own mission and that it has an important role to play in fixing some of the state's 'broken schools.'

AC Campbell asked members of the commission and work group to introduce themselves and to identify one task or need that the groups have that have not yet been provided. Suggestions included:

- More emphasis on adult learning and related best practices
- More emphasis on pre-service training opportunities for teachers-in-training
- Best practices for meeting the public's needs for information and data
- Continued support for Smart Growth policies with emphasis on education
- Increased awareness of DEP employees for environmental education and their own involvement with their local schools and public outreach

Closing Remarks: Frank thanked the Acting Commissioner then provided a brief summary and wrap up before closing the meeting.