**LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY**

**DATE: Wednesday, April 20, 2016**

**TIME:   9:30 am – 2:30 pm**

**LOCATION: Philip Merrill Environmental Center, 6 Herndon Ave, Annapolis, MD 21403**

**PURPOSE**

1. To explore how states can assist school systems in creating and sustaining high-quality environmental literacy (EL) programs as part of ongoing education reform and to meet Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement commitments.
2. To examine opportunities provided by the environmental education provisions of the recently enacted Every Student Succeeds Act to support state and local environmental literacy programming.

**NOTES**

*Follow the links for a list of* [*attendees*](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23922/attendees_-_print_version.pdf) *and* [*photos*](https://www.flickr.com/photos/29388462%40N06/sets/72157667308591366) *of the event.*

**Take Aways**

* Each state is committed to advancing EL in a way that takes advantage of state specific priorities, policies, and programs while taking into consideration the unique educational system of that state.
* There is work to be done in each state to advance EL. This conservation should not stop here.
* EL can be integrated into multiple disciplines, not only science. That said the transition of many of our states to the Next Generation Science Standards provides a wonderful opportunity to advance the EL goal in those states that are adopting the standards. Of course the environment is included in many of the content areas, but beyond the content, EL has particular relevance in giving students an engaging way to learn and reinforce scientific practices.
* US Department of Education has several opportunities to advance this work in the new Every Student Succeed Act and would like to work with partners to explore these opportunities. There are also other federal resources that can help, including the [NOAA B-WET grant program](http://chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/bay-watershed-education-and-training-b-wet/bay-watershed-education-and-training-b-wet), the [EPA EE grant program](https://www.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants), and [EPA Healthy Schools resources](https://www.epa.gov/schools).
* Call for CBP to convene this group of people annually as it is really important to learn from each other and hold each other accountable.

**9:30 Welcome**

* Nick DiPasquale, Director, Chesapeake Bay Program Office
* Congressman John Sarbanes
* Molly Ward, Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources
* Dr. Steven Staples, Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction
* Will Baker, President, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

**10:00** [**Overview of the Chesapeake Bay Program Environmental Literacy Goal**](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23922/cbp_backgrounder.pptx)

The group was provided with a brief summary of the [Management Strategy for the Environmental Literacy Goal](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23922/5b_envro_literacy_6-24-15_ff_formatted_final.pdf).

* Shannon Sprague, Chair, Education Workgroup (NOAA)

**10:10 Environmental Literacy Case Studies**

Leaders from schools and school systems from around the watershed highlighted their environmental literacy programs and what makes them successful and sustainable.

* [Video from Park Forest Elementary School](https://youtu.be/GRucrh_d5zg)
* [Julie Hanenfeld, Seaford Public Schools, and Alice Mohrman, Delaware Nature Society](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23922/dns.environ.literacy.4.20.16_part_1.pptx)
* Dr. Aaron Spence, Superintendent Virginia Beach City Public Schools
* Dr. Kevin Maxwell, CEO Prince George’s County Public Schools

**11:00 Field Experiences**

Participants joined students from Hammond High School to discuss what they learned during their outdoor field experience.

* Tom Ackerman, Vice President, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
* Dr. Renee Foose, Superintendent Howard County Public Schools

**12:00 Lunch**Participants explored the questions: What has resonated with you thus far from today’s meeting? How might you use this information to support your environmental literacy efforts?

* In general, participants felt that the meeting was very valuable in establishing and renewing relationships and opening lines of communication about EL across agencies and among leadership and staff members.
* Sharing information across states about how to connect EL with core subjects, including Next Generation Science Standards, was a highlight for many.
* Participants were interested in competency-based education and how this could support areas like science, mathematics, and English/reading.  They felt this would be high interest for students.
* Leaders were confident that their staff (and others) were doing a good job with implementing EL and that they should consider ways to encourage more discussion around EL.
* Participants noted that district superintendents and school principals might be a good audience. Leaders felt that they could help connect their staff with these groups.
* One group felt that the biggest challenge to EL is marketing and getting our message out, including how to communicate about EL to be more in line with what teachers, administrators, and partners feel is important to them.

**1:00    Environmental Literacy Listening Session**

The group heard from US Department of Education officials about existing and planned programs
that could be used to support environmental education. This was followed by a facilitated discussion about the opportunities that the [Every Student Succeeds Act](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23922/ee_in_essa_fact_sheet_4.18.16.docx) presents.

* Monique Chism, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Policy and Programs, U.S. Department of Education
* Sarah Bodor, Director of Policy & Affiliate Relations, North American Association for Environmental Education
* The group learned that while key language for environmental education is explicitly included in Title IV of the Act, the overall legislation creates additional opportunities for related activities that still need to be explored. US Department of Education may be able to help support that effort through guidance to states and promotion of specific model programs.

**1:45 State Priorities for Environmental Literacy**

State leaders from around the watershed will report out on the vision for environmental literacy in their state, what they see as the highest priority actions to achieve that vision, and what support they need to help them get there.

**Maryland (Belton and Salmon)**

* DNR will work towards assuring that every student has access to outdoor learning, with opportunities to visit any of our State’s beautiful natural areas, parks and public lands.
* DNR will work with MSDE and partners to assure that schoolyards have appropriate natural features that can be used for investigating and learning about local environmental issues.
* MSDE will provide the necessary resources to districts that will enable curriculum writers to become champions of environmental literacy. We see environmental literacy as part of the required curriculum and of equal importance in the implementation efforts for STEM and NGSS. The curriculum writers need to have an environmental literacy lens as a guide when writing integrated curriculum, and use the environment as a context for learning.
* MSDE will provide the necessary professional learning opportunities to support the vision of integrated curriculum that includes environmental literacy, STEM and NGSS. Creating district and state professional learning communities to share knowledge and examples of successful integration modules will create a wealth of highly effective, innovative, aligned resources.

**Virginia (Staples)**

* VA DOE will ensure EL is well represented in the current revision of the K-12 science standards.
* VA DOE will explore opportunities to include EL in the Profile of a Virginia graduate.
* VA DOE will look at changing the regulations for institutions that prepare teachers to help them become more comfortable in teaching about the environment and leading outdoor field activities.
* VA DOE will complete a guidance document that shows how current teachers are implementing watershed and field work.
* VA DOE will update guidance document on incorporating green design and places for outdoor learning into the design of outdoor areas at schools.

**Delaware (Godowsky and Small)**

* Today has been very meaningful and EL is very important.
* Include EL in the development of a multi-state state-of-the art assessment for NGSS.
* DE DOE will work more closely with Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to develop and support new initiatives statewide.
* DE DOE will better leverage outdoor resources at schools (schoolyards, playgrounds, etc.) to affect science literacy at the school level and classroom level.
* DNREC will work with DE DOE and partners to develop a robust state EL plan that showcases the important collaboration among education and natural resource agencies.
* DNREC will work with partners to develop creative strategies to fund transportation for outdoor experiences.
* DNREC will work to align outreach and education programs and resources to strategically fill gaps and make them easy for educators to access.

**Pennsylvania (Kasi, Norbeck, and Volkman)**

* Our challenge is that the EL program has to reach all across the state to 500 school districts and this requires a great deal of effort. We have an opportunity with our green schools movement in PA to advance environmental literacy.
* PA agencies will increase interagency collaboration to combine resources to create a greater impact for our students.
* PA DOE will work on educational advocacy that ties into environmental awareness and workforce development.
* PA DEP will look at larger, more regional grants with schools, nonprofits, county conservation districts and other eligible organizations to advance EL outcomes.
* PCNR will advance a youth engagement initiative for the parks that takes into consideration whether experiences are as effective as possible and explores the potential of providing more teacher professional development to maximize student reach.
* DCNR will maintain the Youth Conservation Corps to engage urban youth in environmental work and help to diversify the work force.

**District of Columbia (Kang and Karimi)**

* There are strong partnerships among education and environmental organizations in DC. DC is also trying to use their resources creatively (example: using students to meet their trash TMDL).
* OSSE will better integrate EL into the broader work of schools through integrated learning.
* OSSE will ensure that EL is a prominent part of the work that DC is doing to support broader health and wellness initiatives in the schools.
* OSSE will provide instructional support for educators.
* DOEE will work with OSSI and nonprofit partners to focus on disadvantaged groups (Wards 7 and 8)
* DOEE will help to expand MWEEs from just elementary school to middle and high schools.

**2:25 Closing Remarks**, Mark Belton, Maryland Secretary of Natural Resources

**2:30 Adjourn**