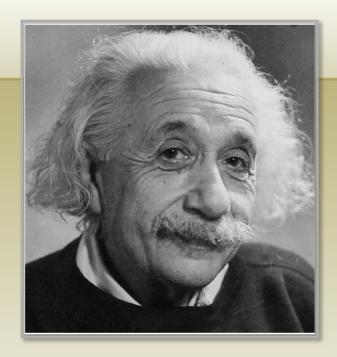


# Civic Engagement & Place-Based Education in the K-12 World

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December 2, 2013





"Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

If we continue to do the same thing the same way, we will get the same results. We need to be willing to look at alternative ways to teach our students.



How do We **Define Civic Engagement & Place-Based Education in the** K-12 World?



#### Civic Engagement

- Extends learning beyond the classroom and into the community
- promotes civic responsibility through active participation in service experiences
- fosters a sense of caring for others
- develops a habit of volunteer service to those in need



#### Civic Engagement

• Interdisciplinary in nature - connects science and civic engagement by teaching "through" complex, current, and unresolved public issues "to" basic

science

Builds level of challenge

- Learning through an underpinning of democracy
- Teaching through context to content



#### **Place-Based Education**

- The pedagogy of community
- Students become a part of their community, instead of a passive observer of it
- "Place-based education is not simply a way to integrate the curriculum around a study of place, but a means of inspiring stewardship and an authentic renewal and revitalization of civic life."

**England Graduate School** 



David Sobel Director of Teacher Certification Programs in the Education Department at Antioch New



## Civic Engagement and Place-Based Education

- Connecting new information to old learning by making connections
- Durable learning winds up in attitude and habit formation





**How do Civic Engagement & Place-Based Education Fit in** the Current Theories on

Learning?





- Learning ONLY happens when it is active and intentional, so keeping students engaged is vital
- Focus teaching on helping students connect new information to old (not on uptake of content)
- "Nothing we learn can stand in isolation; we can sustain new learning only to the degree we can relate it to what we already know." (Sci Am Mind, July 2010.)

#### Learning:

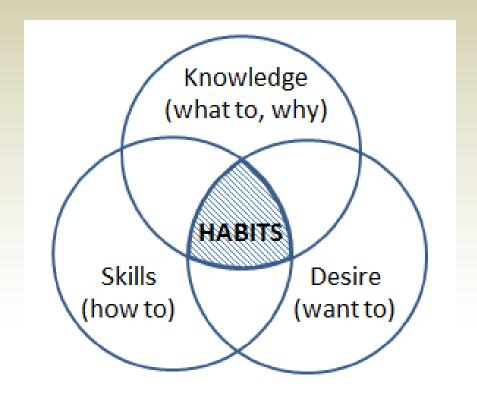
- ONLY works when it is active and conscious.
- Involves the use of multiple senses to enhance learning.
- Requires real effort (difficult is good).
- Depends on managing emotions well.
- Practice in learning is critical





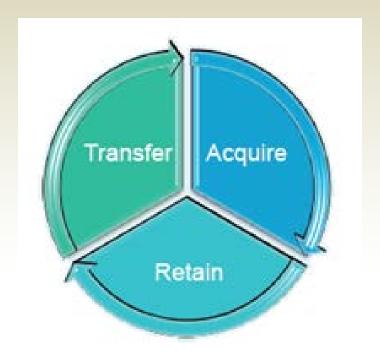
#### Learning is Forming New Habits

- Fueled by attitudes and desires (emotion)
- Supported by skills and understanding



#### The ART of Learning

- A Acquire new material
- R Retain new material
- ullet  $oxed{T}$  Transfer use of new material







- Learning by doing facilitates acquisition because it:
  - is always active and intentional and immersive
  - helps students connect what they know to what they are doing and learning
  - helps students see the value and meaning of what they are learning (engagement and affective change)
  - ensures relevant learning happens every day; it requires constant effort and provides always-appropriate challenge
  - enriches the learning environment and the variety of learning tasks



## Civic Engagement/ Place-Based Education and ... $\underline{\mathbf{R}}$ etention

- Learning by doing facilitates retention and habitformation because it:
  - creates a constant need for repetition and review
  - constitutes repeated low-stakes testing and requires distributed practice
  - engages students' emotions in positive ways
  - provides a richer learning environment



## Civic Engagement/ Place-Based Education and ... <u>Transfer</u>

- Civic engagement/ Place-Based Education aids transfer because it:
  - requires pattern recognition at ever-increasing levels of complexity
  - encourages the integration of knowledge acquired in different disciplines to solve problems
  - forces students to constantly move back and forth from theory to practice in always-changing contexts



#### Conclusion

Pedagogies based on civic engagement in a community setting are exceptionally effective because they align teaching practices with how people actually learn.





Why are Civic **Engagement &** Place-Based **Education an Important Part of** K-12 Education?

• Every student may not become a scientist or engineer, but **EVERY** student will become a citizen. We need to make sure our students become INFORMED citizens who can make INFORMED decisions.



 Civic Engagement and Place-Based Education should be used with ALL students at ALL levels.



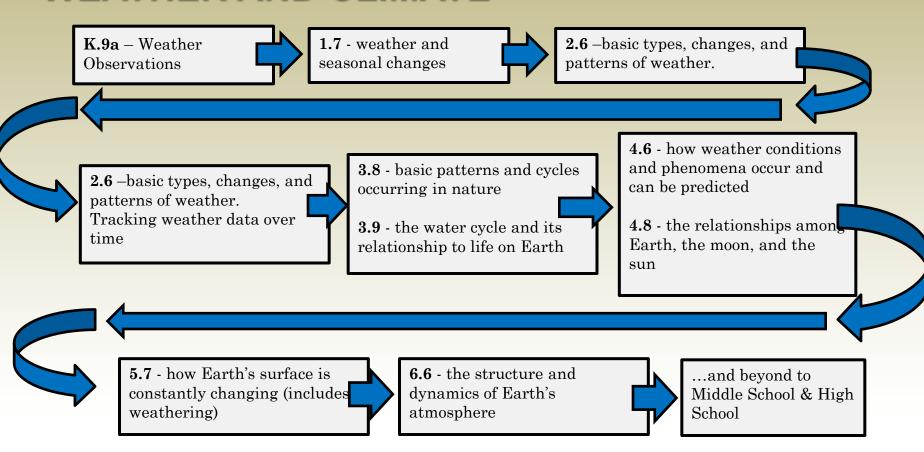
• Ultimately, successful graduation from high school depends greatly on student learning and success beginning in elementary school.

# ELEMENTARY BUILDS THE FOUNDATION!



#### Learning Standards are Built on Learning Progressions

#### **WEATHER AND CLIMATE**





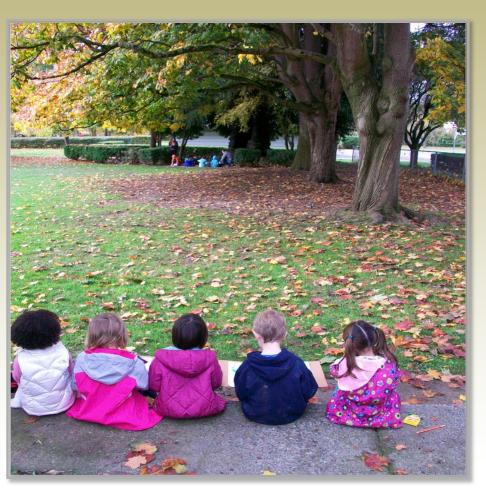
## The Environment is an Excellent "Integrating Context"



## Using the Environment as an Integrating Context (EIC)

"Since the ecosystems surrounding schools and their communities vary as dramatically as the nation's landscape, the term environment may mean different things at every school. ... Each school, by necessity, therefore designs its own program independently to take into account their specific locale, resources and student needs."

Lieberman and Hoody, 1998





## Using the Environment as an Integrating Context (EIC)

"Kids make connections across disciplines. We believe this not only brings [learning] alive, but also reflects real life and allows students to do the kind of thinking that problem solving in the real world requires."

Dan Bodette, Principal School of Environmental Studies Apple Valley, Minnesota

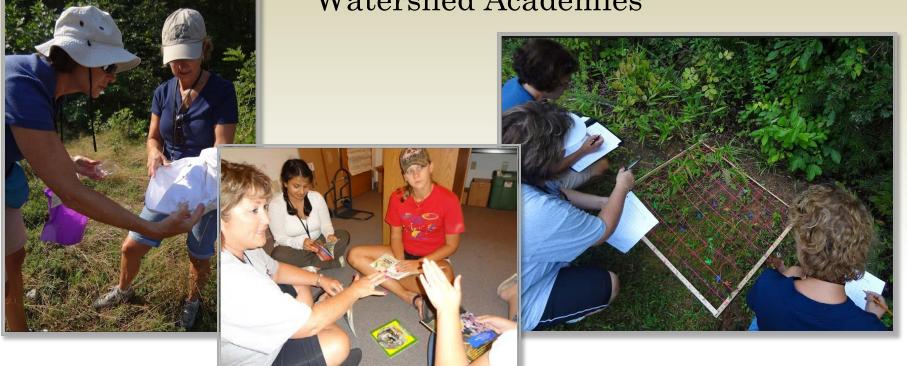




**Examples of Using Civic Engagement &** Place-Based **Education in K-12** Education



- VAST Region I Mini-Conference
- Science through an Interdisciplinary Approach Institutes
- Virginia Mountains to the Bay Watershed Academies





#### For Educational Leaders

• VAESP Conference





#### Creating and Using Partnerships

- VRUEC
- VSELA
- Virginia's colleges and universities







### **QUESTIONS?**



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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