

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR A GREEN CITY**

**AGENDA**

**April 16, 2008**

**Gheens Academy Room 208**

**4:30 – 5:30 p.m.**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

- Attendance: Marlon Francis, Emily Goldstein, Georgia Drury, Heather Kemp, Colvin Atchison, Tim Baker, Carol Gundersen, Kaki Robinson, Betsy Ruhe, Judy Sanders, Jeffrey Liddle, Shannon Meredith, Jason Sanchez, Christy Martin, Angela Page, Julie Fried, Hawk Hart-Suk, Beth Inman, Teddie Phillipson-Mower, Melissa Cottrell, Lindsey Joyce, Brent Fryrear, David Wicks, Darleen Horton, Marcelle Gianelloni, David Myers (taking minutes).
  
- Minutes: April 16, 2008
  
- The meeting was called to order at 4:31 pm by Teddie Phillipson-Mower. Introductions were made.

**II. Changes in Agenda Items**

- Melissa Cottrell reported that a comprehensive list of JCPS schools that have an Outdoor Education Program was needed. A written survey was sent to all JCPS school Principals asking for the environmental education teachers for those schools to complete the report. This included information about the predominating reasons why those outdoor programs are successful or unsuccessful and quantify to these results listed in order of difficulty. Copies of the survey were passed around for JCPS School Employees that wished to participate and had not yet had the chance to complete. Some noted they had already participated online.
- Kaki Robinson noted she had announcement to be made at appropriate time.
- Jason Sanchez noted he had announcement to be made at appropriate time.

### III. Presentations

- 1. Research Project Discussions (UofL Honors Students)
  - A UofL Honors student (led by Melissa Cottrell?) reported that 40-50 people have viewed and/or started the online site survey, though none of the paperwork had been returned from the teachers, 24 online completions have been reviewed. It was noted that several of the schools on the list were not involved / did not have the Outdoor Education Programs and that a list needed to be compiled that would allow contact with those schools to invite them to participate. Survey completion reports in the open-ended question indicated that the number one difficulty they were experiencing was lack of funding for continuing maintenance & upkeep especially during the summer months. Other difficulties included vandalism, parental & community involvement, inclusion into the core curriculum (in-class learning, not field action), support from other faculty members, and administrative support (though this was the least of the problems). Inquiry was made to the attendees as to ideas of why such a low completion rate was being experienced. Part of the problem was admitted to being technical difficulties with the webpage not allowing editing therefore hampering actual completion, possible question ambiguity, or simple forgetfulness of 1 item in a teacher's stack.
  - Round-table discussion of other difficulties occurred, and a problem involving support from the JCPS ground crews was widely acknowledged as a major threat to program implementation, i.e. program plants & trees down are mowed down like so much grass. So despite the enthusiastic support at the Principal level, grounds-crew action is deleterious to this effort. Many teachers have forged personal relationships with the maintenance crew in order to combat this problem. It was also recognized that both JCPS and individual schools have guidelines regarding this sort of

activity, and it is incumbent upon the teachers to obtain and follow them.

- Melissa Cottrell announced a meeting with David Wicks next Monday in preparation for a final analysis presentation on **Monday April 28<sup>th</sup>** in “that little bitty room in the honors hall”, subject to change / update.

Presentation would also be made to the Board of Education on **May 12, 2008**.

- Russ Barnett and Barbara Burns are the instructors for the two Honors Program research courses. Dr. Burns and her students were unable to attend the EEC meeting because of the presentation of Grawemeyer Awards at UofL. However, her class will present their research
- Teddie spoke to her desire for yearly expansion of the research group, asking in general for ideas as to how this could be done to get more community involvement.

○ 2. Polar Bear International’s Environmental Youth Summit Report (Emily Goldstein)

- The Weather Channel held an essay contest for students on how the students individually helped the environment. There were ~6000 entries and 22 winners were chosen. Emily won one of the spots and was sent to Washington D.C. for 3 days. One of the major events there aside from seminars and various lectures was a speaker introducing the “Plastic Vortex” in the Northeast Pacific just North of the Hawaiian Islands and its effects on the environment and local life from unicellular creatures in the phototropic zone to feeding birds, fish, and whales suffering from both entanglement and ingestion. To illustrate the magnitude and reality this represented, the speaker routinely made plastic rafts and floated them among the Hawaiian Islands, and allowed the students also to build such a raft from plastic bottles & recycled materials, using plastic bags to form the ropes, crutches as paddles, satellite dishes as seats, and float around the Potomac.

- Dr. Patty Cline\* lectured about climate change and various people groups' views of it such as pure disbelief, acknowledgement of warming while denying cause or contribution of human activity as factors (e.g. effects of religious groups). Stomach contents of albatross chick was examined, noting preponderance of colors were whites & yellows similar to their dietary fish colors. The amount of plastics in the sample was astounding, and showed to be a primary cause of chick death due to parental feeding of these plastics.
- Students recorded PSAs on their topic of choice, Emily chose fishing. These are to be incorporated into The Weather Channel broadcast.
- Many guest speakers from bands, TV shows, etc. gave talks about their specific 'pet' projects and noted how the students represented the future.
- Gave them job of making small local teams with the goal of making actual change in the community. Emily and a partner would like to make a plastic raft sourced from the Ohio River and launch into the river to examine and catalogue other plastic detritus, take water samples – and educate the community about how these plastics will eventually make it to the ocean and the Plastic Vortex. Emily's informal investigation revealed most people she spoke with had never heard of it.
- Emily's mother proposed a program possibly sponsored by the water company or other city resources for example, complete with a recognizable boat that not only could be used for water samples and plastic clean-up, but gain community recognition to spark more widespread involvement. Emily is planning all of this to be started this summer.
  - Teddie made announcement here about another similar project in the College of Education and Human Development to begin plastic recycling. She also mentioned that she has a copy of "The Brave New

Ocean" with Dr. Walter Nichols on DVD from Bioneers\* and that she would be happy to share it with teachers requesting who would like to show it to their students.

- Teddie then asked for specific ideas for implementation of existing programs, or creation of new ones such as legislative action banning plastics. Since the EEC normally does not meet in June or July, a small group may convene at the end of July to discuss possibilities.
- Julie from Brightside spoke that may be able to connect/and or coordinate their events like the Ohio River Sweep in June, and another October River cleanup event sponsored entirely by Brightside. Teddie related a specific example of a the Xstream cleanup in which her group decided to separate out the plastics and clean them up for recycling. This yielded 10 bags! One logistical concern was noted that the sorting & separation of plastics was very time-consuming, and self-limiting so that in order to counteract some of this that 1-2 hours could be scheduled during the cleanups for sorting.
- Serious emphasis was placed upon the plastic situation and environmental impact
- 3. EE Sampler (Donna Griffin, David Wicks and Teddie Phillipson-Mower)
  - Booklets EE Samplers were passed around.
  - Teddie, David and Barbara Burns taught classes in the Honors Program in the fall. As a cross course assignment, their classes wrote essays in different writing styles using the environmental as a context. The EE Sampler contains selections from the on-line Louisville Reader that will provide support for the middle school reading and writing curricula.
  - David Wicks noted that 30 of 125 written pieces submitted were selected.\* Donna Griffin edited the webpage to include a set of open-ended response questions for each genre. David informed the group that the website was up and running, containing about 150 articles available for viewing. The EE Sampler whose original purpose is to serve as a 7<sup>th</sup>

grade reader has been piloted in 1 school, and complete classroom sets are available for dissemination if requested. Teachers and their students can also use the website. Five more Environmental Honors classes have been proposed for this fall, and it is expected that additional pieces will be collected. The website for the Louisville's Environmental Reader: Exploring Local Issues, Events, and Experiences is at:

[www.louisville.edu/education/research/centers/environmental-ed](http://www.louisville.edu/education/research/centers/environmental-ed)

- 4. Earth Day Perspectives (David Wicks) is online and can be accessed from the website Global Connections. Several EEC group members were noted to have contributed articles for it as well as civic leaders and government officials etc. Correct URL will be posted. Planned to partner with the Kentucky Conservation Committee (KCC) to do this again next year. The KCC focuses on 'The Earth Needs a Friend in Frankfort', monitoring environmental legislation. "We" are hoping to get the state legislature more involved and online.
- A 1 page handout was passed around titled "The Partnership for a Green City" that is an overview of the Partnership for a Green City's focus over this coming year. This was taken from part of the discussion that we had at last month's meeting as well as other Committee responses. Instead of "goals" the steering committee decided to use the word "focus." The document has been reviewed by all three Partners and all three are committed to it. Already UofL has pledged to get 10% of all their food served on campus from local sources. The food group is now looking for schools in the JCPS to work towards this. One implementation possibility is to hold a workshop for Food Managers in which they would plan a visit to Oxmoor Farm to observe & learn the value of local food. Another idea would be to secure 1 to 3 area schools to pilot a program that would use local foods.
- David Wicks mentioned that JCPS will announce that the styrofoam trays in lunchrooms will be switched to 100% biodegradable trays made of a corn product. These new trays are said to degrade in 30

days even in buried landfill. David thanked this crew to focus on food, and success therein.

#### IV. Working Groups

- 1. Working Group Reports
  - Announcement by Kaki Robinson of Kennedy Montessori that on **May 9<sup>th</sup>** they are having their Earth Day, everyone is invited to visit and/or volunteer. Exhibit hours are from 9:30 to 3:00. Contact Kaki Robinson by calling Kennedy at 485-8280 or home at 458-1814. A kickoff day partnered with Humana will start the event.
- 2. Meeting Time for Working Groups broke up into groups at 5:25 for 10 minutes to meet. Working Groups included:
  - Outdoor Classrooms
  - Food Group
  - Alternative Energy Group
  - Brightside

#### V. Announcements

- 1. Dr. Barbara Burns from the UofL Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, in collaboration with Judy Nielsen from the Metro Louisville Health Department, is teaching a class in the UofL Honors Program entitled "Connecting Research to the Community." Her students took on two issues of health equity in Louisville and have written white papers that they want to present to the Health Department at the end of the semester. The first white paper is an analysis of asthma and children in Louisville. The second white paper is focused on the challenges of the Somali Bantu community for access to health care in Louisville. On **Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup>** between 2:30-4:30 pm you and your colleagues are invited to attend the research presentations and receive the white papers. The presentations will be on the Belknap campus in the Ekstrom Hall Seminar Room. Dr. Burns would like to identify some folks from the EEC who may want to volunteer to continue to work with the Health Department on these issues. For more information or to arrange parking in the North Campus visitor lot, contact Dr. Burns at (502) 852-5947 or [bburns@louisville.edu](mailto:bburns@louisville.edu).

- 2. Announcement by Julie Fried - Brightside is partnered with the Fred Wiche family to make Fred Wiche Award. They are celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Nominations and proposals for the Fred Wiche awards must be postmarked by **May 16<sup>th</sup>**. This call for Nominations for the Fred Wiche Awards 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary noted that money has INCREASED to celebrate this milestone. Cash awards for schools to be used to implement their ideas or programs are:
  - First Place = \$3,000  
Second Place = \$2,000  
Third Place = \$1,000
  - Julie Fried will have brochures to distribute at the meeting. She encouraged all to consider submitting a proposal. For more information, call Brightside at (502) 574-2613.
  
- 3. David Wicks followed up on Kaki Robinson's mention of the Greening book and Humana Insurance. He mentioned that Humana wants to change from an insurance company to a health industry and is very interested in sustainability. He gave specific details of action undertaken by the company (e.g. pledges that all new buildings and all renovations are to be Green-certified). Humana has also invested heavily in a program called "Gaines for Health", and are looking at another involving the Greening Book, Being a Friend to Planet Earth. Ellen Sabin\* is considering writing a book for Louisville called The Green and Healthy Book, targeted at 3<sup>rd</sup> to lower-level 6<sup>th</sup> grade readers.
  - Humana is very interested in partnering with schools, 6 schools selected by the Superintendents office are to pilot it this Spring.
  
- 4. Jason Sanchez announced **April 19<sup>th</sup>** was Alternative Energy Day at the Louisville Science Center. Businesses coming in with products that are more green-friendly, including solar powered products, alternative engine fuels, peddle bikes powering common household appliances.
  - There is also a nascent group Kentuckiana Alternative Fuels Energy Group.

- Students coming in to display (12:30-4:00) their science experiments with 2 speakers at ~3:00. Event details posted on LSC website under "Science Saturdays"
- 5. Angela Page announced that her Environmental Science Advanced Placement class at Male High School was recognized by the Mayor and several others today. Angela's students worked with Tonya Swan at Jefferson Memorial Forest to restore an area along Beargrass Creek.
- 6. **April 23<sup>rd</sup>** is the date set for an outdoor classroom tour for the UofL Environmental Education Teaching Methods course. The Outdoor Classrooms Working Group has developed the tour that the class will go on. If anyone would like to join the tour, please contact Teddie at (502) 852-0791. We will meet at Chenoweth Elementary School at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Myers of the UofL Center for Environmental Education