

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

May 21, 2008

Gheens Academy Room 204

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Layne Greenwell (UofL), Emily Conn (UofL), Donna Griffin (JCPS), Teddie Phillipson-Mower (UofL), Beth Bell (UofL KPPC), Ann Larson (UofL CEHD), Sherri Brown (UofL CEHD), Hawk Hart (JCPS), Julie Fried (Brightside), Brent Fryrear (Partnership for a Green City), Casey Sterr (Food Literacy Project), Rachel Connolly (UofL), Molly Woofter (JCPS Fairdale HS), Carol Gunderson (Food Literacy Project), Kaki Robinson (Kennedy Montessori), Peggy Eklof (Chenoweth Elementary), Betsy Ruhe (JCPS Indian Trail), Keith Mountain (UofL – Geography / Geosciences), Michael O'Toole (St. Xavier HS), Kiernan Heine (St. Xavier HS), Justin Coppola (St. Xavier HS)

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm by Teddie Phillipson-Mower and Donna Griffin. Introductions were made. It was announced that Layne Greenwell will be taking the place of Emily Conn for the upcoming year as EEC secretary and student coordinator of the UofL Center for Environmental Education. In August, Layne will enter the Counseling and Educational Psychology graduate program at UofL.

I. Presentations

1. 2007-2008 EEC Annual Report Review – Emily Conn distributed a DRAFT of the current EEC Annual Report to be reviewed by members of the committee. A few changes were made. The final DRAFT will be sent to the committee for approval before publication. The report will be completed by the end of June.

No committee action needed at this time.

2. The Xpedition Project – Two St. Xavier students, Kiernan Heine and Justin Coppola, along with their teacher Michael O'Toole and UofL Professor of Geography and Geosciences, Keith Mountain, presented their current work and future plans for the Xpedition Project. The program was inspired by Michael O'Toole who has long been concerned about the lack of climate change education occurring in our schools nationwide; most notably, our failure to look at the big picture and address the problem with sound scientific evidence. He believes that each of us can make a difference and that real change starts with the youth of our community.

The Xpedition is a global-to-local learning and outreach program that focuses on Global Climate Change. Through hands-on study of the various climates and eyewitness accounts of the shrinking glaciers of Mt. Kilimanjaro, the

program aims to raise awareness of the causes of and possible solutions to this Issue through local outreach to the youth of our community. Starting June 2, 2008 twenty-seven individuals will be traveling to Tanzania, Africa to study the geography, biology, geology, culture and climate of the area and attempt to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro. The team traveling to Africa includes 15 high school students, 7 parents, 2 high school teachers, and 2 university professors. This diverse team of individuals hopes to share their experiences with the Louisville community upon their return by posting their journals, photographs, and interviews on their website, www.xpeditiononline.com, and presenting at schools and organizations in the community. The website also includes current climatology data, lesson plans, and a chance for students to earn their GAD, Global Awareness Degree. Educators from around the country are already using the sight and enjoying it.

During the meeting, Dr. Keith Mountain, a renowned climate scientist and UofL professor, presented an academic overview of the Kilimanjaro Xpedition (see attached handout) and distributed two articles he had written on the subject – *The Role of Glaciers and Ice Cores in Deciphering Global Climate Change* and *The Response of Glaciers to Climate Change: The Example of Mt. Kilimanjaro, East Africa*. (Both articles can be found in the Spring/Summer 2007 edition of SUSTAIN, a journal published at the University of Louisville.) These articles and the Xpedition website provide current scientific data and vital background knowledge needed to comprehend the complexities of global climate change. If you have questions related to the Xpedition project you can contact Mike O’Toole at otoolemike@saintxfac.com and if you have questions related to climatology you may contact Dr. Keith Mountain, krmoun01@gwise.louisville.edu.

ACTION: When the members of the Xpedition return from Tanzania they will have many stories to tell about their experiences and will be compelled to share them with their community. Thus, we challenge you to think of ways that you could allow these students to share their experiences either with students at your school or members of your organization. Contact Mike O’Toole if you are interested in scheduling an event. You can also visit the website, www.xpeditiononline.com, for photos, journal entries, and interviews of their trip. A five day lesson plan is also available for classroom use.

3. Recommendations for a Systemic Environmental Education Curriculum – A conversation has been initiated to determine the most effective and appropriate means of expanding the role of environmental education district-wide. Rather than letting one group decide the outcome we need the diverse perspectives and input of all of our members including teacher, government, and community representatives. Donna Griffin asked all of the EEC members present, “If EE was designed to be a required part of a student’s education in JCPS how would that look from your point of view?” Everyone agreed that

EE as “systemic” is confusing because it can mean a variety of different things – “interdisciplinary”, “variety of contexts”, “one specific class”, etc. Molly Woofter, science teacher at Fairdale High School, commented that if EE is always taught as a separate class then kids are always going to think of it as separate. However, if it is integrated through their lives they are more likely to take it to heart. Everyone agreed with this. Rachel Connolly suggested looking into the AAAS benchmarks atlas for science literacy K-12 which focuses on using the authentic environment to bring real science into the classroom. Teddie Phillipson-Mower suggested two articles to read about Curriculum Issues in EE:

- i. Ramsey, J.M., Hungerford, H.R., and Volk, T.L (2005).
Environmental Education in the K-12 Curriculum: Finding a Niche.
Essential Readings in Environmental Education. Champaign: Stipes
Publishing
- ii. Volk, T.L. (2005). Integration and Curriculum Design. Essential
Readings in Environmental Education. Champaign: Stipes Publishing

Donna emphasized the importance of thinking beyond K-12 education including community and non formal educational opportunities.

ACTION: It is critical that we as a committee contribute to this very important conversation. Thus, we ask you to take time this summer to really think about the possibilities for integrating environmental education into our schools as well as our community education and outreach programs. What is your role or the role of the group that you represent? We hope to have some specific proposals developed by August. This discussion will be a major focus of the EEC for the 2008-2009 year.

4. Youth Summit Surveys and Report – Brightside is working to complete the annual Youth Summit Report. It will be distributed to the committee along with the 2007-2008 EEC Annual Report by the end of June. Teddie pointed out that the Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools (KGHS) and Earth Force initiatives will really support the Youth Summit in a variety of ways. Next year’s Youth Summits will include time for students to share ideas and showcase their KGHS projects.

Students and teachers from newly registered KGHS were honored by the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Environmental Education Council at an awards ceremony held at the state capitol on May 6th. Several students and teachers from JCPS attended and received awards. Fairdale High School was one of the few schools in Kentucky to receive a plaque for completing three KGHS inventory projects.

ACTION: If any teachers would like to attend Earth Force training there may be funding available. Contact Teddie Phillipson-Mower for details at tophil01@louisville.edu. If you are interested in becoming a KGHS next year visit the website, www.greenschools.ky.gov.

II. Housekeeping

The EEC *Yearly Evaluation 2007-2008* was distributed and completed by a few committee members in attendance. The questions and answers to the evaluation are written below. **If you would like to submit your own comments to the questions below please email them to cenvired@louisville.edu.**

1. Did the structure of the monthly meeting accommodate your needs? If not, please suggest possible improvements.
 - *"This was fine"*
 - *"Yes – good organization"*
2. Did you feel that your working group had the support that it needed from the entire committee? If not, what needs should be addressed next year?
 - *"I am hoping that working groups will become more proactive next year."*
 - *"What is going on in the other groups?"*
 - *"Maybe [working group] minutes would be helpful so if a meeting was missed, we could be kept current."*
3. What projects or initiatives are you most excited for next year and what role do you see the EEC playing?
 - *"Integrating EE in curriculum"*
 - *"Youth Summit"*
 - *"Getting EE programs in JCPS → Cleaning the city!"*
4. Additional comments or suggestions:
 - *"I feel like we are really accomplishing something"*
 - *"Hopeful for greater participation from Metro Government"*

III. Working Groups

Working groups did not meet.

IV. Announcements

1. Carol Gunderson from the Food Literacy Project at Oxmoor Farm announced Family Farm Day, Saturday, May 31 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. For details visit www.foodliteracyproject.org. Carol also distributed a *Group Program Application* which can also be found on their website. The Food Literacy Project conducts programs in the summer, fall, and spring, and slots are filling quickly!
2. Brent Fryrear, Director of the Partnership for a Green City, announced several events:
 - i. First Energizing Kentucky Conference to be held at the newly restored Henry Clay Building, 604 South Fourth Street on June 3 and 4 presented by the Presidents of Center College, University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Berea College. The second conference of the three part series will be held on September 18-19, 2008 and will

feature Thomas L. Friedman, author of “The World Is Flat”, as the keynote speaker. For more details about the conference series visit www.energizingkentucky.org.

- ii. Boehl Distinguished Lecture in Land Use Policy by Victor Flatt on “Act Locally, Affect Globally: Local Government's Role in Addressing Climate Change and Other Large-Scale Environmental Harms.”

The lecture will be at 6 pm on Monday, June 9, in the Cox Lounge at the University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law. It is open to the public. The Cox Lounge is on the 2nd floor of the Law School in the very center of the building (Wilson Wyatt Hall).

Professor Flatt is the O'Quinn Chair in Environmental Law at the University of Houston Law Center and is a nationally recognized expert on environmental law and policy, including the local role in addressing climate change.

This special supplemental Boehl Distinguished Lecture in Land Use Policy is co-sponsored by the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District, the EPA Region 4 Environmental Finance Center at the University of Louisville, the University of Louisville Center for Land Use & Environmental Responsibility, and the Herbert F. Boehl Fund and the Kentucky Research Challenge Trust Fund.

- iii. There's an easy-to-read, free, updated primer on climate change available at <http://dels.nas.edu/basc/climate-change/>.