

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

**October 17, 2007
Gheens, Room 202
4:30 – 5:30 pm**

Attendance:

Tonya Swan (Jefferson Memorial Forest), Julie Fried (Brightside), Doug McCoy (Louisville Zoo), Beth Inman (Ballard High School), Lisa Markowitz (UofL), David Wicks (JCPS), Kandi Walker (UofL), Joy Hart (UofL), Jennifer Clark (ACTIVE Louisville), Dee Lynch (KAIRE), Kaki Robinson (Kennedy Montessori), Angelique Perez (UofL), Cynthia Herbig (Newburg Middle), Carol Gunderson (Food Literacy Project), Darleen Horton (Chenoweth Elementary), Hawk Hart (JCPS), Donna Griffin (JCPS), Emily Conn (UofL)

The meeting was called to order promptly at 4:30 pm by Donna Griffin. Introductions were made.

I. Presentations

1. Youth Summit Report – Julie Shinton-Fried gave a brief overview of Brightside’s Fall Youth Summit held Tuesday, September 25th at the Louisville Science Center. (An extensive analysis of the program is currently under construction and a more detailed report will be given at the next meeting.) The number and caliber of students that attended the Summit was impressive: over 200 students from 37 different schools. Students shared their ideas and discussed ways they could improve their school’s environment using Kentucky’s new *Green and Healthy Schools* initiative as a framework. Throughout the Summit they expressed their concerns, asked questions, and decided on ways they could take action to improve their school environments. Teachers who attended the Summit participated in a Professional Development facilitated by Donna Griffin, Teddie Phillipson-Mower, Jane Eller, and Maria Zoretic. This PD familiarized teachers with the *Green and Healthy Schools* initiative and provided them with the structure and know-how to support and motivate their students to take action in their schools. According to David Wicks, four schools have signed up to participate in the *Green and Healthy Schools* initiative to date and one more will be added to the list in the next week. The teachers committed to the *GHS* initiative are interested in meeting frequently throughout the school year to share ideas and strategies with each other.

ACTION: Schools are looking for mentors from the private and public sector to assist in reaching their goals. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, contact David Wicks at david.wicks@jefferson.kyschools.us. Another way to participate is to join the *Green and Healthy Schools* working group. If you are interested in joining you can either attend the next Environmental Education Committee meeting or email David Wicks directly.

2. Brightside Bio Bag – Julie Shinton-Fried distributed Brightside’s newest product, the Bio Bag, designed to decrease the amount of plastic bags used in yard waste collection. These biodegradable cornstarch bags are available at Heine Brothers Coffee stores for \$5 per roll (10 bags per roll). The money raised by the sale of these bags will go towards Brightside’s clean and green programs. Julie distributed these bags to us free of cost in hopes that we would field test them and afterward provide her with constructive feedback.

ACTION: If you received Bio Bags from Julie at the meeting she would appreciate your ideas regarding the bags practicality. Email your thoughts and/or concerns to Julie Shinton-Fried at julie.shintonfried@louisvilleky.gov.

3. Lassiter Middle School Pilot Project Update (Donna Griffin) – Lassiter Middle School is currently updating its environmental education magnet program. Recent changes in the school’s administration, including a new principal, have helped to reinvigorate the program. In collaboration with JCPS (Donna Griffin and Bryan Thompson), UofL (Teddie Phillipson-Mower), and Metro Government (Julie Shinton-Fried of Brightside and Tonya Swan of Jefferson Memorial Forest), Lassiter Middle School has developed a plan for integrating EE into every classroom and the school culture. Support for this initiative includes teacher workshops, EE curriculum pieces, and most recently a PD facilitated by Al Herring, director of the Muhammad Ali Institute for Peace and Justice at UofL. During this PD session, Herring presented his Do No Harm campaign which promotes awareness and understanding of international equality, while aiming to resolve seven core areas of national brutality, one of which is environmental violence. During her most recent visits to Lassiter, Donna Griffin has noticed a transition toward internalizing environmental education as a vital part of their school. The administration has begun to take ownership of their environmental magnet program by inviting environmental experts into their school and entering several curriculum pieces into the classroom upon teacher request. In addition, Tonya Swan is working with Lassiter to buy native plants for their greenhouse. Once they arrive, the plants can propagate over the winter and be ready for planting in the spring. Donna and Teddie are documenting the progress of this pilot program and hope to implement similar programs in other JCPS middle schools.

ACTION: If you are interested in contributing to or learning more about this pilot project you can contact Donna Griffin at donna.griffin@jefferson.kyschools.us or join the Middle School Pilot Project working group (see below).

4. Garden Professional Development with ACTIVE Louisville (Jennifer Clark and David Wicks) – ACTIVE Louisville, a five-year Active Living by Design grantee, joins Metro government agencies with community non-profits to promote active living in the Clarksdale HOPE VI Revitalization area and the surrounding neighborhoods of Phoenix Hill, Smoketown, and Shelby Park. Part of their mission has been focused on revitalizing farmers markets, specifically the Smoketown / Shelby Park Farmer’s Market, and the newly created St. Peter Claver Community Garden to promote healthy eating. On November 7th there will be a Garden PD

facilitated by a panel of experts including ACTIVE Louisville staff members and others from the community.

ACTION: If you are interested in participating in the ACTIVE Louisville's Garden PD contact David Wicks at david.wicks@jefferson.kyschools.us or (502) 485-3295 or Jennifer Clark at activelouisville@gwise.com. Jennifer Clark from ACTIVE Louisville is also looking for environmental educators to facilitate activities for children who visit the last harvest celebration at the Smoketown/Shelby Park Farmers Market located at Meyzeek Middle School. The celebration will be held on Saturday, October 27th from 9-12pm. Young people who have been working in the St. Peter Claver Community Garden all season will be selling their produce at the market as well. Come and celebrate this wonderful accomplishment!

5. Food and Agriculture Professional Development Report – Carol Gunderson, Director of the Food Literacy Project at Oxmoor Farms, reported that this PD was a great success. The PD was informal, allowing elementary and middle school teachers as well as others from the community to experience the inner workings of the farm including the awesome education opportunities the Food Literacy Project provides students from all over Jefferson County. Carol commented that it was nice to converse with adults who understood the complexities of the current food system and were passionate about food literacy education.

No committee action needed at this time.

6. Brightside Fall Community Wide Cleanup – On Saturday, October 27th Cynthia Herbig, a teacher at Newburg Middle School, along with her students, and other members of the Newburg neighborhood will be participating in the Brightside Fall Community Wide Cleanup.

ACTION: If you are not already participating in a Cleanup in your neighborhood, Cynthia would love anyone's help. The Newburg cleanup begins at 11:00 am. If you would like to volunteer, contact Cynthia at cyncatfan@insightbb.com. If you would like to learn more about the Brightside Fall Community Wide Cleanup you can click on Brightside's website <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/Brightside/Calendar/Brightside+Fall+Community+Wide+Cleanup.htm>

7. Open Air Market Places Curriculum – Donna Griffin along with specialists from the JCPS Diversity and Multicultural Education Office (Aukram Burton and Catherine Collesano) and JCPS Gheens Professional Development Academy have developed a curriculum based on open air markets around the world. Aukram Burton is a phenomenal photographer who has taken photos of open air markets on all seven continents. These interesting photos will be used as primary sources in an interdisciplinary curriculum that integrates Culture & Society (Social Studies), Economics (Social Studies), Geography (Social Studies) Consumerism (Practical Living), Nutrition (Practical Living), and Community & Environment (Practical

Living). There will be a PD on the Open Air Market Places interdisciplinary curriculum on October 18th, 2007.

ACTION: There are versions of this curriculum for elementary, middle, and high school. If you are interested in integrating this curriculum in the classroom or would like to learn more, contact Donna Griffin at donna.griffin@jefferson.kyschools.us. A follow up PD will be offered to EE Committee members from the food working group that expressed an interest in the curriculum. The date will be announced at the next meeting.

II. Working Group Reports and News

1. Alternative Energy Education Report and Request (Beth Inman) – Beth Inman, a science teacher at Ballard High School, is working in collaboration with Jason Sanchez from the Louisville Science Center (LSC) to create an alternative energy display. The initial purpose of the interactive display is to educate kids who attend Science Saturdays at the LSC on current alternative energy technology. Ultimately, Beth would like to see the display transported to other events around the community. They are looking for mini-grants that could fund the design and construction of the display. Several committee members suggested Home Depot and Lowes as possible sources of funding.

ACTION: If you have other suggestions for possible grant sources please contact Beth Inman at beth.inman@jefferson.kyschools.us. You may also contact Beth if you are interested in working with the Alternative Energy Education Working Group of which Beth and Jason are the only current members.

2. Outdoor Classroom Update – David Wicks met with Jim Fegenbush, head of JCPS Buildings and Grounds, to discuss district “cutting” policies in relation to outdoor classrooms. According to David, Jim is interested in meeting with members of the Outdoor Classroom working group to devise a plan that would prevent harmful cutting of outdoor classroom areas in the future. David suggested using the Brightside Outdoor Classrooms Registry as a starting point to create maps of designated classroom areas that would be handed out to mowers and weed-eaters. Darleen Horton suggested that there could be a policy that simply asks grounds maintenance crews to avoid mulch areas. She also emphasized that the “ball had started rolling” and that these conversations were extremely valuable.

ACTION: If you would like to contribute to this discussion, you can either email Darleen Horton at Darleen.horton@jefferson.kyschools.us or David Wicks (see email above).

3. Working Group Collaboration – Darleen Horton mentioned a desire to work with the Alternative Energy Education group to implement ways of using alternative energy technology in outdoor classroom education. The idea of collaboration between working groups was greatly supported by all members.

No committee action needed at this time.

III. Announcements

- 1. We encourage working groups to meet between meetings. If you are interested in becoming a member of a working group or would like to start one of your own contact Emily Conn at cenvired@louisville.edu. If you are already a member of a working group but are having difficulty communicating with other group members to establish meeting times, Emily Conn has offered to help organize meetings, etc. Please email Emily if you feel your working group would benefit from this service.**
- 2. The next EEC meeting has been changed to Wednesday, November 14th due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. It will be held at Gheens Academy in Room 202 from 4:30-5:30 pm.**
3. The Partnership for a Green City has recently hired a new program director that will begin working on December 1st.
4. The University of Louisville's Louis D. Brandeis School of Law announces the first annual conference on *Law, Ethics, and the Life Sciences*. The conference will be held at the University of Louisville on October 26-27, 2007. This conference will bring together scholars from law, environmental science, information technology, health sciences, bioethics, and other disciplines to consider their disciplines' connections as well as their divisions. To learn more about this Conference visit <http://www.law.louisville.edu/life-sciences>

The meeting concluded early at 5:05 pm because Preston Highway was schedule to be closed off after 5:15pm due to Male's Homecoming Parade.