

# NYSOEA

## Environmental Literacy Committee: Report of Activities 2009-2010

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# Environmental Literacy Committee History and Activities

- Federal *No Child Left Inside* (NCLI) legislation and TEEP
- Environmental Literacy Committee officially established by NYSOEA board in January 2009
- Task – lead the development of a state-wide environmental literacy plan (ELP)
- Working with state legislators (Kavanagh and Bradley) to introduce NYS Environmental Education legislation

# NYSOEA Roundtables

- The ELC hosted a series of roundtables to:
  - Inform constituents about the NCLI legislation
  - Inform constituents about the state legislative activity
  - Gather input on developing an ELP for New York State





# NYS Roundtables

To date 6 Roundtables were held in NYS:

- Teatown
- Poughkeepsie
- Cortland
- Irondequoit
- Paul Smiths  
(Adirondacks Region)
- New York City



# Roundtable Attendees

- 48 Non-Formal Educators
  - Representing government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, etc.
- 11 University Faculty
- 8 K-12 Teachers
- 4 Graduate Students
- Total attendees: 71





# Defining Environmental Literacy: Initial Goals

An environmentally literate citizen:



- Has a connection to the outdoor environment and a sense of place
- Understands the interconnectedness of all Earth systems
- Is engaged and empowered to address environmental issues and their impact.

# Defining Environmental Literacy

**Understands the interconnectedness of all Earth systems:**

- Has a working knowledge of 'sustainability'
- Understands how the world works from an ecological perspective
- Comprehends basic scientific principles, environmental history, processes, etc.
- Sees humans as one of many species, as a part of the ecological world
- Understands human impact/influence on earth systems
- Appreciates that everything is connected



# Defining Environmental Literacy

**Is engaged and empowered to address environmental issues and their impact:**

- Is a life-long learner
- Can apply environmental knowledge to solve problems
- Considers ethics in decisions
- Engages in service learning
- Exhibits behaviors of stewardship
- Takes action on environmental issues



# Pathways to environmental literacy - Formal

## School

- Integrated EE curriculum
- Use of school grounds
- Green schools

## Institutionalizing EE across the state

- EE requirement for PK-16
- Regents
- Semester-long courses
- Field trips
- Service learning requirements
- Placed-based education
- Certification for Non-formal educators



# Pathways to Environmental Literacy – Non-formal

- Nature Centers
- Youth organizations
- Field trips
- Family
- Role Models
- Media and Technology





# How do we assess environmental literacy?

## Traditional assessment

- Environmental literacy surveys or assessments
- Regents Exam

## Non-traditional assessments: (students)

- Service Projects (outcomes)
- Student Portfolios (writing, drawing, photography)

## Behavior changes and environmental awareness surveys

## Number of individuals ready for the 'green workforce'

# What other entities should we invite into this process?



- College Faculty
- Classroom Teachers
- School Administrators
- State Education Representatives
- Additional State Agencies
- Businesses
- Youth Organizations
- Outdoor Recreation Organizations
- Local representatives of national environmental organizations



# Committee Tasks

- Draft the ELP
  - Develop environmental literacy goals
  - Assessment
  - Professional development
- Advocate for legislation to support NYS ELP and/or NCLI
- Engage other stakeholders



# ELC Subcommittees

- Education
- Outreach
- Legislative
- ELP Development
- Fund Raising





# Become Involved!



- Be ready to advocate for EE state legislation



- Visit and participate on NYSOEA's Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/NYSOEA/143143469473>