

Governor Martin O'Malley's
Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature

John R. Griffin, Chair
Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Nancy S. Grasmick, Chair
State Superintendent of Schools,
Maryland State Department of Education

February 18, 2010

10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Outward Bound

- I. Welcome & Introductions – Sec. Griffin (10 minutes)
 - John Enny of Outward Bound gave a brief overview of the mansion and goals of Outward Bound
 - Secretary Griffin announced that Dr. Grasmick will not be able to attend due to another commitment

- II. Bay Backpack (15 minutes, Kristina Hopkins – Chesapeake Bay Program)
 - Kristina gave an overview of the Bay Backpack
 - On-line resource for educators
 - Goal: get more MWEEs
 - Clearinghouse of information, blog, marketing
 - www.baybackpack.com

- III. Greening School Facilities, Dr. David Lever, Executive Director of the Interagency School Construction Panel (30 minutes)
 - Dr. Lever provided a summary of the Annual report of initiatives across the state
 - Benefits of high performance schools (environmental, financial, behavior, educational)
 - Range of initiatives from least costly to most costly (innovations in policy → comprehensive high performance initiatives)
 - Dr. Lever gave examples of projects that have been implemented.
 - Montgomery Co. has set a goal of 5% reduction in energy based on behavioral modifications
 - Potential legislation to use low VOC cleaning products
 - MEA & MSDE gave grants to school systems that would integrate school facility folks with instruction folks. Harford, Cecil and Calvert County Public Schools
 - Evergreen Elementary School. – first LEED Gold

- Maintenance is a major issue. Needs to be part of budget and on-going. Training and commitment is imperative.
- Any project being done on a school ground should be signed off by the central office building. To prevent safety and engineering problems.
- MABE (MD Assoc of Boards of Education) Risk Management team is in the process of putting out a “how-to” list to prevent safety infractions and engineering problems caused when facilities managers are not involved in the planning and design phase of school yard projects.(example: plants that attract bees by an open window; installing a wetland that would alter the flow of water for other storm water management ponds).
- Montgomery County has schoolyard habitat templates on-line.
- Jeff Horan brought up the idea of using iMAP and the Governor’s Smart, Green and Growing website to track the schoolyard habitats, tree plantings, etc.
- The Green Book is on the MSDE website.
- Julie Dieguez mentioned the interactive Maryland Green School map on the MAEOE web site should soon have projects that pop up when school is “rolled over” on map (i.e. rain garden, meadow, recycling, etc.). Model to follow for future tracking of projects geographically. Much information is available on the site on maintenance, project templates and policy, much of it derived from and linking to the “Green Book”.
- Steve Barry discussed the importance of connecting the educators with the facilities folks and getting over that technical barrier.
- Policies are in place which encourages energy efficiency. A new school must be LEED Silver certified or better.
 - High performance buildings act
 - Smart growth
 - MDP has a guidebook on construction and siting
 - Maryland Green Building Council
 - DGS performance standards
 - MSDE policy on Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment on School Sites
 - Communication

IV. Speakers Bureau (15 minutes – Catherine Shanks, MD-DNR)

- Cathie Shanks gave a very brief overview of the Speakers Bureau presentation.
- Check out minutes and website for the presentation.
- **Provide comments in the next month**

V. National Update (10 minutes, Don Baugh -- CBF)

- Earth Day Network is making NCLI one of the two signature issues
- Making a national call for every student to go and learn outside that day. Include video featuring Secretary Duncan / celebrity appearances or voiceovers.

- Effort to put together a national block proposal for the Innovation Fund. 35M → 5M for Maryland. 3-6 counties will be models of having EE infused throughout education.
- Obama released his budget and EL was included as a subject
 - \$1B teacher training available. \$655M in support of providing students with a well-rounded education (EE could qualify). USDE Investing in Innovation grant funds included in this.
 - Include EE in ESEA including STEM, Early Childhood Education
- Opportunity to put Maryland on the map across the country
- Gary Heath: US Dept of Education has identified a Green Team. School construction is high on their agenda.
- ESEA is moving forward. Hopeful that NCLI language will be included.

VI. Maryland Update (30 minutes)

a. Graduation Requirement (Rebecca Bell)

- i. Becky Bell provided an update
- ii. Asst. Superintendents to make a recommendation to Dr. Grasmick. They are responding to Dr. Grasmick through a memo with a background report. In September The LEA Assistant Superintendents opted to form a subcommittee to discuss the Partnership report and recommendations. 15 school systems had representatives on the committee and other school systems submitted written comments to formulate a response. Their draft background report and memo went to the Assistant Superintendents in January, 2010 where there was general consensus with some edits suggested. MSDE staff sent the version to all Asst. Superintendents electronically to ensure all 24 districts could read it and provide any final edits. Tomorrow (2/19/10) they will meet.
- iii. The Asst Supt committee had the following comments, suggestions, recommendations:
 1. Don't want a test, don't want a cookie cutter approach (LEA's want to have flexibility on how to implement their program).
 2. Committee identified a number of challenges to implementing the graduation requirement.
 3. Asst. Superintendents presented two recommendations to Dr. Grasmick: any decision regarding graduation requirement should be made at local level. MSDE & LEA to work together to set goals for EL and a system of funding. No support of a state-wide graduation requirement.
- iv. Steve Barry expressed his concern about the "weakness" of the recommendations.

Jamie Baxter reminded us of Dr. Grasmick's support of this issue. What will allow Dr. Grasmick to take this to the school board and have some support?

- v. Becky explained that the Asst. Superintendents support EE and EL, but they wished to be involved from the ground-up. The Asst. Superintendents recommendation is to have each LEA produce their own program with the assistance with MSDE. There was discussion that the Assistant Superintendent memo and background report draft report had not been completed and had not been reviewed or acted upon by the entire Assistant Superintendent group. Dr. Grasmick had not yet received the memo, yet members of the Partnership had copies of the documents and had inappropriately distributed it.
 - vi. The group agreed that no one asked to have a required course and was upset that this was a focus in the report recommendation.
 - vii. Jeff Horan: Asst. Superintendents feel as if they were not included in the development of the Children in Nature plan. Dr. Maxwell was part of the team that made the recommendations. How do we prevent this miscommunication from happening again?
 - viii. Asst. Superintendents meet tomorrow (Friday, Feb 19). Any changes they want to make to the document will be made tomorrow and the group will vote acceptance or rejection of the report. After that, the report and memo are to go to Dr. Grasmick.
 - ix. Conclusion: we would like to discuss the report with the Assistant Superintendents in person. Dr. Colleen Seremet is State Asst. Superintendent of Instruction. Becky Bell will ask Dr. Seremet if we can get on the agenda within a short period of time.
- b. Update on Work Plan (Elena Takaki)
- Due to time constraints, this was not reported. See attached for electronic update.

Jamie Baxter reported that the CBT approved \$450K in EE grants.

Future meetings:

May 12th – Prince George's County (10 a.m.-noon)
M-NCPPC's Prince George's Parks and Recreation administration building

- Natural Play Spaces
- Discussion: How can continue moving forward? How do we measure our progress?

September 16th – MAEOE Headquarters, Jessup, MD (10 a.m. – noon)