



Governor Martin O'Malley's

Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature

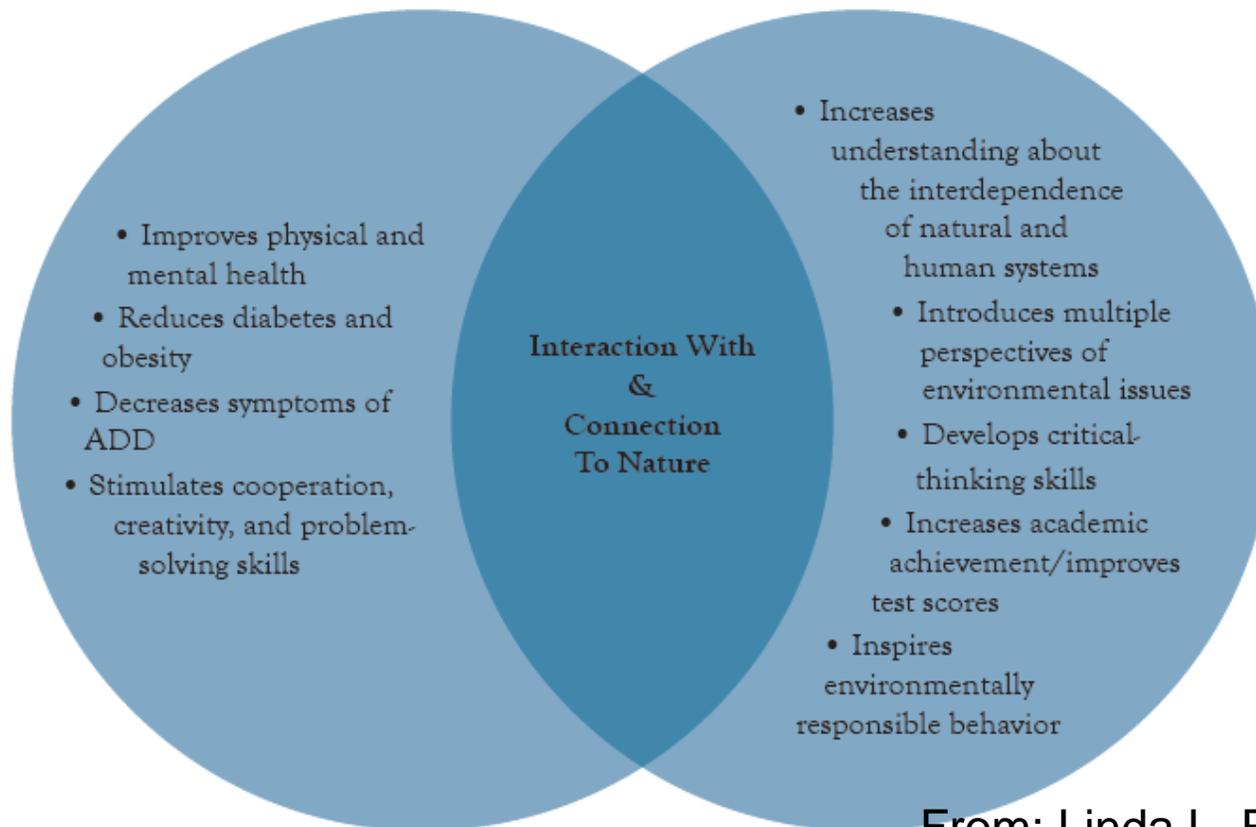
John R. Griffin, Chair
Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

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

Benefits of Leaving No Child Inside

Outdoor Play and Recreation

Environmental Education



From: Linda L. Rhoads & Anita Kraemer

Outline

- Introduction
- Many emerging benefits of CIN
- Nature deficit disorder, fueling obesity, add, depression, etc.
- Maryland has unique and diverse natural resources of great value
- Sustainability of MD's natural resources requires environmentally literate citizenry for generations to come

Outline (cont'd)

- Improved student achievement
- Complex environmental challenges and 21st century job market
- Recognizing the importance and urgency, Gov. created a Partnership for CIN
- Executive Order charge
- Overview of Process
 - E.O. Earth Day 2008
 - August Partnership Meeting
 - Workgroups Established
 - Make-up of workgroups

Outline (cont'd)

- Summary of MD's many existing programs and opportunities
- COMAR. VSC, Svc Lng, Ed Centers, MAEOE
- Open spaces, parks, recreation
- Maryland already a leader; now poised to serve as a national model as states across the country struggle to address the same issues re: env. Literacy and connecting kids to nature.
- Gap summary

Outline (cont'd)

- Despite all this, opportunity for improvement.
- National leadership means that Maryland has opportunity not only to transform education and outdoor access for Maryland, but to inspire transformation for children across the globe.
- Key Recommendations
 - Define Environmental Literacy
 - Environmental Literacy requires opportunities, experiences in both formal and informal settings, through both structured and unstructured learning, as reflected by the two components of the Governor's charge



Outline (cont'd)

- Community and Public Lands
 - Key Recommendations
- Environmental Literacy Plan
 - Key Recommendations
- Expected outcomes
- Attachments

Community & Public Lands Recommendations

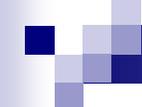
(refer to **Community and Public Lands Working Group: Overview and Goals of Seven Core Components** *Draft December 16, 2008*)

Outdoor Classroom/Service Learning

- Goals for supporting and enhancing curriculum-aligned and service learning outdoor programs are to:
 - Eliminate/reduce the identified major barriers to curriculum-aligned and service learning outdoor program participation
 - Increase capacity of state, local & national parks to provide meaningful, curriculum-aligned and service learning outdoor experience;
 - Ensure that all Maryland students have curriculum-aligned/service learning outdoor experiences at least once per year; and
 - Implement an evaluation program to quantify and provide demonstrable, cohesive data in order to:
 - Assess the benefits of outdoor education/service learning; and
 - Implement ongoing program improvement.

Schoolyard Habitat

- Overarching Goal: The outdoor classrooms of a school are as integral to learning as the indoor classrooms are. The green and grey infrastructures of a school have equal impact to the success of our students.
 - Embed Schoolyard Habitat Programs as an integrated component of the curriculum inextricably linked to the academic achievement of the school.
 - The building services branch of the 24 Maryland School systems will provide systemic support for creating and maintaining natural areas on school grounds
 - Ensure that Schoolyards reflect state's changing land ethic and commitment to improving the health of local waterways including the Chesapeake Bay; and also offer opportunity for open space, community pride, connecting families with nature, and public examples of what can be replicated on private land.



Green Initiatives: Nature Play Areas

- 1) Increase awareness of what nature play spaces are and how essential they are to the health and well-being of children.
- 2) Protect, preserve, reclaim existing and create new nature play spaces, including underutilized spaces.
- 3) Ensure access to natural play spaces.
- 4) Establish expectation that nature play spaces are an element of land-use planning and community development, parallel to typical infrastructure elements such as transportation, schools and guidelines.



Trails Connected to Public Lands

- 1) Make development of “trail system second to none” a priority for the State of Maryland by providing visible leadership that strengthens trail planning and development at all levels of government and supports public awareness and advocacy.
- 2) Increase widespread support for and engagement in trail development and promote public awareness about trail based recreation and transportation opportunities for youth and families.
- 3) Integrate trails into planning at the federal, state and local levels of government.
- 4) Increase trail funding and streamline access to the trail design, building and maintenance funds.

Access to State Park Rangers

- 1) Develop and implement a staffing plan to provide appropriate professional Ranger and seasonal Naturalist staff to plan and direct interpretive programming at all State Parks.
- 2) Enhance existing programs to successfully connect children and families with state park resources.
- 3) Provide greater coordination for children and families to experience a seamless network of opportunities in local, county, state and national parks
- 4) Provide infrastructure in state parks to support diverse interpretive programming for larger audiences.
- 5) Provide sufficient law enforcement staff to create an environment where parents, teachers and children can feel safe participating in nature-based outdoor activities.

Civic Justice Corps

- 1) Build capacity and develop sustainability of existing CJC model for statewide application.
- 2) Develop and implement new CJC model programs with Partner Providers to increase capacity of CJC program by a minimum of 700 youth by 2015.
- 3) Improve sustainability of CJC program by developing alternative funding sources to supplement state funding.

Reaching Underserved Audiences

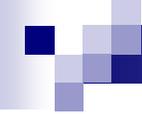
- 1) Staffing Diversity is critical to meeting the goal of enhancing outreach to underserved communities. Engage in partnerships that expand programs and services in a way that is meaningful and of value to all people.
- 2) Provide consistent and quality outreach to children (K-16) for underserved communities in order to ensure the opportunity to develop a personal connection with Maryland's natural resources.
- 3) To create and support a sustainable coalition of culturally competent partner organizations from the non-profit , private and public sectors dedicated to connecting underserved communities to opportunities with nature.
- 4) Create Employment Opportunities/Career Pathing5) Ensure Consistent, Meaningful Outdoor Environmental Experiences

Environmental Literacy

Recommendations (refer to Environmental Literacy

Workgroup Report document)

- ***Every Child Every Year:*** An annual meaningful watershed education experience as defined by the *Bay 2000 Agreement* must occur for every student every year, pre-K through grade 12.
- ***High School Graduation Requirement:*** Every student must take and pass at least a one credit high school course/offering in Environmental Literacy in order to graduate. This could be an existing course or an LEA invention but must include an action or issue investigation component.
- ***All Schools are Green Schools:*** By 20XX, every Maryland school will achieve and maintain MAEOE Green School certification.
- ***Environmental Literacy for Teachers:***
 - Require that all Maryland pre-service teacher preparation programs include a course in environmental literacy. Establish a 15 credit Environmental Literacy Endorsement for all Maryland elementary and science in-service teachers.
 - Demonstrate within the Master Plan how each LEA is addressing Environmental Literacy through teacher professional development.



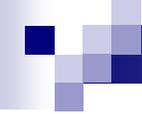
Current Efforts in Maryland Schools

- COMAR
- Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement
- Course offerings
- Career Technology Education
- Student Service Learning
- State-Aided Institutions
- District Partnerships
- Student environmental literacy levels
- Informal Education opportunities



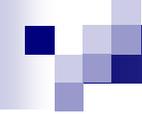
Identification of curriculum necessary to develop environmentally literate students;

- Voluntary State Curriculum
- Core Learning Goals
- Maryland State Environmental Literacy Standards
- Issues-Based Instruction
- Career Technology Education (CTE) and Adult Learning
- Student Service Learning
- Advanced Placement Environmental Science



Identification of model outdoor field and service learning experiences that can be integrated into the regular school curriculum;

- Outdoor Environmental Education Centers
- Maryland Green School Award Program
- Student Service Learning
- NorthBay
- Maryland Summer Centers for Gifted and Talented Students
- District Partnerships
- Publications



**Professional development opportunities
for in-service teachers, pre-service
teachers, and non-formal
environmental educators;**

- Environmental Education Endorsement
- PreService Education Programs
- Informal Educators Certificate



Methods to annually measure and report at the State and local level, progress of public school students toward becoming environmentally literate graduates; and

- Proposed methods of evaluation include:
- An electronic students portfolio of activities PreK-12;
- Number of students participating in Meaningful Watershed Experiences;
- The number of students graduating from environmental programs in higher education and career technology programs;
- Number of student service learning hours spent in environmental activities;
- Number of students participating in approved IEEIA programs.
- Data from state agencies that track Maryland recycling levels; miles traveled; and energy consumption.
- Data from participation in the National Environmental Literacy Assessment.



A process for revising or updating the environmental literacy plan every five years, or as needed

- Existing mechanisms provide a reporting method. In order to reduce the burden on school systems, the reporting dates of three programs can be combined.
- The current Environmental Education regulation requires school systems to certify their compliance every five years.
- MSDE requires the review of curriculum documents every five years.
- Master Plans are reviewed every five years and annually updated.

