

White House Summit on Environmental Education: April 16th, 2012

Notes from Breakout Session: Blue Group

The responses listed below are transcribed directly from the sticky notes and flip charts used during the summit breakout sessions.

Each breakout group was asked to address the following question:

What one bold new step would you recommend for all organizations to ensure that environmental education fosters lifelong environmental stewardship from K-Grey?

Major Themes: This summit should be just the beginning

- Need more tools:
 - -technology, information, resources, measurements of success, academically, environmentally, longitudinal, replicable programs & materials
- Cultural Capital –under “empowerment” – be inclusive
- Mobilization /Action Oriented:
 - Get Kids outside
 - Go to where the people are –don’t wait for the m to come to us – especially the “unexpected” groups such as NASCAR
 - Lifelong learning & action
 - Messaging from the top – speech from President
 - \$\$ is important for research and metrics, use a program like STEM to find \$\$
 - Teacher training and resources that are easy to fit in curriculum –national programs sometimes need to be localized, teacher leaders can broaden impact of EE in community
- Partnerships: build on strengths of partners
- Empowerment:
 - Need sufficient \$ to carry out ideas – especially from federal government
 - Need fed. Govt. to make EE a priority – consistent, strong messages
 - Need to consider what’s important to each community
 - Use technology to our benefit
 - Make citizens responsible for own environment
 - Local

- Service-learning
 - Community involvement
- Virtual EE Academy- national, international, certificate, empowering educators around the world
- Federal funding needed – start with the 2013 budget
- Reduce duplication of efforts
- Share resources and ideas
- Students as leaders of EE- develop their skills to do this –interpret data, leadership skills
- Integrate social science with “hard” sciences
- Civic responsibility should also be part of curriculum
- Train neighborhood leaders – project based learning
- Cultural capital = human social resources within the local community
- All EE working together to build infrastructure needed for learning- partnerships, connections, build on models
- Imbed EE into school curriculum- provide development for teachers, best practices on project-based learning
- Need to work together to share scarce resources
- Educate communities on LOCAL environmental issues
- Service learning – action oriented, community based
- Civic responsibility to monitor our environment
 - cultural shift – every citizen is a “citizen scientist”
 - Empower all levels of society
- Community Colleges:
 - Center of community
 - Serves ALL citizens
 - Leaders in EE AND Sustainability
 - Nexus for leadership with K-12 and university
 - Partnerships
- Mentorships:
 - College level mentor for high school students-work together on projects
 - Colleges, Universities, community colleges have great resources- examples for younger kids, knowledge on environmental issues
 - Pairing of mentor/mentored important – so kids can see themselves in environmental fields, more likely to feel empowered
 - Important that mentored kids are empowered to take action and go beyond awareness

- Community level action is empowering in all areas –especially urban
- Listening to the audience is important – not just telling them what to do