

This template can be modified by non-formal EE providers to share information about their programs to stakeholders.

Environmental Education Programming: Comprehensive Overview

Organization Name: [Your Organization Name]

Program:

Alignment with State Standards

At [Your Organization Name], our environmental education programs are meticulously designed to align with state standards, ensuring that the experiences we offer complement and enhance the formal education students receive in school. Our curriculum is integrated into the district's science framework, providing educators with the resources to seamlessly incorporate our outdoor activities into their classroom instruction. This alignment guarantees that our programming supports students' academic growth while achieving the learning objectives set by their schools.

Grade-Level Rigor and STEM Skills

Our programs are crafted to be both engaging and rigorous, offering students the opportunity to practice STEM skills in real-world settings. Through hands-on experiences, students are encouraged to apply their classroom knowledge to natural environments, reinforcing concepts while challenging them to think critically. Our interdisciplinary approach enables students to connect STEM learning with broader societal challenges, thereby deepening their understanding and enhancing their ability to address complex issues.

Student-Driven Learning

We prioritize student-driven learning, empowering students to take charge of their educational journeys. By providing opportunities for exploration and discovery, we encourage students to engage deeply with environmental issues that resonate with them personally. This approach not only makes learning more meaningful but also inspires students to take actionable steps toward making a positive impact on their communities.

Incorporating the Four MWEE Essential Elements

Our commitment to excellence in environmental education is reflected in our incorporation of the four MWEE (Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences) essential elements: issue definition, outdoor field experiences, synthesis and conclusions, and environmental action. Each program is centered on local environmental phenomena, allowing students to engage in hands-on investigations and field studies that are directly relevant to their communities. By

integrating local knowledge and requiring students to take action on environmental issues, we help them develop the skills and confidence needed to contribute positively to their surroundings.

Increasing Awareness of Environmental Careers

Our programs are intentionally designed to introduce students to a wide array of environmental careers, providing them with opportunities to develop and practice skills relevant to these fields. Through career exploration activities, we help students envision potential futures in environmental professions, understanding the pathways to achieving their goals. Moving forward, we plan to expand these activities, further aligning them with Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways to better prepare students for the demands of the workforce.

Adaptation and Differentiation Based on Student Needs

Inclusivity is a core principle at **[Your Organization Name]**. Our programs are designed to be adaptable and differentiated, ensuring that every student can engage fully with our environmental education experiences. We maintain clear communication with classroom teachers to tailor our programming to meet the diverse needs of their students. For example, in our **[name of program]**, we offer varying levels of engagement, from guided activities for those who need more support to advanced tasks for students ready for deeper challenges. Additionally, our field sites are carefully selected to be accessible, and we provide on-site programs for students with mobility challenges or other needs.

Comprehensive Safety Protocols

Safety is a top priority at **[Your Organization Name]**. We have established comprehensive safety protocols, including well-documented procedures for emergencies, with all staff trained in first aid, CPR, and other relevant safety measures. These protocols are regularly updated and cover a wide range of scenarios, from severe weather to medical emergencies. Furthermore, our culturally responsive approach ensures that our programs are inclusive, taking into account the diverse backgrounds of our students. This includes offering materials in multiple languages and maintaining a low adult-to-student ratio of 10:1 to ensure personalized attention and support.

Collaboration with School Districts

Our success is built on strong partnerships with school district leaders and teachers. We collaborate closely to identify opportunities for outdoor experiences that align with educational goals. By focusing on sustainable outdoor experiences that can take place on school grounds or within walking distance, we enhance the accessibility and longevity of our programs. We also build capacity within the school system by providing co-teaching opportunities and empowering formal educators to confidently lead outdoor experiences. Our willingness to adapt and modify our programs to meet the unique needs of each district further demonstrates our commitment to collaboration.

Professional Development

We are deeply invested in the professional growth of our staff and the educators we partner with. All staff members receive ongoing professional development in key areas such as state standards, culturally responsive teaching, and student-driven inquiry. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) training is mandatory for all staff, ensuring that our programs are inclusive and equitable. For participating teachers and administrators, we offer a range of PD opportunities, including flexible formats and timeframes, practical MWEE implementation models, and incentives such as PD credits and stipends. This comprehensive support ensures that all educators are equipped to bring meaningful environmental education into their classrooms.