

NOAA Education Council Meeting

Date/Time: February 18, 2009 (1:00–4:00 pm)
Location: SSMC3, Room 10836
Dial-in: 866.901.0711
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AGENDA

- 1:00 Welcome/Opening Remarks
- 1:10 Virtual Worlds - D. Parks (*informational*)
(30 minutes presentation/15 minutes discussion & questions)
- 1:55 NOAA Education Strategic Plan Update/Close Out - S. Storck (*informational*)
(10 minutes update & discussion)
- 2:05 Education Implementation Plan - S. Storck/C. Michalopoulos (*input requested*)
(presentation and discussion)
- 3:30 Updates & Announcements

Upcoming Council Meetings:

March 11, 2009

April 15, 2009

Attendance

In person: Christos Michalopoulos (acting chair - CM), Kirk Beckendorf (KB), Maryann Bozza(MB), Lexie Brown (LB), Paula Keener-Chavis (PKC), Ron Gird (RG), Doria Grimes (DG), Atziri Ibanez (AI) , Nina Jackson (NJ), Luis Leandro (LL), Paulo Maurin (PM), Carrie McDougall(CMc), John McLaughlin (JM), Frank Niepold (FN), Derek Parks (DP), Dan Pisut, Bronwen Rice (BR), Jacqueline Rousseau (JR), Stacey Rudolph (SR), Peg Steffen (PS), Steve Storck (SSt), Kate Thompson (KT), Sharon Walker (SW), Carla Wallace (CW)

On the phone: Bob Hansen (BH), Louisa Koch (LK - Chair)

Announcements

- CM: I would like to start this meeting by welcoming Lexie Brown to the Office of Education. Lexie is one of our many prestigious Knauss Sea Grant fellows and we are very excited to have her on board. I would also like to welcome Luis Leandro to his first official Education Council meeting as the Executive Secretary, and express my thanks again to Jen Faught for all her help and assistance with the Education Council.
- LK (Update on SES summit 6 retreat): Discussions focused on increasing synergy across NOAA. We are lucky to have Nancy Sutley to lead the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Nancy was present at the summit and spoke for a few minutes. She mentioned she was getting up to speed and it was clear that NOAA was on her radar. The Deputy Under Secretary Mary Glackin announced that Tom Karl was heading the anticipated National Climate Service. The current plan is to have the Climate Service fall within OAR; however, Mary mentioned that the Climate Service has a "NOAA-wide feel" to it. People speculate that other agencies/departments such as the Department of Energy and NASA will also have increasingly larger roles to play with regard to Climate Change. Finally, "Harmonic" identified climate as a good overarching theme.

Virtual Worlds – D. Parks (informational)

Derek was introduced to the council by CMc. D. Parks briefed the council on Second Life and NOAA's Virtual Worlds. His goal was to engage the council on this project and seek sponsorship.

- FN: I appreciate you mentioning your efforts to increase coordination and communication. Is second life the right program to meet all the objectives we have? D. Parks: Second life has a lot to offer, but is only one of several technologies available.
- PS: In this Virtual Worlds effort, are you also including online games and massive multiplier games? D. Parks: Yes, that is the plan. Virtual life is not the only thing available and we intend to include and utilize other resources/technologies available in this collaborative effort.

- AI: Have you made an assessment of what has been developed on overall collaborative efforts in other projects/services? Also, do you have a targeted audience for this? D. Parks: Our plan is to build on existing services. This effort has only started recently and we want to make sure we utilize all that is available to us out there as well. We have not decided what our primary audience is, but will look at this and tailor our priorities based on the requests we receive from the agency.
- FN: I have heard Second Life is a growing asset and that the community is evolving to a new platform. I have also heard that the integration of myspace and facebook is where this is going next. Is Virtual World expandable? In other words, can it be built into existing social networking programs? D. Parks: That is the plan. Before doing so, we need to receive feedback from the agency as to which priorities we should follow.
- SS: CIO office is doing its own study on how to take the technological side of things (similar to Virtual World).
- CM: So, what if you don't get what you need? The timeframe you propose is very ambitious and your focus is clearly narrower than ours. Do you have a backup plan? D. Parks: Well, we are ok with failing and going back to the drawing board if need be. The critical thing here is to receive feedback from others in order to build on currently existing options.
- CM: The PPBES process has been pushed back this year, so in terms of planning for funding you can take advantage of this delay if for some reason you need more time to work on things. Additionally, you should think in terms of what the Education Council can provide to you. The council is currently discussing the Implementation Plan, so the timing is good.
- PKC: Eric has begun a virtual tour of the NOAA Okeanos Explorer and raised the concern that Second Life must not be the only method used. If the Education Council is interested in pursuing a virtual option, this has already been developed for the Okeanos Explorer. We can discuss this later in more detail.
- CMc: There is a growing interest in the broader idea of NOAA collaborating with Web 2.0. We need to distill what is unique about Virtual World that is different from other virtual capabilities that already exist i.e., facebook, twitter. D. Parks: I think the advantage that Virtual Worlds has is that it's extremely visual, which makes it an excellent tool for educators to use.
- PS: FYI - I wanted you to all know that there currently is a contract out there that NOS is sponsoring to test virtual platform.
- JM: I am glad to see that you called out and referred the NOAA Education Strategic Plan. We mentioned Virtual Worlds in our plan. There is a callout for using Virtual Worlds for education issues.

NOAA Education Strategic Plan update – S. Storck (informational)

ST: We just recently completed the 2nd final version of the plan and finished the picture captions. The final version of the plan is being reviewed one more time and we should have approval by the end of the week. The final PDF version should be complete by later this week and printed copies should be available by March.

- CM: I wanted to express thanks to Steve for his leadership on this effort in engaging the Education council and steering committee for their input.
- SS: I am pleased with the imagery. I really think it complements well what we intended to say in the report.
- PKC: What is the distribution plan for this report? ST: We just put together a plan (BH has taken the lead on this). The primary distribution of the plan will be electronic, but we are planning on printing 1000 copies for right now.
- CM: I am concerned that 1000 copies may not be enough. We should discuss this further. Steve will send out a distribution list, but we need to make a decision on this soon.
- SW: I am sure we could also get help from the line offices to help cover the cost for additional prints.
- FN: Who needs to read our plan? Congress?
- CM: Well we certainly need to send copies to congress given that we were mandated by congress to do this report through the COMPETES Act. Nonetheless, electronic copies are always an option especially given that we are an environmentally driven agency and thus should support green initiatives.
- PKC: This is certainly an important product for us to send to a broader audience. There are a lot of eyes on our agency for education efforts.
- KT - How will we display the report on the web?
- SW – What is the cost associated with producing and reviewing the strategic plan? In terms of how much time we all put in? Maybe this is a good exercise to go through and include in the PPBES process for Education initiatives?
- CM – Yes, thanks Sharon. I think this is a great idea and probably a good exercise to do.
- Several other Council members commented on how they thought it was important for us to do this.

Education implementation plan – S. Storck/C. Michalopoulos (input requested)

The purpose of this discussion session was to go over a tentative outline and timeframe for putting together the Implementation Plan. The Steering Committee had recently met on 2/13/09 to brainstorm some ideas on how to proceed with the Implementation Plan. This was mostly an opportunity to engage the Council on these ideas and vote on whether the Council agrees with the proposed plan and timeframe. The specifics and details of how we will put together the Implementation Plan will be discussed during the retreat in June.

- FN: What if there is a last minute change in the 5-year plan? CM: The idea is to do this Implementation Plan every 5 years. If major issues come up we will have to update and change the plan accordingly.

- DG: Why don't we integrate the implementation plan deadline with that of the Strategic Plan as written in the COMPETES Act? CM: Typically congress requests these reports to be updated every 3 years or so, so we are trying to keep on track. We are trying to keep with a 3-5 year update plan for implementation. Also, we need to capitalize with momentum now that we are all into this.
- PS: I don't think we should allow the National Academies of Science (NAS) to dictate what NOAA does.
- CM: I would love to see this plan on the Annual Guidance Memorandum (AGM) of PPBES. It would be great to see if our priorities are identified. It would be nice to have an Annual Operating Plan (AOP) for this to keep track of progress.
- PKC: I got a set of guiding questions from NAS. The questions they asked made it clear that they are not aware of how far we have gone with the Education Strategic Plan. This is why I don't think they should be informing us.
- Frank: The 5-year timeframe for the Implementation Plan is a problem because we are now entering the FY12 PPBES cycle. We are now in FY09. So, if the 5-year plan is way outside of the PPBES deadline, how do we even know what is implementable at that point in time?
- CM: This is the reality of things. If PPBES goes away, we will adapt and do something different. We will be looking at the 3-year horizon for funding no matter what. In term of making it a reality, we just need to continue to work well together on this and keep optimistic. We need to believe in this as well and we will make it happen.
- KT: How successful has education been in the PPBES process? Not very. This is exactly why we need to do this. In order to get more visibility and eventually resources for education purposes. NOAA education needs to increase its visibility and this is a good way to do this.
- CM: What we really need to know at this stage is if you all are ok with these tentative dates (referring mostly to the proposed retreat in June 2-4 and general Implementation Plan timeframe)? No one said they had any problems. PKC: There could be a possible conflict with another meeting that is taking place in early June. We need to look further at this timeframe to avoid conflicts.

Action Item 1 (Suggested by CM): We should consider doing some sort of performance measure training for the Ed Council in the April/May Council meeting.

- PKC: Slide 10 (literature review slide) is very overwhelming to me. Under NRC reports. A lot of these reports are very long and detailed. How will someone be able to review these reports? CM: We need someone that is an expert in this topic to review the reports and see if there are pieces there that we are not aware of and should include. The steering committee will be essential to make sure our list is complete. I think we can do this. JM: There are several reports that people have already done some work on digesting that we can include and use as guidance. PKC: I agree, but this will be a challenge, especially with reports focusing on underrepresented and underserved groups. CM: I don't think this will be that difficult. A lot of this work has already been done and we have no choice but to do this. FN: Keep in mind that a lot of folks have already done similar evaluations as well.

Action Item 2 (proposed by AI): We should consider forming a small working group to assist with performance evaluation for the Implementation Plan. CM: This could be a good idea, let's think about this further. Luis will send out an email to the council to solicit membership for this working group later on if we decide to do this.

- SSt: The facilitator for the Implementation Plan retreat is supposed to have expertise to combine ideas from everyone.
- SW: Going back to the reports consideration (slide 10). These reports usually have a "recommendation" section. We in Sea Grant look to align our documents with relevant existing reports. I am guessing this list will grow to something like 20 reports. However, most reports are probably complementary, so this is probably not that big of a deal. CM: I agree, and we need to make sure we take into account what other reports have to say.
- AI: What collection methods will we use for performance measures? This is something we should think about prior to the retreat. CM: Absolutely! This is why we may want to have an AOP for reporting our successes and keeping track of progress. The majority of the measurements will be performance based.
- SSt: We also want to make sure that we get feedback from constituents at the task level (slide 13).
- KT: If we develop an AOP, are these tied to the Office of Education or more broadly NOAA Education? CM: Great question. Unless we decide collectively to ask for money through the formal PPBES process for NOAA Education-wide activities, which would be VERY challenging, we probably would do it just for Office of Education. Maybe our office could have the pot of money and manage resources accordingly. FN: Yes, it is virtually impossible to collect data on what all the different programs/lines are doing on any given topic, say climate for example.
- CM: We need to come up with money for doing performance measures for NOAA-wide education efforts.
- KT: How do you hold us all accountable for this? It will be very challenging to come up with NOAA-wide performance measures.
- PS: We need to look for a common way to gather information. Maybe the Office of Education needs to take the lead on this. Develop a common collection system that the Education Council can use to their service.
- AI: Maybe we need to talk more about what we want to come out of the Implementation Plan. Should we focus on where the synergies and collaborations take place on the different goals? One or two performance indicators (outcomes). MC: I think this is an opportunity to think outside of the box and change things that need to be changed. The idea you present is safe, it's how we have been doing things so far, but we are missing the opportunity to make things better. AI: I agree, but what I am saying is we should focus on only 4/5 things and do them well instead of having so many different topics to address all at once.
- PS: Hopefully this plan will help us, the Office of Education and other programs to get additional resources for education.
- AI: I feel as though we are not clear as to what is coming out of the Implementation Plan. CM: We definitely will need help from each program in figuring out where most of the resources are going to. During the Implementation Plan retreat we can discuss this in more detail. We can also discuss the literature review issue and pick the two/three priorities we want to address first. This is the easy part. The hard part will be to find out how we will measure

performance and keep us accountable. The facilitator will help with this and the steering committee will also hopefully give additional guidance.

- Ideally by end of the day we can have approval from the Council on what we are proposing today.
- KT: I think it will take much longer than 4 implementation plan retreat days to get this all figured out. CM: I don't really expect major breakthrough areas. Also, I think if we have the information ahead of time we can keep on track and stick to the 3-day schedule.
- CM: All we are looking for at this time is a general approval from the Council that we are on track. Also, that the Council agrees with the idea of having a retreat in the June.
- Kate: I am ok with the proposed idea. I just want to warn everyone that coming up with a performance measure system that works well across all the relevant programs in NOAA will be a huge challenge.
- PS and KT: There must be a physical way to hold us accountable.
- FN: How do we transmit the educational requirements that other programs have, such as corals, SG etc... I am sensitive that climate, given how much focus it has received recently, will overwhelm priorities that other programs have. I am sure that there will be a category of activities that will not make it to the list of our top three priorities.
- CM: We can make a note that the three top areas we decide to address first are not inclusive of all education and environmental literacy efforts that we intend to address.

Council Vote (to proceed with the retreat and Implementation Plan as discussed today): Approved.

Updates and Announcements

- CM: The steering committee will be meeting bi-monthly from now until the retreat in order to prepare us ahead of time. We will pass on any recommendations to the Council.
- SW: Previously I had sent Jon Lilley several documents for soliciting scientists to help update the Ocean Today Kiosk. I would like to encourage everyone to solicit scientists that they think will consider helping out with this effort. I will resend these guidelines again to Luis so he can forward these to the Council.
- RG: The Great Falls Public School District partnered with the National Forest Service, National Weather Service, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, and Get Fit Great Falls to write a grant proposal sponsored by the Forest Service, called More Kids in the Woods (MKIW). The goal of the grant is to instill an appreciation and greater understanding of the natural environment and the impacts that man's actions have on the future of our natural resources. The grant targeted approximately 900 fifth grade students under the age of twelve (Please contact Luis Leandro if you would like more information on this partnership and specifics on lesson plans, activities etc...)
- PKC: I wanted to remind everyone that in addition to covering Ocean Exploration, I am also the OAR liaison for the Education Council. I have passed on to OAR leadership that we are working on the Implementation Plan and other Council activities. If you recall, we developed a working group to come up with criteria for Education Council presentations. We have come up with a few suggestions and are ready to present our conclusions on this in the near future. Perhaps at the next Education Council meeting in March.
- PS: Thank you for all the DVDs and for the support from all the programs on this. The "Estuaries game" will be ready to for release soon and a press release will be made for this.
- DG: I am retiring soon! My last day in NOAA is April 11. Neal Kaske will be replacing me and represent the NOAA Library in the Education Council.
- KT: The Sanctuaries Strategic Plan is out to the regions to provide comments. We are having a meeting in two weeks to discuss all of these comments. Once the plan is adopted we will be working in our own implementation plan as well, and how it fits to performance measures, AOPs etc... A lot of you are mentioned in this plan, just so you are aware. On climate, I need to talk to FN to make sure climate is incorporated into our environmental literacy. Oceans live.org is being moved to the University of Rhode Island. I feel that oceans live could be our portal for people to go in and view. This is a good strong way to do what we need to do and make ocean literacy a priority
- DP: Our website will be live next week.
- PS: I will be out on annual leave for part of next month and will not be here for the next Education Council meeting in March. NSTA meetings – we should not use this space for NOAA internal interaction. This should be a place for us to interact with teachers only.
- FN: The U.S. climate change science program has instituted a planning process for this administration. There is a strong interagency climate change document. This Literacy document is close to being completed. Jane Lubchenco announced that she is interested in putting together a Climate Change Service. We need to think about how education will play into this.
- PM: The Coral Program will have a piece in the Oceans Hall. It is a Hawaiian painting and it's an interactive piece.
- CMc: The grantee opportunity for the Science On a Sphere network is closing tomorrow, so we anticipate receiving a lot of applications.