NOAA Education Council Meeting

Date/Time:	December 19, 2012 / 1:00–4:00 pm
Location:	SSMC3, Room 14836
Dial-in:	866.901.0711
Passcode:	8134683
Contact:	Lisa Iwahara (202) 482-3139, Erin Sams (202) 482-9183

Adobe Connects Link to Meeting: http://connectpro46305642.adobeconnect.com/edcouncil/

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AGENDA (updated)

1:00 Welcome/Opening remarks - Louisa Koch (5 min)

1:05 Council decision: Way-forward with WGs - Lisa Iwahara (40 min)

- Confirm lead(s) and WG members
- Agree on initial charge and when they will report back to the Council next
- Agree upon new Co-Comm membership and charge

1:45 SEE/Budget data call results and lessons learned (*Discussion*) - John Baek & Lisa Iwahara

- Presentation (15 min)
- Focus group-style discussion (45 min)

2:45 Updates and announcements (15 min)

3:00 Break/Holiday Cheer! (30 min) in Room 14817

3:30 Adjourn

Upcoming Council meeting dates:
January 16, 2013
February 20, 2013
March 20, 2013

Attendance

In person: Louisa Koch (LK), Christos Michalopoulos (CM), Erin Sams (ES), Lisa Iwahara (LI), John Baek (JB), Marlene Kaplan (MK), John McLaughlin (JMc), Molly Harrison (MH), Maria Murray (MMu), Bronwen Rice (BR), Sarah Schoedinger (SSc), Sarah Yue (SY), Molly Harrison (MH), Bruce Moravchik (BM), Stacey Rudolph (SR), Chelsea Berg (CB), Ron Gird (RG), Bree Murphy (BMu), Liz McMahon (LM), Steve Storck (SSt), Judy Koepsell (JK), FN

On the phone/chat: Seaberry Nachbar (SN), Paula Keener (PK), Osaretin Obaseki (OO), Shannon Sprague (SSp), Sarah Yue (SY), Maria Murray (MMu), Barbara Wallace (BW), Atziri Ibanez (AI)

Presenters/guests: n/a

Welcome/Opening Remarks (LK)

- We have not yet received the OMB passback due to the negotiations over the budget: OMB doesn't want to show their hand for FY14 until the larger issues have been resolved. President Obama may be providing an update as early as today…so we'll just have to wait and see.
- I was asked to brief Dr. Titley on our SEE Implementation Plan along with the rest of the Champions of NOAA's Strategic Goals and Enterprise Objectives. I presented on behalf of the overall Engagement Enterprise Objective representing Education, External Affairs, Regional Collaboration, and International Affairs. I used the tagline that the three parts of the Engagement Enterprise are regional, international and education and I described us all as NOAA Ambassadors. I think this actually is very fitting because the regional offices are the NOAA ambassadors, trying to pull together the NOAA story. In education, we serve as ambassadors to the communities. Internationally, we are truly supporting the ambassadorial role. I also emphasized the high return on investment in terms of our constituents' good will toward NOAA. Dr. Titley called out partnerships as part of the solution in achieving our mission in the current fiscal climate.

- The draft Blue Book is posted on the Education Council intranet page. We have given this to budget and are expecting to get comments back as soon as tomorrow and they're hoping to wrap it up near the end of the year. We will be asking for feedback when that happens.

Council decision: Way-forward with WGs - Lisa Iwahara (40 min)

See PowerPoint.

- M & E
  - Should confirm adjustments and updates **by January 11th**
  - **No further comments on recommended action – approved.**

- Regional Education Policy
  - SSp: I'm asking for a month reprieve to come back with milestones in March because in February I'm going to ask the Council for subject-matter priorities.
    - LI: So the modification is to change February to March. Any objections?
    - **No objections in room or phone. Move forward with change.**

- NGSS
  - FN: The integration of NGSS and the regional education policy I could see as a discrete task for a short period of time, but then possible merging into the regional down the road because of how the NGSS works.
  - MH: I agree. It's definitely something that's going to be important at the regional level. Peg is an overlap with that group right now.
  - FN: Some things are moving much more nimbly that others, and I'm not sure how the Council would look at those time differences.
    - LK: Shannon has already talked about coming back to talk in February about priorities and she has highlighted NGSS as a priority for Regional, so there is a clear next talking point.
  - **No further comments on recommended action – approved.**

- NODE
  - LI: any comments on this one?
  - **No comments on recommended action – approved.**

- Partnerships
  - AI: Could you clarify a little more what the --- is supposed to be?
    - JB: It's an internal evaluation process that's led by program staff (generally a smaller team) with support from an evaluator. The purpose is to do an internal evaluation – designing a study, scoping it out, etc.—and two of the key features are that you focus primarily on internal data sources (depending on your questions) and the team analyses your data, coming up with actionable recommendations to the Council, in terms of how we want to frame things in terms of partnerships. Ideally, it's a year-long process to complete all the phases.
    - PK: How is the evaluator selected?
    - JB: Through a partnership (laughs). Diana was someone we met at the AEA conference. We were interested in bringing her on board to take advantage of her NOAA- level evaluation interests and expertise. We were able to negotiate some of her time to do this. Also, she's made this connection back to the original NRC study where there were some recommendations to investigate our partnerships.
  - AI: So, the scope of the study that she's proposing to do is going to replace the survey that the partnership group was thinking of doing?
    - JB: We would revisit the survey, and it would be part of a larger inquiry. The issue for me when I looked at the survey I was 'What questions is it really trying to answer?'. We can collect a bunch of data, but I wasn't sure what we'd really be able to get out of it. Using this process frames that much stronger and we'll have a better sense of what we want out of that once we start to investigate this.
  - **No further comments on recommended action – approved.**

- Distance Learning
  - LI: any comments on this one?
  - **No comments on the recommended action – approved.**

- Recommended Coordinating Committee Membership
  - AI: Is it okay to have a back-up, so that for example Brie could attend in my place?
    - LI: If at least one of the leads attends the Co-Com meeting, that is fine.
    - CM: We'd be happy to have back-ups listed as well.
  - JK: No NWS listed for Co-Com; I wasn't able to be present at the November meeting
  - LK: Molly, have you spoken to Peg about Judy serving as the third chair for the NGSS WG?
  - MH: I'm happy to discuss this with Peg.

- MK: This (the Education Council) is the body where we need every line office represented. I'm not sure if we need every office represented in the Co-Comm.
- FN: I do think that there's some business of the Co-Com that would benefit from having a wide perspective. The programs of the NWS are distinct enough that their representation might be a good idea.
- LK: Anyone on the phone have anything to say about this issue?
  - PK: I don't.
- CW: We had an internal meeting at the NWS and we were discussing this. Ron sent a letter to Louisa. We will contact the leads and co-leads to express our interest in working with the groups as well.
- LK: that was a great list. (LI: and it was shared with the leads.)
- LK: Let's talk with Peg and allow her to weigh in. We can table this as an issue that's been raised and needs to be addressed and we can continue the discussion next month, or sooner.

Further comments on the WGs

- AI: I know we have talked previously about communicating back to the regions. I suppose that that's already echoed because we would be trying to add membership to try and represent regions and people in the field. Correct?
  - LI: The idea was to branch out for the workgroup members, going beyond the Council for each workgroup membership because of the Council's limited capacity.
  - CW: I that would be a great idea because we have so many WFOs in the regions and I'm sure we can get some participation from there.
  - LK: Ok, but for that to happen we need programs with potential regional participants to take Lisa's email and send it out to the people you think would be interested. Right now we have programs signed up for working groups but we need people and names. It's a wonderful thing for us to get more regional input and a broader perspective. We really count on the Ed Council members to make that connection.
  - CW: I can talk to Ron and Judy and we can discuss this - review our list of potential members again and come to an agreement.
  - LI: It would be difficult for the WG leads to track down everyone; I think it would be helpful for the Council members to take that coordination on and be the point person with the respective WG leads.

- RG: The NWS had another comment for the NODE task. It was a dilemma for us because we thought there was a possibility for future expansion of the NODE because of our work with the AMS. With teacher community, the Data Stream project provides that real-time weather stream for learning. We wanted to join, but we don't want to join at the current charter; when it becomes an expansion to include other sciences we think the NWS could contribute to the real-time data sets for AMS teachers.
  - JK: If the title could include Data In the Classroom…
    - RG: There's a provision for that.
  - AI: If regionally, yes, we were thinking it would have to be broadened to capture the rest of our efforts. It was more of the fact that we were trying to narrow down what we would be able to accomplish in the next couple months. The idea is there and we've started a conversation about building out a portal to allow that to be better represented. Ron, we can all get together and work through this in the next couple months. I like the idea!
    - RG: Great!
  - PK: There's a communications group that meets monthly, the Com-Com, that I used to participate in monthly. I would give monthly updates on what the Education Council was doing. I don't know if that is taking place now, but that was also a really good way to communicate Council business down through the lines.
    - LK: I don't know if Bob Hansen is attending those meetings anymore…
    - MK: Yes, he is.
    - LK: We'll check in with Bob when he returns from Africa and see that the appropriate information is communicated.
  - MMu: Even if Bob isn't transferring the information, Rochelle Plutchak should be able to.

- Way forward (Lisa summarizes Council decisions)
  - AI: That was a great summary and I would like to ask for an amendment for the NODE group. If you could give us one month and change that due date to February…
    - LI: Okay, we'll change NODE to February as well.
  - SN: Have we discussed a maximum number of members for each working group?
    - LI: We have not explicitly discussed this. For the regional WG, we've talked about a tiered membership, but a group of, say, 30 would be unwieldy. So we're leaving it up to the WG leads to manage their work groups. Other thoughts?
    - LK: So Shannon, are you comfortable with managing the membership?
      - SSp: I think it's going to evolve over time. Since we've had a few meetings, we have a pretty good understanding of who at the first call was interested. I think we're fine.
    - LK: Does anyone need Lisa's email again? I want everyone to have to that so that they can forward it or translate the message.
      - (No response.)
      - LK: Excellent, thanks for helping us get to your networks.

Council Decision:

- Recommended next steps for all the working groups were agreed to with some modifications on when they will report back to the Council
- M&E will report back in January; NGSS, NODE, Partnerships, and Distance Learning will report back in February, and Regional will report back in March.
- Council members will be responsible for working with their networks and the leads to identify individuals to be on each working group as appropriate by January 11.
- Recommendation on Co-Comm membership was agreed to with the caveat that discussions on NWS representation need to be revisited.

SEE/Budget data call results and lessons learned (*Discussion*) - John Baek & Lisa Iwahara (60 min)

See PowerPoint.

- MH: I just wanted to point out some additional information for the Fisheries number. We overall decreased in budget, but there were two significant programs that had not reported in previous years. So, it looks like we had almost an extra million dollars, but we did not. I can get that exact number to you if you're interested.
- LK: We need a footnote on that because it definitely stands out or is it possible to retroactively estimate the FY11 number, so that we have apples to apples?
    - CM: Except now we have in the Blue Book a published number so I would go with the asterisk.
    - LK: Doing it apples to apples with an asterisk I think is the best way to go forward.
    - CM: We can do both, but we definitely need an asterisk.
    - LK: To me, doing it apples to apples and having an asterisk is the best way to go forward to you don't raise the questions…
- JB: And that's a good segue into a lot of these numbers. Some of these increases and decreases are based on different reporting by the programs.
    - SSt: The direct bills for data Stream and other education projects…do those budget dollars make it to this pie (diagram) or is this just programmatic dollars?
    - CM: I don't think they do. If they are captured they are captured under the Office of Education.
    - LK: We captured probably only the OEd component.
    - SSt: Are the other offices capturing that for their programs? That's a fair amount of money that we're not reporting. Just an observation.
        - CM: It's about a million dollars, it's significant.

- FN: So the sub-line office slices of the pie are still being reported, but just not represented here?
    - JB: right.
- FN: Would it be appropriate here to put the FY11 chart next to the FY12 chart? There's no way to see that change.
    - LK: But if John's right in that we're capturing different program numbers, then the differences are really more anomalous than they are representative.
- FN: What I'm trying to get at is that there are some reductions of programs that are going on that are having impacts on our outputs. I'm wondering how we convey that – how do we do that and *do* we do that?
- CM: My sense is that Budget may push back on that. The primary purpose of the Blue Book is to report the President's Budget Request (FY14) and there are some political sensitivities to that. We can ask if we can show a trend… I believe this year's data was collected with much more rigor and a stricter definition, so I would view this as our baseline. We can ask to see if they will let us follow trends, but I will not be surprised if they say no because this is an administration document.
    - FN: I appreciate what you said, but the reality is that some very key programs have pretty much been zeroed out.

- LI: The reason why we chose to show you FY12 actuals and the FY13 estimate only is because the estimation gets fuzzier the farther along you go. The reduction story was clearest between 12 and 13. This is also the type of storyline I get asked about all the time from the Budget Office. In showing these types of trends, it was helpful to have those extra comments about why certain programs were zeroed out.
- SN: Can you remind me again- was that in the form or another email?
    - LI: That was in the form.
    - JB: Everyone was asked to say how they made the estimates they did. The information you all provided in that field on the form was extremely helpful.
- CM: I want to make sure everyone understands that the number FY13 is an estimate, based on the President's Budget Request, and that assumes some of our programs have been zeroed out. When the time comes and we have enacted amounts for FY13 we should go back and connect. To get back to Frank's point, I do see the value of telling our story with real data, but I'm not sure if the Blue Book is the best vehicle for that story. If we produce our own report – doesn't have to be elaborate – we can show whatever trends we want. I just want to be sensitive to the fact that we are using an official NOAA publication with a very set purpose to piggy-back and tell our story. I don't dispute the value of us being able to communicate our declining trends and having to do more with less.
- FN: We had talked about arming you, Louisa, our champion, with the information you need to do the work you need to do and the Blue Book is a piece of that but isn't all of that. Do you have what you need to tell the story or do you need more from us?
- LK: I think more would be better. Increased solidity with the numbers in 12 versus 11 and 10, puts us on a much stronger footing.

- BMu: One thing that's hard for NERRS is trying to tell this story since we have been zeroed out. It felt arbitrary the way that we had to come up with our estimates. If we could come up with a little more consistency in developing our estimates.
    - SN: I would agree; I found it hard to come up with the estimates in a logical way as well.
    - LK: In previous years, we've refused to show any estimates because much of the education budget is at the discretion of the leadership of individual programs and we can't estimate even in the President's Budget what resources are available for education.
    - CM: Yeah, except that now that we have those eight metrics, and we're reporting on the SEE Process and in the AOP, both of those documents' metrics require that you provide estimates for the out years. The guidance on the budget is very clear, it's unambiguous. The point is how do we actually estimate the numbers? There's not much we can do to standardize this because each office has to make their own assumptions, of how this artificial target will impact their metrics.
    - LK: But if the feeling of the educators who are putting these numbers together is that this is an arbitrary process, it's an important point to discuss.
    - FN: Maybe a proposal is that, under the monitoring & evaluation group, prior to the data call, we facilitate a conversation about these types of issues.
    - SN: It would also provide consistency across each program.
    - JB: We have some initial data on that now, the explanations of how they did do that.
- MMu: I'm looking for an explanation as to why the last two performance measures have a zero percent change. Also, in order to tell that lag story for post-secondary and degrees awarded, would it be helpful to project out for those two, the years that actually would be impacted?
    - JB: To answer the first question, because the data collected on visitors is collected in a different way, we didn't collect out year estimates. The visitors to ISE institutions are based on annual attendance estimates for particular institutions.
    - MK: We've got these in place, so if you're not putting money in you expect it to be flat; if you're putting money in you expect it to go up.
    - JB: Well, this is also not purely those institutions that we are funding. We have direct access to the raw data, but we didn't have time to circle back and run estimates on the out year data. Web traffic is another data set that is difficult to track. And for your second comment, you make a good point in highlighting where the impact happens in those stories.
    - MK: If I could add to that… one piece of the case that we're not making is that when students have a lag time, you've made commitments to students and if you drop the funding it's not clear that you are able to sustain those students out in the out years. An effective case to make to budget people is that once you've made these commitments you should stick with them.

- FN: There has to be a better way to represent these numbers to better tell the story.
    - JB: I agree. I had a day to put this together. There should be a way to create better visualizations, maybe parse the difference between new program performance and those that have real decreases.

- BMu: Those critical aspects of having a footnote are important in basic pie charts like these.
    - JB: These are not of high quality data and are not for external use.
- FN: How do you know there is data missing?
    - JB: They reported an overall number, but not any disaggregated numbers.
- [CM sidenote: dots on Geographic participation simply reference state-by-state participation, not georeferenced nor sized based on level of participation.]

- JB: Any final comments on the data review?

- SN: Do you feel like you guys are getting the info you need to tell our stories, or do you think there's still work that needs to be done on the data sheets?

    - JB: I'm just the collector, not the story teller.
    - LK: I think we're moving forward, but we have lots of improvement to do. Having half the data missing, representing only half of our programs, makes me leery of representing, for example, the regional impact of our programs. That's one that we've wanted to show for a long time and I'm still not sure it's ready. The CoSTEM had a meeting yesterday and one of the major agreements, one of the slams for STEM education in a federal agency is that there's no good way to show that it's effective, to report on it. John Holdren asked for the federal agencies to come together and assess the evaluations that had been done and try to make some statements that we know we are having. This is a long discussion, and we're nowhere near being done. The answer that NIH gave was that we need to continue to encourage programs to do more thorough evaluations. I don't think that the answer is for every program to be doing a double blind comparison study. We have groups (NHHS, NSF) interested in doing the research needed to help us answer the questions we don't know. We're making tremendous progress and we're much better able to capture our contribution. We are harder not to hear now.

Switching to a discussion on the data call experience

- Prompt 1: What is the biggest benefit received from the data call?
    - FN: I could see from the data reported that a lot of people were working on multiple topics across what we would normally think were not their primary topic.
    - Brie: It allowed us to look at how we tell our story. We realized that we were not able to tell our regional story very well. The state-by-state geographic data was most helpful to us.

  - MH: It gave some validity to what I've been trying to do, showing that someone else wants to look at the data we've been reporting.
  - RG: It's forced us to be more rigorous in our data collection. It allows us to better look at what we do and compare it to what happens throughout NOAA.
    - JB: Were you sharing the forms with them, or doing something else to communicate this data collection with them? What were they seeing that gave them that validity?
    - RG: Well they haven't seen much, and we also have some new resource/financial managers. They had no clue how we arrived at our previous numbers, so this exercise was particularly helpful to our resource managers.
    - SN: Because we had our own data collection system in place, we were kind of fumbling around. It was helpful to look at data hierarchy and see where each piece falls out and scale it down to our specific office level. I incorporated a good chunk of the data call instrument into our own system which was helpful.
    - PK: Just a comment…It's nice to go back and look to compare annual data.
      - JB: Great, thank you.

- Prompt 2: What is the biggest problem you encountered with the data call?
  - FN: The biggest problem I encountered was the disaggregation. It also asks us to work on what we need to do now to be able to do a better job when your question comes up next time.
  - RG: We developed a new database of our own, which caused a disconnect with this exercise. We need to bring over someone to align our collection methods to what you're looking for to make this better.
    - JB: That's some technical assistance that we should provide.
  - BMu: Disaggregation was definitely an issue. Having to put in every institution with exhibits was very time consuming, and I don't even think Atziri did that portion.
  - CB: We also have our own data collection system that was based on how data has been collected in the past. We weren't able to contribute to some of the categories that you required.
    - LK: is there any hope to align the Sea Grant data call with the general data call?
    - CB: It's an ebb and flow process, and we're trying to not change the metrics that we collect as often to prevent duplication or complications down the line.
    - JB: We could look at alignment and see if maybe there's a way to use some of your existing data.
  - LI: I noticed an issue with timing. With the fiscal year just ending, it is hard for many of you to collect this information only a week later. I'm interested in exploring solutions to this.
  - MK: I'm interested in comparing notes with you because you're in a similar situation to us in tracking and collecting data on students.
  - FN: There has to be some way to denote who is contributing the data when we work in the data call with partners.
  - MK: I had a similar conversation yesterday with our center directors. We have students who receive funding from both NOAA and NSF and they are reported on twice (by each agency), making it look like we have twice as many students graduating than what you really have.
  - SY: We had a discussion on when to try to eliminate double counting and when not to. There are advantages and disadvantages to eliminating this, we just need to figure out when to do this/not do this and the best ways to do it.
  - FN: I'd like to have one data system for what we do.
  - SY: That gets into the idea of how we handle the issue of double counting and how we collect data in ways that either can parse that out or not, depending on what's needed.
  - PK: The biggest problem for me was finding the time to do it.
    - JB: How long do you think it took you, once you were able to do it?
    - PK: Not long…
    - JB: So knowing how much time to dedicate to the survey when it comes again is a good thing to know now.
  - FN: One thing that was helpful was a spreadsheet from Fisheries (via Bart Merrick) that I was able to modify for my programs.
    - JB: Is there anybody that doesn't have an existing data collection system throughout the year?
  - MH: We don't but now that we know this is coming, we will be better able to prepare.
  - SSt: Consistency is key, so having the same people working it and knowing what to expect is important.
  - JB: We were in the building process this year, so it was hard to signal what we would be expecting you to report ahead of time and what you should be aligning to. If you don't already have a representative on M & E, it would be good to consider. When we get to the summer, we'll roll out what the changes will be to the data call next year.

- Prompt 3: What suggestions do you have to improve the experience?
  - LI: One thing I'll bring up is the challenges people faced with the disaggregation. I wonder if there's a way to look at what caused the challenge. There might be reasons why it is difficult for people to report out, for example ethnicity or geographic representation. How the disaggregation could be reported is something to think about to avoid having information fall through the cracks.
  - BMu: Having multiple pages for a single measure made the form less user-friendly. Also the requirement to fill out a form in one sitting should be revisited.
  - MH: Any changes that are going to be made should be made known to us sooner rather than later.
    - SSt: John suggested that in the summer he would present the changes he plans to make. Is that too late?

- MH: I would have liked to have known October 1st, so that I could tell people what I'll be asking for them to give me in September.
- FN: If we're going to collect new data for 14, we can't retroactively go back and change anything.
- MK: So we signed up for the disaggregation with the understanding that we aren't going to be to do it this year but that we can do it in future years.

Updates and Announcements

- …