

Outdoor Education For All! – MEETING SUMMARY

Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 29, 4:00-7:00 pm

Chico Junior High School

Classroom of Mary Anne Pella-Donnelly, Rm. 304, Chico Jr. High

NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS – please mark your calendars:

November 19, 4-7 pm, Bidwell Mansion Visitor Center – General OEFA meeting.

December 10, 4-7 pm – Steering Committee Meeting. “ACTION Plan 2015”

Mary Anne’s Classroom (is there anywhere else so we don’t keep imposing on Mary Anne? She says it is “effortless and a central location.” We thank you!)

Barbara’s Request to Steering Committee between now and Nov. 19: Please take 20 minutes to review the work on the Purpose Statement and especially the Goals and Actions and send additional thoughts and comment to her by Nov. 12. She will send out the results of this meeting to all for additional reviews and “thoughts while sleeping on all this.”

Attending: Tony Catalano, Shannon Johnson, Marti Leicester, Nate Millard, Jeff Mott, Lisa Speegle.

Unable to attend: Debbie Chakarun, Christine McCormick, Lucas RossMerz

Proposed Outcomes

- ✚ Review working draft vision and mission and complete FINAL working draft
- ✚ Review OEFA description and complete FINAL working draft
- ✚ Review five year goal themes, confirm and/or edit add categories.
- ✚ Review five year goals and confirm/edit add new goals.
- ✚ Provide updates on recent activities and calendar key discussions for future actions
- ✚ Confirm proposed outcomes and agenda for November 19 OEFA meeting

A. Welcome, ground rules, agenda review:

1. Marti Leicester called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm.
2. She welcomed Barbara Rice for once again making an up and back trip from the Bay Area to facilitate the Strategic Plan portion of the meeting. Thanks also to Mary Anne for the use of her classroom AND for volunteering to take the minutes for this meeting.
3. All agreed to the ground rules.

Announcement:

1. Marti announced she had received a phone call that afternoon from Tanya Parish. Due to the pressures of some personal family issues, she must cut back on her outside commitments at this time and asked to resign from the Steering Committee. She hopes to resume working with OEFA in the “near future.” She had spoken to Robyn DiFalco, Director of BEC, about a replacement on the Steering Committee for Tanya to represent BEC.
2. Marti will call and discuss with Robyn. [Future agenda item for the Steering Committee.](#)
3. As the Steering Committee now consists of 8 voting members, we had a quorum of 2/3 for the evening.

B. Review and approve October 8 minutes: Approved unanimously with no changes.

C. Vision and Mission Statement Working Drafts and OEFA Description

1. Vision Statement:

- a. Barbara reminded us this statement answers the question **WHAT** OEFA does.
- b. We had worked on this in the 2 previous meetings and quickly reviewed the wording.
- c. "Outdoor Education For All! brings together dedicated organizations and individuals who collectively deliver a range of standards-based and high quality outdoor learning experiences for students of all ages and backgrounds." **This was approved as the group's final, working draft.**

2. Mission Statement: It was more difficult to find agreement on the Mission Statement.

- a. We began with: "We partner to collectively deliver outdoor learning experiences that inspire a passion for conservation and build an informed (*ecologically literate*) and active (or engaged) citizenry promoting natural and cultural resource (*conservation and*) stewardship for this and future generations."

3. We debated the following terms (many of the terms are politically loaded):

- a. informed v/s ecologically literate (easily understood v. cutting edge but not in common use)
- b. conservation and/or stewardship (these words represent two philosophies of environmental protection)
- c. we agreed we wanted a more action oriented rather than a more passive Mission Statement.

4. The new Mission Statement: "We partner to collectively deliver outdoor learning experiences that promote ecological literacy and build a citizenry active in natural and cultural resource conservation and stewardship."

5. Barbara pointed out that some organizations combine their Vision and Mission statements and create a **PURPOSE STATEMENT.**

- a. OEFA's Purpose Statement would then read: "Outdoor Education For All! brings together dedicated organizations and individuals who collectively deliver a range of standards-based and high quality outdoor learning experiences for students of all ages and backgrounds. We (could delete this phrase as repetitive: partner to collectively) (We) deliver outdoor learning experiences that promote ecological literacy and build a citizenry active in natural and cultural resource conservation and stewardship."
- b. The group consensus was they preferred the Purpose Statement.
- c. We agreed to the **Purpose Statement as a working draft**, to be brought to the Nov 19 meeting.

D. Five Year Themes and Goals

1. Barbara reminded the group that goals should be S.M.A.R.T Goals: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, **T**ime element. They are statements about the outcomes or results we seek. They can include both:

- a. programmatic outcomes (what results we seek in the community) and
- b. organizational outcomes (what results we seek within the organization).

2. Barbara had compiled the goals we created in the Oct. 8 meeting. She explained she had kept our major CATEGORIES, but had edited our goals into Goals and Actions that would fall under the Goals. (

- a. See attached Handout. The left column summarizes the Oct. 8 meeting. The right column is an edited version by Barbara of Goals AND Actions.
- b. The group agreed they understood and agreed with what she had done.
- b. Barbara asked if there were any additional Themes names and categories edits or additions? There were none.

3. We moved on to the **review the draft goal statements.**

a. We had many actions we wanted to suggest to carry out the goals. In the interest of time, Barbara suggested that we keep lists of our ideas for ACTION and save them for both the Nov. 19 meeting and our December 10 Steering Committee meeting when we would begin to fleshout the 2015 OEFA Action Plan. We all agreed to do that.

b. We clarified with Barbara that Goals are broad statements (WHAT) and we discussed that each action needed to tie back to the Vision/Mission or Purpose Statement WHY:

c. 1st Goal Category: **Program Delivery** (WHAT). The group developed 3 GOALS under this CATEGORY:

- GOAL: Establish programs that connect providers, schools and youth. (WHY: our purpose.)
- PROPOSED GOAL: Increase the number of providers delivering outdoor experiences. (WHY: need additional program delivery capacity to reach the goal).
 - We debated this goal. We agreed that OEFA's purpose is not to create new Provider organizations or establish new individual providers. That is a community led option or choice made by individuals to create a niche for their programs and delivery methods.
 - OEFA might identify a provider gap (some grades are not being served or some areas of the county aren't being served) but our job would be to elevate recognition of the need, not to create the solution to fill it. That should come from the community.
- GOAL: **We revised the previous goal** to read: Support and expand the capacity of providers to meet the demand and assure quality program delivery. Why-Meets our purpose to collectively deliver outdoor learning experiences.
- GOAL: Identify and build recognition of outdoor learning places within proximity of communities and learning institutions.

d. 2nd Goal Category: **Training** (WHAT):

- GOAL: Coordinate and support leadership development and training program for informal and formal educators.
 - We agreed there should be a reference to standards in this Action:
 - *Next Generation Science Standards
 - *current content standards

e. (3rd Goal: **Placed-based Learning**;) We agreed this category could go under Goal 1: Programs.

f. 3rd Goal Category: **Assessment, Monitoring and Organizational Effectiveness**:

- ACTION: On a regularly scheduled basis, assess the process and effectiveness of OEFA as an organization and in program delivery to assure its improvement and sustainability.
- ACTION: Build quantitative and qualitative measurement systems to measure the effectiveness of programs being offered.

g. 4th Goal: **Outreach and Engagement Goal**:

- ACTION: Promote the value of OEFA in the educational community as a primary resource for outdoor learning experiences.
- ACTION: Build awareness and participation in OEFA targeting diverse partners and the public.

h. 5th Goal: **Financial Stability (formerly named "funding")**

- ACTION: Establish and maintain financial stability to sustain OEFA and program delivery.

4. Barbara concluded her facilitation of the portion of the meeting that focused on Strategic Planning.
 - a. She will need to think about how to structure the agenda for Nov. 19.
 - b. She proposed a possible approach of having stations for the Purpose Statement and for each Goal Category and Goals. Each station might be “staffed” by a Steering Committee member who would receive input and explain our planning process. This is just one way to go about getting input.
 - c. She will send a proposed agenda for all Committee members to review and give time for preparation.
 - d. She **requested** that each Committee member please take 20 minutes to review the work on the Purpose Statement and especially the Goals **and send additional thoughts and comment to her by Nov.**
12. She will send out the results of this meeting to all for additional reviews and “thoughts while sleeping on all we accomplished at this meeting.”
 - e. Barbara estimated the Strategic Planning time needed for the Nov. 19 meeting would be about one hour and 15 minutes.
 - f. Marti expressed 2 concerns:
 - She is bothered that she hasn’t found a way and doesn’t have the computer knowledge to know how to have posted the Steering Committee minutes for all OEFA participants to see. Nate and Lisa offered to help establish a web site so this can be easily accomplished. Marti will follow up with them and get this done before November 19.
 - She is not certain and we had run out of time to develop a clear agenda for the remaining time for the Nov. 19 meeting. Barbara reassured her she would assist Marti with the development of the rest of the agenda.
 - g. Shannon brought up several issues about the Steering Committee: the makeup of the Committee and criteria for selection, transparency (she was also concerned we hadn’t been able to post the notes), how often to hold general meetings, more information on fund raising, how to get community input on the draft Strategic Plan Framework after we get input from the larger group on Nov. 19, etc. She also stated concern that we would be floundering without Barbara’s facilitation skills and was worried about the end of her “contract” with OEFA.
 - h. Barbara reassured the Committee on the following:
 - We are just on the verge of working on organizational development issues and that will come soon (after we draft the 2015 Action Plan in December and January.)
 - Barbara recommended that the OEFA general meetings be held quarterly at a minimum.
 - She also stated that she believes strongly, based on her experience, that it is best for groups to work together for a year or two, or even more, (Marti commented we already have over a year of working together and we have learned much) before they come to definite conclusions about deciding on their final governance structure – MOUs, non-profit, other structures.
 - Although our goal is to have the Strategic Framework done by spring, 2015, Barbara will be available for consulting with OEFA through Sept. 30 of next year.
 - Barbara reminded us that after we complete the sections of the Strategic Plan Framework, we have committed to an outreach program in 2015 that will take the Framework to the community for additional input and to generate engagement and support.

E. OEFA Reports and Updates:

1. **Funding Needs and Grants!** In November, we have an opportunity to apply for funding for OEFA through the Oroville Dam Federal Regulatory Energy Commission (FERC.) Tony has kept you in the loop that this opportunity came up and it seemed a huge rush. Then we found out on 10/20 that we have until Nov. to apply for the funds. Just through the process of gathering ideas on what to put into a grant application we came up with a set of ideas that would benefit the OEFA Providers and focus on south county schools (those most eligible for FERC funding.) A summary of what we might put into the grant application includes these ideas:

- a. Focus: Standards based experiential natural and cultural resources programs, both in the schools and for field trips, that will provide pay for Providers and bus transportation funding support (matching with other funds?) for south county schools (must tie into Feather River? Need to get our geographic boundaries straight!)
- b. Support for an internship program with Butte College and CSUChico. Many details to that but a great idea. A big component in itself. Question: In addition to interns, include other adult volunteers (development of the California Naturalist Program?)
- c. Service learning projects for river restoration projects that could use the projects with interns and High School (and Jr. Hi?) Science Ambassadors to provide learning during the service projects. Again, need to look at the geography of what might fit in. Will Sacramento River be ok to include? (Need to see grant application guidelines to decide if that would fit in.)
- e. UPDATE: Marti was contacted by Linda Mobilio-Keeling, one of the professors that oversees the ITEC (integrated Teacher Education Core) program at CSU Chico. They work from freshman year with a cohort of about 20-25 students who express the desire to be teachers. It is an inter-disciplinary program and they are interested in these students learning more about teaching out of doors. Nate Millard arranged the introduction of ITEC and OEFA. Marti, Tony and possibly Nate will meet with the ITEC Administrators on Nov. 5 and seek ways to incorporate the students into the thinking about an intern program and grant application.
- d. Funding to support a coordinator to oversee the scheduling of events with Providers for the schools and for the restoration projects. Might tie in with #2 as one FT person and a PT admin person and include working with the interns/ITEC students as well.

2. Steering Committee Policy for Grants Letters of Support.

- a. We considered a request from the Stream Team (sent before the meeting to the Committee members) for a letter of support for their grant application to the Rose Foundation.
- b. UPDATE: Forest Ranch Charter School is applying for an Audubon Backyard Habitat Grant and might also like to ask for a letter of support from the Steering Committee.
- c. After a brief discussion, **we voted unanimously to adopt the following policy**:
"The OEFA Steering Committee supports any OEFA participants' fundraising efforts. We will provide letters of support for funding applications that are in line with the OEFA Purpose."

3. Providers: Marti has sent out two surveys to Providers, **responses due Nov. 12**:

- a. OEFA Brochure: This survey asks for information that will be used to write up the content of the brochure. The hope is that the busiest time of the fall season is now winding down for Providers and they will have/make time to respond. Would like to have all Providers respond by the Nov. 19 meeting and will use that meeting to try to catch up to any who still have not sent in responses. As a result of offering the training course, we have been able to add a few more Providers to the OEFA mailing list to whom we will reach out: GRUB, Chico Museum, California Waterfowl Association, Gray Lodge, and we will also contact the California Deer Association and see if there are any agricultural groups (in addition to Rancho Esquon) that might be added (Lundberg Family Farms and their duck egg rescue program? Other suggestions?)
- b. OEFA Workshop: This survey ask if there is still interest in the workshop: "Taking Science into the Field using NGSS, Common Core and Inquiry Methods." If there is enough interest, Marti will set new dates (either Jan. 31-Feb.1 or Feb. 20-21). The instructors have generously agreed to try again if there is interest.

4. OEFA Pilot South County Schools: The next dates to work with Stanford Avenue School (SAS) are November 20-21. Based on feedback from the Providers and SAS Teachers, we will set up stations that will make it possible to work with smaller groups of students. We also plan to tie in the stations more closely with the curricula of each class. Tony is heading up organizing this next demonstration project. Another date is set for March with SAS and we will also be meeting in Nov. with Ishi Hills school to set up similar events and their May Science Camp.

5. NEW TOPIC: This Way to Sustainability Conference (March, 2015): Nate brought forward the suggestion from him and Jim Pushnik that OEFA might want to make a presentation at this conference. All agreed it a good idea and Marti will submit a brief proposal – due Oct. 31! A panel presentation will be suggested and use the panel to recruit students to get involved in OEFA (highlight our new Strategic Plan Framework and use the new brochure.)

6. Possible January New Year's kick off and Planning meeting for Providers. Can tie into 2015 action plan. Topic tabled for a future meeting agenda item. .

F. Marti adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm. The next Steering Committee Meeting Dates are November 19 (focus on Strategic Plan Framework and OEFA organization issues, actions), and December 10-begin 2015 Action Plan.