

Outdoor Education For All!
Steering Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 10, 4:00-6:00 pm

Via Conference Call - Barbara Rice - Facilitator, Debbie Chakarun

Attending: Tony Catalano, Shannon Johnson, Lucas RossMerz, Marti Leicester, Mary Anne Pella-Donnelly, Nate Millard.

Proposed Outcomes

- ✚ Review input on vision and mission/purpose and complete FINAL working drafts
- ✚ Review input on five year goals and complete FINAL working drafts five year goals.
- ✚ Confirm next steps for action planning
- ✚ Confirm proposed outcomes and agenda for January or February OEFA meeting.
- ✚ Recap current topics

A. Welcome, ground rules, agenda , review OEFA November 19 notes and approve – Marti
APPROVED by all.

B. Vision and Mission Statement and Five Year Goals: Review input received at the November 19 meeting.
Complete final working draft of mission/vision and combined purpose. B. Rice Facilitated.

Purpose Statement (FINAL draft from after this meeting)

(VISION): Outdoor Education for All! (OEFA) 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, abilities, and backgrounds. (MISSION): Through this work OEFA promotes ecological literacy and health and wellness, and builds a citizenry active in natural and cultural resource conservation and stewardship.

1. B. Rice: Comment: “Great turnout at Nov. general OEFA meeting.”
 - a. Most of the comments were suggested actions.
 - b. She recommended the Steering Committee do one final review tonight but be ready for “full steam ahead” on Action Planning at the next Steering Committee meeting in January.
 - c. Tonights focus will be discussing two new ideas introduced at the general meeting: “Abilities” and “Health & Wellness Discussion.”
2. The group discussed:
 - a. Question from general meeting and Mary Anne also wondered: Why was “age” included? STRCom agreed: “because we didn’t want it assumed just K-12, but *all* learners.” Group also felt it important to mention age range because it would be beneficial later for grants and also good to be explicit. Reads well. . Mentioning all the qualities we included as targets for OEFA focus Implies an action – **Agreed: keep in “Ages” and “Abilities.”**
 - b. Mary Anne willing to agree.
 - c. Barbara introduced the idea of including “Health & Wellness” into OEFA work at the general meeting; then others agreed. Question to STRCom: Keep it?
 - Shannon & Marti: This area and topic is a good source of funding right now and part of environmental quality learning experiences tho a newer way of thinking about it.
 - B. Rice: Don’t keep it for just monetary and funding purposes. She suggested we could consider it implied and feature it in the action items.

- Lucas: add it in. We want kids keep it comfortable in the outdoor playground of the world.
- Shannon: The only thing that hasn't been put in yet is making the purpose statement more concise. This was an important comment from the 11/19 meeting. And now we have *added* 4 more words!
- Lucas: Marketing tag lines can be short and concise. Health & wellness as a tag line and not as much a purpose.
- BR does think Purpose statement could be further edited.
- Nate: Add a comma after wellness.
- **All agreed: and keep Health and Wellness in as part of the Purpose Statement.**

d. Scott Huber felt at the general meeting the important concept missing in the Vision and Mission was the original intent for OEFA to address underserved communities.

- B. Rice: Do we want to address this in a general way? Do our identified concepts in the Vision/Mission already encompass this concept? There could be an action agenda around this specific concept.
- Discussion: Although it is important that many groups see themselves recognized in our Vision and Mission, it begins to make the Purpose Statement too long to mention each one.... "underserved," "special abilities", etc.
- We can already demonstrate those are our initial actions and intent in the South County Pilot program....
- **Group: Agreed not to put it into Purpose statement.**

e. One additional comment: Debbie liked the phrase: "quality outdoor learning experiences – but what about the place based and historic sites? She stated she had missed the last 2 meetings so felt she needed the updated on what had been the discussion about this word "outdoor" in relation to historic sites that are more outdoor.

f. B. Rice: There had been a lot of discussion on what term to use. It is through experiences inside and outside that learning takes place. An **ACTIVE CITIZENTRY** is the product of OEFA and outdoor learning experience isn't necessarily JUST outdoors, but the experience is appreciating that element of the many other learning places that also fit into it.

g. Marti mentioned it is always a dilemma on what word to use: outdoor education; place based, experiential, environmental education...maybe it depends on the audience. It might be a dilemma that our name is specifically OUTDOOR Education for All?

h. B. Rice asked the questions: When you are teaching outdoor learning does that mean the learning is outdoors or is it teaching outdoors?

i. Nate: Theoretically, Kolb's (sp?) Learning Cycle demonstrates that learning continues in a cycle with the learning continuing long beyond the actual experience.

j. Marti suggested 3 periods to shorten the Mission statement into 3 sentences. Shannon promoted 2 sentences. Lucas recommended making the start of the second sentence begin with OEFA.

k. **All agreed with Shannon and Lucas.**

3. COMPLETED!! THE LAST DRAFT OF THE VISION, MISSION, PURPOSE!

C. Review input received at November 19 meeting. Complete final working drafts of five year goals. Include review of organizational development goal and any additional goals.

1. B.Rice stated that the input for each goal didn't really change the goal statements so she didn't edit further. The comments under each goal didn't change the language of each goal.
2. Nate: The actions under Goal One make sure we target and specifically mention underserved and special communities = they want to see themselves mentioned and we can do that.
3. If you get home and see a change in the goals, let Marti and Barbara know.
4. B.Rice: Adding in a goal: Nothing had been put in for organizational development. This Goal would cover the intent to carry out organizational planning and meet organizational needs. Who will you be? She recommended we add in a goal to address those questions.
5. Group: **Agreed to including a goal to address organizational development.**
6. The questions came up, is this an edit to the Organizational Development Goal: "Formalize OEFA as an organization"? Or would that be an action under the Organizational Development Goal and have a priority action under the Goal begin with that action?
7. B. Rice Establishing OEFA in a formal organizational structure is a recurring theme for the STRCom. T We want to know our future as an organization.
8. Mary Anne: Then one of the actions would be to set a formal goal: "Establish an OEFA organization and then put the other actions under it.
9. B. Rice: Organizational assessment is totally different, but need to establish the organization first before you can do organizational assessment. . BR will stream line it and put the actions under action planning.
10. **REVISION TO INPUT FROM 11/19 meeting. Just to Goal One: CONNECT PROVIDERS, SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS OF ALL AGES.**
11. **Done with DRAFT Goals!**

D. 2015 Action Planning Warm Up:

B. Rice: So what can we do now, how much and how can we do it? After 2 years of all we have done, there are a lot of important questions to ask and lessons learned. Time to do a reality check given the context of the mission vision context . For today, she stated we will address just the first 2 bullets, then address the next 3 bullets for Jan.

LESSONS LEARNED :A FACILITATED DIALOGUE TO HELP FRAME ACTION PLANNING FOR 2015 :Building from Lessons Learned and "Community" Input consider these Questions for Discussion:

1. After two years of piloting Outdoor Education for All !, what has been expressed as the greatest needs by providers, teachers and schools/school administrators? What are the challenges?

Group Discussion:

- a. Transportation funding
- b. Trainings
- c. Money for teachers and Providers who want to pay for training on NGSS and Common Core
- d. Curriculum alignment for Providers and also Teachers. Mary Anne: Eventually the teachers will get their standards and would love to find programs that will meet those standards.
- e. One of the challenges has been to corral the Providers to meet the school needs.
- f. What about the buffet of services we were going to put in the Brochure? This is very much needed and gives teachers the ability to directly contact the Providers. Very important. Starting with the roll out of the Conference and the brochure would be high priority for OEFA in 2015.
- g. Providers want funding to keep their programs going. Are supplies implied? As they increase the number of programs they provide to meet demand, will that also increase their need for additional materials and supplies?

- h. B.Rice – Q: how do they support themselves now? A: Many have grants and would like to be paid, but often the schools or groups don't have the money to pay for a program.
- i. Funding is needed for transportation and staff time costs for Providers, and transportation and staffing to support Providers and Teachers for field trips (and sometimes for school programs, too.).
- j. Providers want dependable salaries.
- k. Native American Elders especially get asked a lot to give programs and are rarely provided fees for that.
- l. Capacity of Providers is not large enough to meet demand.
- m. There is a concept of "fiscal bandwidth". Providers may not have the money to push through the barrier to expand their capacity or, you can also have too much money if not quite enough to expand your capacity and you don't have the staff to track and spend the money received.
- n. Teachers want better connection between programs and the age of the students – improved age appropriate programming. **Where is the largest gap in the programs the Providers offer?**

Early education

- o. Ideas to expand Provider capacity:
- Providers share office space.
 - Interns.
 - CA Naturalist Program.
 - Free lancers with wealth of experience who aren't paid.
 - Liability is the issue that must be addressed. A "1099 employee" who doesn't need to be paid (??? Marti note: what does this mean?)
 - OEFA might be a fiscal sponsor paying a provider or a provider could write a proposal to OEFA for funding, pay mileage. We could put out the word: "Are you a Provider?" OEFA could make a contractor list, once we have that network we can put the word out and fill in the gaps for community needs. OEFA would need to be an organization with funds to do this. Would this streamline the capacity and do it really quickly? This could be a strategy to meet the first goal. Our own "Linked In" Service! OEFA acts as a broker would this be a good role? An ACTION.
 - Build a non-profit "village" for non-profits in Chico, lots of the general funds go to rent and investors would build it and those investors are supportive. But all the non-profits are on different lease agreements. All want to be near the downtown core. There is a big push for that. Robin and Lucas are working on this. Tear down and build what you want, move in to turn key? 5-10 years out? Because of the leases and finding the right location and everyone gets equal amounts of space it has been too challenging to implement in the short term.
 - Bldg would be co-owned. Shared membership pool. A wonderful idea and would save a ton of money. Create a trust where the investor would get their money back, endowment fund for repairs, insurance, maintenance, Construction and Purchase costs, month to month and cyclic maintenance. Has some locations in mind.
 - Who gets included? So many non-profits. Boys and Girls stable but a BIG array of groups not all are env. who would be invited and not be excluded? Need to establish criteria. A strategy question. OEFA needs a common core....Or if someone not OE would OEFA want an Office Space. It would be Education Focused – they seem to need the most money. Ed. constantly needs help – doesn't pay back, basically a giving mission!

- Could OEFA maybe have its own wing? The foyer, meeting room, League of Women Voters – very educational.
- Now in a holding pattern.
- Investors want an outdoor component to the property.
- Need a Provider Guide to align with standards and OEFA Teacher Guide of Providers and how to apply for Transportation help, and annual events and Nature Camps and learning places. What OEFA can do for you and when to approach OEFA.
- AND utilize CREEC and stream line that both OEFA and CREEC already there – calendar, program listings, contact info. Announcements of events. There are some hand out materials re: CREEC.

p. Steering Committee – how to grow your OEFA/Steering Cmt. To expand capacity? Can others help OEFA grow?

q. If OEFA had the money to be in a jointly managed building situation, how might OEFA help its buddies survive and do what they do best?

r. For Example, how could we help CCNC now in its time of need? What is OEFA capacity to help people like that as a part of collaboration. The question arises because of our vision of collaboration in our vision and mission and purpose.

2. For 2015, is the higher priority organizational development and fundraising or providing more school programs?

a. If schools, we need the Providers to step up and support organizing themselves more actively.

b. Stanford Ave. would offer its woodland as an outdoor site like Ishi and Forest Ranch Charter School has offered outdoor learning sites, too. But we need the bodies to have the time to do this. We will finish Stanford Ave. this year but next year we need someone to take it over.

c. CREEC isn't in any of our goals or purpose statement. CREEC has no money or people who have some time. No financial assistance is available through CREEC but they do have the linked in data base.

3. What's first? Outreach: 1) Brochure asap. 2) Conference 3) Pilot program AND who will lead pilot programs? How much money to make it happen? If we chart this year, then we can take actions 1,2,3 and add 4) Grantwriting for fall, 2015.

4. Who is OEFA? Providers? A "backbone organization as defined by the Collective Impact model?. OEFA doesn't DO Not the work. OEFA acts as facilitators, coordinators, the network, organizer v. having an office and a building and dedicated, paid staff to deliver programs. We don't deliver the programs.

5. Shannon – It's hard to imagine because we are in the development stage. At this stage whatever OEFA is or becoming, it is very time consuming. So, we are all like unpaid staff. For example, the position of facilitator is unpaid. TWO different things. At some point, it takes compensation.

6. The Goals on the ACTION TEMPLATE:

a. Lucas: All 3 Goals are related to CREEC. Action items under #1: teach about how CREEC works, get Providers registered, etc. #2. Support and Expand: Action – Providers take their program on CREEC make it check more boxes more easily for their programs to show up under more categories. #3. Train: it's like OEFA is the CREEC advocate. OEFA loves CREEC. CREEC is the reference book but don't know how to get to CREEC without CREEC being better marketed to all types of teachers with diverse interests. CREEC doesn't account for the networking needed on the ground. Clarify and articulate this distinction. For example, at Stanford Ave., the way we have managed the event days there it is hard to meet the standards for all age groups. With some focus and training each Provider can update their programs to meet standards for each grade.

c. Leverage OEFA by using an existing organization. Promote the various "Projects" – Wild, Wet, Flying Wild, Learning Tree.

d. Before we do that, we need to establish OEFA as an organization and get money.

e. Nate - we need to find funds.

f. VERY IMPORTANT TO LUCAS to have CREEC listed as part of what we are talking about.

- g. In January we need to set meeting dates for the STRCom and general meetings. We need our Action Plan completed as early as possible in the year so we can articulate how to move forward with OEFA..
- h. Q: Can we complete the Action Plan in January? A: B.Rice: Depends on how many action ideas come up for prioritizing in the January meeting(s) and then the need to fine tune a one year action plan with the general OEFA group.. The goal is to be done by Feb. So, December and January and maybe early February are how much time we have to devote to action planning.
- i. Just say no to any new initiatives or ideas!
- j. Right now it seems our commitments so highest priorities are: Print and distribute the OEFA brochure; plan and produce the final Stanford Avenue School event in March; present the Sustainability Conference; help Ishi make Provider connections for their May Science Camp and see if we can raise \$450 for their Table Mt. field trip.
- l. Tony: I think the highest priorities are 1.Establish OEFA as an Organization (501.c.3?) and 2. Raisse Money. Nate agreed.

7. B.Rice: Use the templates to list the actions and send to Barbara what you think are the stating points for 2015 10 days before our next meeting (revised to be due by Jan. 5).

E. Meeting Wrap up and Next Steps:

1. Teleconference next week: 12/16, 4 pm.

Other Topics to be covered on the STRCOM TELECON: 12/16 4 pm

- Provider Meeting planning
- Next OEFA Meeting: dates and agenda
- Funding request from Ishi Hills for bus transportation
- Additions to Steering Committee?
- Update: This Way to Sustainability Conference X
- Add FERC Grant

2. Next STRCom meeting date will be set via Doodle Poll

3. Focus of next STRCom: 3 hours just on Action Planning.

F. Meeting adjourned at 6 pm.

Mkl. 12/12/14