
SUMMARY Cities Connecting Children to Nature's LCNN Steering Committee Mtg. #1

September 28, 2022 1:30-4:30pm

City of Vancouver's Water Resources Education Center

Participants:

- Yasmina Akin – Clark County Public Health - Healthy Communities Program Coordinator
- Ashley Conley – COV WREC Educator
- Erin Figy – EPS Illahee ES – volunteer School Garden coordinator
- Jessica George – COV Urban Forestry - Education and Outreach Coordinator
- Chris Hathaway – Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership - Community Programs Director
- Hailey Heath – COV Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services – Volunteer Coordinator
- Jane Tesner Kleiner – LCNN – Program Coordinator
- Erin Lark – Vancouver Public Schools – STEM and Science teacher
- Stacy Meyer – ESD 112 – Science Curriculum Coordinator
- Bekah Marten – WSU Extension Master Gardener – School Garden Coordinator-
- Andrea Parker – Battle Ground Public Schools - Science TOSA
- Valerie Pufahl – Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership - Education & Community Programs Manager
- Rainy Rau – COV WREC Educator – Student Watershed Monitoring Network
- Elizabeth Schmitz – OSPI - Environment & Sustainability Program Director
- Rebecca Small – COV Climate Action Team - Senior Policy Analyst
- Matthew Solberg – former teacher, naturalist
- Sami Springs Lecain – Clark County Public Health – Green Schools Coordinator
- Monica Tubberville – COV Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services – Senior Park Planner
- Mark Watrin – Battle Ground Schools – retire teacher, Board of Directors
- Mesha Wood – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – Park Ranger, Steigerwald NWR
- Crystal Wulff – Evergreen School District - Science and Health TOSA
- Harris Solomon – CCCN Facilitator – Harris Solomon Consulting
- Andrew Moore – National League of Cities - Director, Youth and Young Adult Connections

Leveraging momentum to engage leadership across city and districts - how do we build on momentum of city and school district leadership?

- **Identify leadership** - who are the leaderships to bring together for conversations and goal setting, including administration, school board members, teachers, students, families and community members who all feel welcome to contribute
- **Community goals / actions** - identify mutual goals and benefits for city and schools - equity and access for all to nature, cohesive messaging and awareness of importance of nature connections, safe routes to parks/schools, mental/emotional/physical health benefits, joint funding goals, community building, etc.
- **School goals for improved success** - without adding burden to teachers/staff, yet increase partnerships for skills building, hands-on learning, social-emotional learning, student focus and needs, hearing student voices, career preparation, cross curriculum goals with city goals and look for opportunities to increase and build programs
- **Environmental cross-connections** - identify opportunities to add more nature with tree plantings, native plants, habitat and other to meet environmental goals while meeting curriculum needs for

hands-on learning. Share success stories, lead tours, activate natural areas with community building, stewardship and learning.

Activating and maintaining green schoolyards - what is a well-activated and well maintained green schoolyard?

- **Highlighting the values and goals of creating and using green schoolyards** - health and wellness benefits, academic benefits, creating welcoming access for all, both school and community use, building the culture of the school to use the outdoors, promoting good design that is successful for years to come.
- **Tools for activating spaces** - identify all of the potential uses for school and community, consistent messaging of what green schoolyards are and benefits (messaging outlets, tours, trainings, etc.), centralized tools to gain efficiencies (volunteer checks, volunteer work days, events/activities, community partners, etc.), teacher support and flexibility to implement.

Action Planning - short, medium and long term goals to build momentum and success

- **Short term actions** - Build on existing successes based on mapping of existing green schoolyards, compile a compelling story to share with leaders and teachers, start building relationships with key partners, create centralized data portals, and create forums to share ideas that welcome all voices
- **Medium term actions** - build on successful models at existing schools, provide teacher and staff training for various uses and goals, invite the community to contribute, identify gaps in the green schoolyards to build equitable access, develop goals & standards for sustainable green schoolyard designs, and create resources for teachers to activate outdoor learning (create staff position for full-time garden coordinators, community resources, BioBlitz program, recess activities, better kits, etc.).
- **Long term actions** - Identify reliable funding streams to build and activate green schoolyards, expand Wahsington's Outdoor School for All with local resources, tie green schoolyards to cities' and school districts action plans, creating on-going information and community sharing for green schoolyards.

Upcoming Steering Committee meetings: upcoming meetings will invite the entire group to meet either virtually or in person to work through action items with a goal to host a community forum Spring 2023. Meetings will focus on a general topic to build-out action plan, but not too specific where it won't feel relevant to all participants. Continue to add voices to make plan applicable to all. Schedule will be coming out shortly.

End of summary