



Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre

Informational Webinar

April 23, 2024 | Grace Manubay

What we will cover:

- Environmental literacy in the District of Columbia
- About the program
- Goals
- How to apply
- Questions

Presenters:

- Grace Manubay, OSSE
- Margi Fineran, FRESHFARM FoodPrints



Environmental literacy in the District

- **Environmental literacy** is the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to make informed decisions concerning the relationships among natural and urban systems.
- An environmentally literate person:
 - Discusses and describes ecological and environmental systems and human impacts on these systems;
 - Engages in hands-on, outdoor learning experiences that involve discovery, inquiry, and problem solving;
 - Formulates question and analyzes information pertaining to his or her surrounding environment; and
 - Understands how to take actions that respect, restore, protect, and sustain the health and well-being of human communities and environmental systems.

Academic benefits of environmental education

- Literature review of 119 peer-reviewed studies published from 1994-2013 that empirically measured K-12 student outcomes associated with environmental education shows the following positive impacts:
 - Improved academic performance
 - Enhanced critical thinking skills
 - Increased civic engagement
 - Fostered positive environmental behaviors
 - Developed personal growth and life-building skills: Confidence, autonomy, and leadership

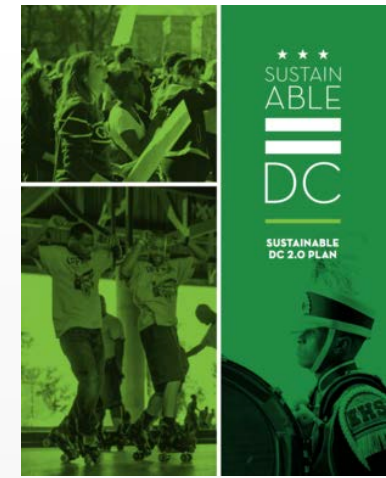
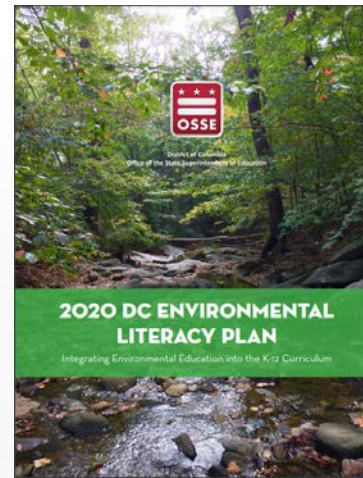
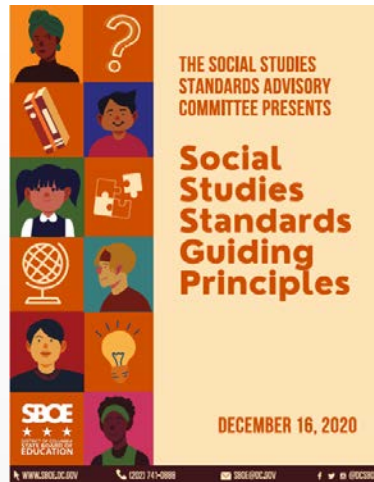


Health benefits of environmental education

- Spending time outdoors helps prevent childhood obesity
- Exposure to nature increases concentration and decreases symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
- Increased trees and green buildings lower asthma triggers, leading to fewer missed school days
- Green school grounds adds to students' physical, mental, and social well-being
- Garden programs can lead to better nutritional food choices
- Increased air circulation outside

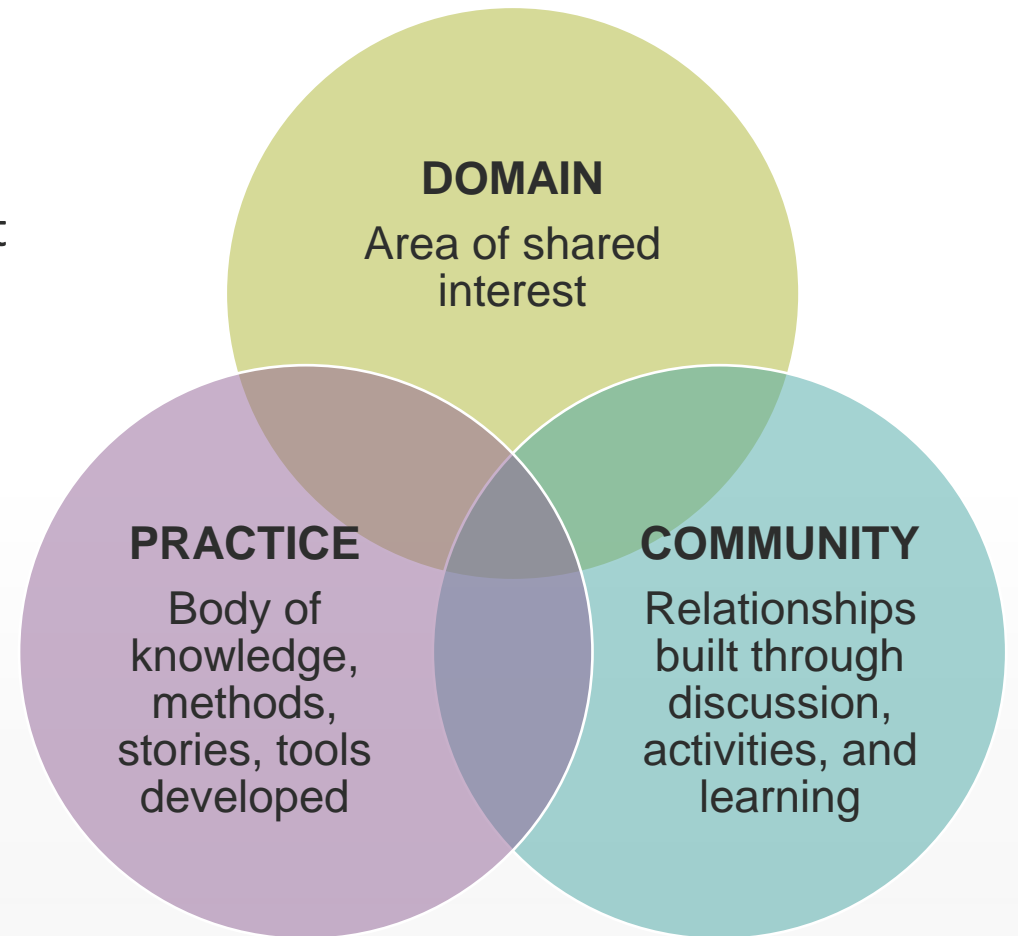


Environmental literacy initiatives



Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre

- Recruiting for the with fifth cohort (YOU!)
- Based on the Sustainable DC Model Schools Pilot (2014)
- Functions as a Community of Practice
 - A group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.



What cadre members will do:

- Receive professional development related to Next Generation Science Standards
- Develop a school-based environmental literacy program to implement student-driven, place-based project that use the school building and grounds as teaching schools
- Network with others to discuss creating systems of support for environmental literacy implementation in schools
- Disseminate information about environmental literacy to the community and garner feedback on the school-based environmental literacy program

Past accomplishments

- **Individual**
 - Gained trust among colleagues and emerged as a school leader
 - Became more involved with local environmental issues
 - Transitioned to new jobs with environmental organizations
- **For their school**
 - Started student and/or staff green teams
 - Got other teachers excited about doing environmental projects
 - Developed environmental literacy standards
 - School recognized as a US Department of Education Green Ribbon School
- **For the community**
 - [School snapshots](#) to help others see range of schools that can make this work
 - [Environmental Literacy Guides for Pre-K-Grade 5](#)
 - Review of [Capital LEAF resource pages](#)

Program roles and support

- Environmental Literacy Coordinator (OSSE)
 - Organizes monthly meetings
 - Stipends

- Mentors (experts in various environmental fields)
 - Offers one-on-one assistance for your school
 - Leads small group discussions at every monthly meeting

Environmental Literacy Framework

for the District of Columbia

Environmental literacy is the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to make informed decisions concerning the relationships between natural and urban systems.



An environmentally literate* person:

- can discuss and describe ecological and environmental systems and human impacts on these systems;
- engages in hands-on, outdoor learning experiences that involve discovery, inquiry, and problem solving;
- is able to question and analyze information pertaining to his or her surrounding environment; and
- has the capacity to take actions that respect, restore, protect, and sustain the health and well-being of human communities and environmental systems.

*as defined in the DC Environmental Literacy Plan adopted 2014

Structure for the year

- Monthly meetings
 - Tentative topics: recycling, energy audits, plants, wildlife, trees
 - In-person, at school site when possible
- Monthly meeting with mentor
 - Via email, phone, or in-person
- Activities and deliverables
 - Teacher survey / Landscape Analysis
 - School staff meeting
 - School-based Environmental Literacy Plan
 - Reporting

Characteristics of successful past participants

- Enthusiastic about engaging in student projects
- Open to trying new ideas
- Good rapport with school administration AND fellow staff
- Has a good understanding of how to create change at the school
- Brings in a colleague to create a team

How to apply

- Complete online [form](#)
- Email Grace Manubay the following:
 - Resume
 - Personal statement
 - Letter of endorsement/support from a member of the school leadership team

Timeline

- All application materials are due by Friday, May 31
- Participants selected by June 14
- First meeting will be in late September 2024



Questions?

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