



Environmental Education Association of Illinois

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Mission Statement: To maintain a vital network that supports and advances quality environmental education throughout the state.

The Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI) is a group of concerned citizens who are interested in educating people of all ages to the importance of understanding and protecting the environment.

Since its inception, EEAI has provided leadership at the local, state and national level within the environmental education community by providing and supporting professional development services to the formal and non-formal educator. As host to national, state-based and independent professional development events and curriculums such as Growing Up WILD, Project Learning Tree and the Midwest Environmental Education Conference, EEAI has set the professional standard to which educators have learned to depend on.

EEAI is governed by a board of directors. The state of Illinois is divided into five regions, each of which is served by two representatives-with the exception of the northeast region which is served by three representatives. The membership elects the regional directors and officers, i.e., president, president-elect, secretary and treasurer.

EEAI is the Illinois affiliate on the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE). NAAEE is the world's largest association of environmental educators, with members in North America and 55 countries worldwide.

How does the Environmental Education Association of Illinois lead?

- Sponsors environmental education conferences in conjunction with EEAI's spring membership meeting. The EEAI Annual Meeting and Conference is held at different locations throughout the state of Illinois.
- Once every eight years, EEAI sponsors the Midwest Environmental Education Conference, which draws participants from throughout the nation.
- Sponsors Project Learning Tree® and Growing Up WILD™ in the state of Illinois.
- Publishes the Illinois environmental education Update newsletter; the only periodical in Illinois devoted to current information and ideas about environmental education.
- Reviews and makes recommendations regarding environmental education materials, trains workshop facilitators and locates funding sources to implement high quality environmental education programs.

As part of the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois' Center for Nonprofit Excellence program, information was gathered about current challenges and future opportunities from members of the Board of Directors and the community. The board reviewed the strengths and weaknesses internal to the organization and the opportunities and threats of external forces.

Based on those discussions, the Board has committed to a strategic plan that will provide a path for the organization over the next three years. The intent is that it will guide the way but provide the flexibility to react appropriately to changing community needs, financial challenges and opportunities and the long-term viability of the organization.

Staffing

Goal: Hire an executive director by end of fiscal year 2018

1. Establish job responsibilities for a paid staff member, initially focusing on at least a .50 FIE position
2. Establish hiring and supervision protocol

Governance

Goal: Review the structure, roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors

1. Formalize roles and responsibilities of the Board
2. Review and consolidate committees
3. Provide additional training and support for board members
4. Formalize the development and orientation process for members of the Board
5. Research the possibility of establishing more regions to enable board members to better serve and represent the interests and concerns in their areas

Programming

Goal: Innovate and broaden the programs and services offered

1. Pursue opportunities for electronic communication of information and service delivery for the board and for members
 - a. Webinars
 - b. Interactive learning opportunities
 - c. New offerings
2. Review needed ISBE Clock Hours
3. Pursue National Accreditation opportunities
4. Expand member events locally and state-wide
5. Provide programming resources for school districts and establish greater collaborations

Membership

Goal: Increase membership by 20% by May 2018

1. Actively solicit new members to EEAI
 - a. Diversify membership
 - b. Offer EEAI members "rewards" or recognition for bringing in new members
2. Actively engage members and make it each Board member's responsibility to do so, e.g. include it in the "Responsibilities of Board Members"

Goal: Increase membership incentives by April 2018

1. Further define member benefits
 - a. Add value to membership
 - b. Think creatively about "why be a member?" and expand on what it means to be a member

Financial

Goal: Review and consolidate the dues structure, ensuring it provides for the growing needs of the organization and allows for service delivery

1. Once the added membership value has been established, enact a reasonable membership dues increase

Goal: Actively pursue local, state, federal and nongovernmental grants to ensure the long-term financial stability of EEAI

Goal: Review amount of operational reserve and method of investment of funds



This work is part of the Community Foundation's
Center for Nonprofit Excellence program.

The Foundation is committed to increasing the
capacity of nonprofit organizations and their Boards of Directors, thus
enhancing the service provided to their constituents.