



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 Consortium, 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 of 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 & 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. Create a committee to research and/or develop the following (*begin February 2017, presented to board June 2017*):
 - Personnel policy
 - Unemployment insurance
 - Payroll service
 - Board vs. director responsibilities
 - Job description
 - Determine future needs of agency and develop profile of ideal candidate
 - Financial staffing plan that allows for a sustainable salary and benefits
2. Create search/hiring committee (*Begin June 2017, advertise after December 2017*)

board meeting)

- Plan hiring strategy and recruit applicants
- Assess candidates (*Jan-March 2018*)
 - Plan assessment process
 - Design interview
 - Conduct interviews
- Hire Executive Director (*April 2018*)

Governance

Goal- to review the structure, roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors

1. Formalize roles and responsibilities of the Board
 - a. Create a written description for Board members
 - b. Ensure that Board terms are established and observed
 - c. Ensure fundraising activities a responsibility of every regional director
2. Review all Committees
 - a. Consolidate and combine committees as appropriate, with a focus on fewer committees with broader responsibilities
 - b. Create written committee charters, detailing the scope, function, responsibilities and membership of each committee
3. Provide additional training and support for board members
4. Formalize the development and orientation process for members of the Board
 - a. Analyze the organization's demographic and areas of expertise
 - b. Create a list of potential board members which reflects these needs
 - c. Create formal new board member orientation
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: to 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
 - *By Sept. 2017, create list of potential "rewards"*
 - *By December 2017, enact the "reward system"*
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 the end of fiscal year 2018 (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 (Begin Sept. 2017, roll out May 2018)

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 (State Coordinator Consultant, Regional Directors, and Executive Committee) Ongoing

Goal: By the December 2017 board meeting, review fund amount of operational reserve and method of investment



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.