



The State of Maryland
Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER
01.01.2024.15

Maryland Outdoor Learning Partnership

- WHEREAS, Maryland recognizes that in order to empower current and future Marylanders to be climate-ready environmental stewards who value, protect, and restore the natural world, all youth should have the opportunity to learn about and connect with nature and develop environmental literacy during the course of their education;
- WHEREAS, Conserving Maryland's natural resources, including the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays, their waterways, natural habitats, agricultural lands, and the hundreds of thousands of acres of diverse land that stretch from the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, requires stewardship guided by a personal connection to the natural world, environmental literacy and a practical knowledge of climate change, and local action by current and future generations;
- WHEREAS, Maryland's natural resources and communities face urgent environmental challenges exacerbated by pollution and climate change. These challenges inequitably burden Maryland's youth and underserved communities;
- WHEREAS, In order to promote thriving communities, all Marylanders must be prepared for environmentally sustaining workforce advancements and the growing green job economy through equitable workforce development;
- WHEREAS, The State of Maryland is committed to collaborating with partners to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the shared priorities of the Chesapeake Bay Program;
- WHEREAS, Spending frequent time outdoors in unstructured and structured experiences increases student engagement and achievement across disciplines, improves human health, and empowers students to implement actions in their local environment;

WHEREAS, Reducing the impact of Maryland's school buildings and grounds on their local watershed fosters an environmental stewardship ethic among students, builds community resilience, and prepares the State's communities for climate impacts; and

WHEREAS, Maryland's teachers and environmental educators must be supported through coordination and partnership of State agencies and key partners to provide adequate funding, access to professional development, and equitable learning opportunities for all of Maryland's youth.

NOW THEREFORE, I, WES MOORE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY RESCIND EXECUTIVE ORDER 01.01.2017.12 AND PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

- A. Establishment. There is a Maryland environmental literacy and access to nature initiative titled the Maryland Outdoor Learning Partnership ("Partnership").
- B. Mission. The mission of the Partnership is to empower all of Maryland's youth to grow as environmental stewards that access, conserve, and restore our natural resources to ensure a climate-ready Maryland.
- C. Membership. The Partnership shall include representatives from State agencies and other partners providing for a well-rounded stakeholder group.
 - (I) The following State agencies shall assign a representative to participate in the Partnership to advise and implement actions in their areas of responsibility:
 - (a) Department of Natural Resources;
 - (b) State Department of Education;
 - (c) Department of Agriculture;
 - (d) Maryland Higher Education Commission;
 - (e) Department of the Environment;
 - (f) Department of Planning;
 - (g) Department of Health;
 - (h) Department of Transportation;

- (i) Maryland Energy Administration; and
 - (i) Department of Service and Civic Innovation.
- (2) The following stakeholders are invited to be, and shall be upon their acceptance, members of the Partnership:
- (a) Alice Ferguson Foundation;
 - (b) Chesapeake Audubon Society;
 - (c) Chesapeake Bay Trust;
 - (d) Chesapeake Bay Foundation;
 - (e) Living Classrooms Foundation;
 - (f) Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation;
 - (g) Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education;
 - (h) Maryland Recreation and Parks Association;
 - (i) National Aquarium;
 - (i) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
 - (k) National Wildlife Federation;
 - (l) Smithsonian Environmental Research Center;
 - (m) Sultana Education Foundation;
 - (n) United States Fish and Wildlife Service;
 - (o) Three representatives of non-profit organizations dedicated to environmental education;
 - (p) One representative of a Parent Teacher Organization;
 - (q) Two representatives of local governments that have demonstrated leadership in sustainable development practices;
 - (r) Two representatives (teacher or principal) serving from an outdoor school, Maryland Green School, Maryland Green Ribbon School, or school with a focus on environmental education;
 - (s) One district environmental literacy supervisor or coordinator;

- (t) One district sustainability supervisor or coordinator;
 - (u) One school Superintendent;
 - (v) One environmental education teacher;
 - (w) Two representatives of youth-based organizations;
and
 - (x) Two representatives of the business community with demonstrated leadership in supporting the green or sustainable workforce.
- (3) The Governor, in their discretion, may appoint additional members to the Partnership.

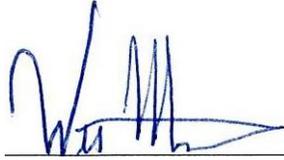
D. Procedures.

- (1) Chair. The Partnership shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee, and the State Superintendent of Schools, or the Superintendent's designee.
- (2) Staff Coordination. The Department of Natural Resources shall provide staff support for the Partnership in coordination with the State Department of Education, other State agencies, and other partners as directed by the Co-Chairs.
- (3) Working Groups. The Partnership shall be supported by working groups, to be established by the Co-Chairs, to lead the major tasks identified under this Executive Order.
- (4) Meetings.
 - (a) The Partnership shall meet monthly to advance the mission of the Partnership.
 - (b) The Partnership Co-Chairs shall preside over the meetings.
 - (c) The Partnership Co-Chairs shall convene and preside over an annual meeting, to include at least one student representative from a K-12 institution, to review the status of the work as described in the annual report.

- (5) Procedures. The Co-Chairs may adopt procedures and by-laws necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business.
- E. Responsibilities. In order for Maryland's youth to meaningfully access the environment and to grow as environmentally literate stewards that access nature and are equipped with skills that empower them to take action to conserve and restore Maryland's natural resources, the Partnership shall:
- (1) Conduct a review of current environmental and climate change education efforts in Maryland;
 - (2) Foster collaboration, coordinate resources, and deliver recommendations to decision makers in order to equitably ensure that:
 - (a) Every Maryland student has access to environmental and climate education;
 - (b) Maryland's students have the knowledge and skills needed for success in college and the growing green workforce;
 - (c) Maryland's youth spend time outdoors engaging with nature;
 - (d) Maryland's Local Education Agencies lessen the environmental impact of their school buildings and grounds on their local watersheds; and
 - (e) Maryland's teachers have the funds, training, and support necessary to implement curriculum to support student achievement of the Environmental Literacy Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, the Maryland Health Education Standards, Social Studies Standards, and other State standards of education as they relate to environmental literacy;
 - (3) Engage with networks to ensure that environmental education is equitably implemented and sustainably funded across Maryland;
 - (4) Support state leadership in the implementation and tracking of relevant Chesapeake Bay Program priorities; and

- (5) Report to and advise the Governor on the status of the Partnership's work and provide an annual report by January 30th on the prior year's progress.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Baltimore, this 22nd Day of April, 2024.



Wes Moore
Governor

ATTEST:



Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State

