

Annual LTER Education Committee Report  
for 2011 - 2012

**Today's Date:** April 30, 2012

**Committee:** Education Executive Committee

**Chair/Co-chairs:** Steven McGee, Beth Simmons

**Current committee composition and changes in 2011-2012** Steve McGee (co-chair), Beth Simmons (co-chair), Alan Berkowitz, Nick Oehmn, Sara Syswerda, Art Schwarzschio, Jeff Corney, Elena Sparrow, Mary Spivey, Kari O'Connell, Clarisse Hart, Pam Snow, Bob Woodmansee, Stephanie Bestelmeyer

Total members: 13

**Number of times met in 2011-2012** A meeting for the LTER Education Executive Committee members was held at [Virginia Coastal Reserve \(VCR\)](#) on September 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Ten LTER Education Executive committee members were present, others reported in virtually including Clarisse Hart, Bob Waide and Marshal White to discuss various items. Working group committees were formed to address areas of the SIP.

- A conference call for the Education Executive committee was held on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012. Members of the working groups provided updates on their progress since the meeting at VCR. There was no progress to report on the adoption of the Terms of Reference as the Executive Board had not yet been able to discuss the proposal to add an education representative to the Executive Board. This opportunity is occurring May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Steven McGee, Beth Simmons and Kari O'Connell will present documents at the LTER Science Council executive board meeting.
- Meetings: The Education committee co-chair(s) will be participating in the Science Council meeting in May 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the Andrews Experiment Forest LTER. This meeting will afford the Education Committee to present their Terms of Reference, Milestones for the Strategic Implementation plan, our working groups and the position announcement for the Education Coordinator.

**Activities / accomplishments since May 2011:**

- At the 2011 September Education Executive (Ed. Exec.) meeting, the committee worked on attaching action items and milestones to the objectives stated in the 2009-2010 [Strategic Implementation Plan \(SIP\)](#). These milestones were shared with the LTER network office Chairs Bob Waide and Scott Collins on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 via email.
  - Objectives 1A – 1D, 2A – 2D, 3A – 3D were all addressed specifically. Five working groups have been formed that encompass all of the SIP objectives. Members of the LTER Education Executive committee have volunteered to serve as the chairs of the working groups. Each working group will recruit members from the Schoolyard Education community and outreach coordinators as well as other network members to serve on the working groups. Each of the working groups will be responsible for making significant progress over the year to report out at the ASM in Estes Park, 2012. The working groups fall into five categories: higher education, student data infrastructure, resource repository, professional development, and citizen science.

- The Fall Ed. Exec. meeting also gave the committee an opportunity to draft the LTER Education **Terms of Reference**. It draws heavily on the IM Terms of Reference. After incorporating the feedback from the LTER Science Council meeting in May, 2012 we will send it out to the entire LTER Education/Outreach community coordinators for comments and feedback. We will then present the resulting Terms of Reference at the ASM for vote and approval to formally establish the committee. Within these Terms of Reference we are also proposing that an elected member of the Education Executive committee serve on the LTER Executive Board as it would be extremely beneficial to be fully and officially integrated into the LTER community.
- **Director of Education**: The LTER Education Executive committee also drafted a job description including salary range for a new Director of Education for the LTER Education community. We are awaiting feedback on the position description and the next steps after the Science Council meeting in May, 2012.
- **Web site reorganization**: We designated an education subcommittee as of April, 2011 for the LTER Education web site reorganization. Our goal is to rebuild and showcase the Education and Schoolyard programs of the LTER community more successfully. Nicolas Oehm, Susan Dailey and Julie Doll will head the subcommittee in coordination with the LTER Communication Committee and webpage subcommittee. The Communications subcommittee worked with Marshal White at the network office and constructed a draft version of the new website. Currently Bob Waide and Thomas McOwiti and Marshall White are writing the content that will be provided. A webpage designer is planned to be hired to construct the final site. We hope to form a working group to contribute content related to the education/outreach pages of this website development during the ASM, 2012.
- **Higher Education**: Clarisse Hart and Arthur Schwartzchild head a working group based on higher education programming at LTER sites. They conducted a survey and received feedback from fifteen sites this past February, 2012. They have written two proposal requests for working groups to meet at the ASM. One is for undergraduate education and the other based on graduate student training.
  - **Professional Development**: Objective 3A in the SIP encourages the number of sites offering professional development opportunities for teacher and administrators. Since one third of the LTER already support professional development opportunities we formed a working group to survey these programs, assess the successes and build new opportunities that encourage more cross site experiences, similar to 2012 summer RET cross site exchange (see <http://news.lternet.edu/Article2429.html>).
- **Evaluations of Schoolyard LTER Programs**: A status report of the *EAGR: Building Tools for Creating Coherence Across Evaluations of Schoolyard LTER Programs* was compiled by Steven McGee and shared with E/O coordinators via email.
- **Resource Repository for LTER**: Communication is underway to investigate the development of a digital library resource for LTER scientists and educators. This partnership includes collaborations with the Ecological Society of America (ESA) <http://ecoed.esa.org/> as a potential partner. A working group will be gathering at the ASM to discuss and brainstorm the possibilities.

- **Citizen Science at LTER:** Many sites have these programs already in place and several sites are interested in launching a citizen science program. A working group meeting will be held at the ASM to encourage sites to share the successes and challenges of hosting citizen science projects.

**Plans for leadership transitions**, if any: Re-election of committee co-chairs to occur in 2012 at the All Scientists Meeting in Estes Park, Colorado. According to the terms of reference a new co-Chair will be elected at the ASM for a three-year term. The election will be for the co-Chair position that Beth Simmons currently holds. The co-Chair position held by Steven McGee will be up for election for a three year term starting the following year at the Education Committee annual meeting in 2013.

**Plans for 2012-2013:**

- Continue annual face-to-face meetings of the Education Executive committee in September of each year to allow for focused committee work around SIP objectives. The education committee meeting at the ASM will serve as the annual meeting in 2012. In the intervening years, the location will rotate among LTER sites in different regions of the country to make it easier for other education committee members to attend without funding.
- To better facilitate communication between the Education Executive committee and the full Education Committee, we have revised a list of each LTER site's Education and Outreach coordinators. This list was shared with the LTER network office and updated online.
- Have working groups execute some results of their proposed plans as a result of the sessions at the ASM. The Education Executive Committee will meet at least quarterly via phone conference to report progress on the working groups.
- Attend our first LTER Executive meeting.