



Maryland Outdoor Learning Partnership (OLP) Access to Nature Working Group Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: Monday, February 10th, 2:00-3:00 PM

Attendees

Rick Garber (NorthBay Education, Access to Nature Working Group co-chair), Chris Wheedleton (Partnership for Learning, Access to Nature Working Group co-chair), Isabel Layton (Maryland Department of Natural Resources), Jo Anne Murray (Maryland State Department of Education), Karen McDonald (Smithsonian Environmental Research Center), Katie Dell (Baltimore County Public Schools), Katrina Jones (Maryland Port Administration), Kristen Komlosy (Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound School), Michelle Hickerson (Alice Ferguson Foundation), Payton Hesse (Maryland State Department of Education), Stephanie Tuckfield (Maryland Department of Natural Resource), Olivia Wisner (Maryland Department of Natural Resources)

Welcome & Meeting Began at 2:00

Introductions

What is This Working Group's Assignment

- References to Access to Nature in Executive Order 01.01.2024.15 include:
 - o "Establishment. There is a Maryland environmental literacy and access to nature initiative titled the Maryland Outdoor Learning Partnership."



- “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.”

- The Executive Order calls on OLP to:
 - “(Responsibilities) 2. Foster collaboration, coordinate resources, and deliver recommendations to decision makers in order to equitably ensure that: (c) Maryland’s youth spend time outdoors engaging with nature;”

- Previous iterations of the Partnership have addressed Access to Nature through:
 - [Past Recommendations from Partnership for Children in Nature](#)
 - [Nature Play Space guidance](#)
 - [Outdoor Bill of Rights](#)
 - [Park Equity Mapper](#)

- Suggested back-mapping to structure your meetings for 2025 can be found on page 5 of 7 of the [OLP Working Group Chair Welcome Packet](#)
 - Recommendations should be drafted by August 29th

Logistical Planning to Achieve our Goal

- Going forward the Access to Nature Working Group will meet every 2nd Monday of each month from 2:00 – 3:00
 - Come as you are able

- Actions items:



1. Read over the [OLP Co-Chair Welcome Packet](#), [Executive Order](#), and [previous recommendations](#)
 2. Make sure you're able to Access the Dropbox; if unable, email Olivia.Wisner1@maryland.gov.
 3. Be ready to contribute to discussion about the reading materials at the next meeting on March 10th 2:00 – 3:00
- Other resources shared:
- o Carroll County's proposed FY26 Operating Budget includes recommended spending reductions that would impact Carroll County Outdoor School; [Minutes from CCPS Board of Education meeting on January 29th, 2025](#); [next CCPS Board Meeting with Public Participation will be held on 2/12/2025 at 4:00](#).

Meeting Closed at 3:00