

South Tahoe K-12 Leadership Group Minutes

January 18, 2005 at Lahontan RWQCB

In attendance: Jenny Francis (NTCD), Kelly Kelso (NTCD), Cindy Wise (LRWQCB), Sarah Muskopt (FS), Barak Shemai (FS), Beth Quandt (Tahoe Valley ES), Susie Marx (South Tahoe MS), Dan Allison (SWEP)

1. Roundtable sharing
2. Professional Development: reminded people of upcoming PD opportunities Project WET Feb 4-5 Incline Village, Place-Based Learning Workshop Feb 11-12 Kings Beach, Project Citizen Mar 1-2 ?, Waves Wetlands and Watersheds Mar 5, Auburn, Community Leaders in the Classroom Mar 15, Incline Village; LTUSD is not going to offer Waves Wetlands and Watersheds on Feb 21 staff development day so the group will probably offer a two hour training after school or Saturday this spring or fall.

Discussed how to determine what sorts of professional development teachers want. No one has an solutions, but suggested made or relayed were: offer curriculum and training on reading and writing in the content areas, such as children's fiction and nonfiction books matched to reading and writing prompts offered on loan; new charter school may need a theme and we could influence and support that theme (decision on public charter school will be made by the district in March, if yes, will start in the fall as K-6; private charter school was turned down but may re-apply).

3. Report on meetings with administrators: Dan has been meeting with principals and other administrators (individually, has not met with administrative council yet). The three elementary principals (Mark Romagnolo, Jim Watson, Karen Tinlin) said their main focus this year is adjusting to the reconfiguration and don't see much energy for new stuff this year, but are interested in outdoor activities after testing is complete in May. Jackie Nelson at the middle school is excited about the EETT grant, wants to extend high quality instruction existing in science to all subjects, and suggested reading in the content areas as our best approach for PD and support of teachers; administrators at the HS (talked a bit with Marcia Kaster, Marilyn Pawling and Jack Stafford) are very proud of their past involvement in environmental education projects and supportive of teachers who want to continue meeting their instructional program using projects, but didn't expect involvement for new teachers. If you want more detail on these meetings, ask Dan for the summary document.
4. TRCD & SWEP: Tahoe RCD and SWEP are going to be offering a series of classroom presentations on watershed concepts, erosion, and BMPs with the intent of increasing the understanding of and participation in Backyard Conservation Program by homeowners. The presentations are primarily for 4th and 5th grade classrooms, but available to others. A flier will be soon. Suzie suggested sixth grade science classrooms as a good fit; Beth mentioned Tahoe Valley upper grades with a connection to the school-based Earth Day. Suzie and Carol Murdock are currently attending GLOBE training for the EETT project and are enjoying it a lot; hopes that GLOBE will again become prominent in the basin at all schools.
5. Selecting one project for the remainder of the school year? The group supports the idea of zeroing in.
6. Discussion of possible projects: We reviewed the list of projects and added some ideas, and talked about several of the projects in more detail. The list of projects was then prioritized by the group by dot marking. The list, in priority order, is:

South Tahoe MS BMP project (5)
South Tahoe HS BMP projects (4 dots)
a creek day for cleanup, restoration and education similar to Markleeville creek day (3)
helping agencies and organizations bring offerings into better standards and grade alignment
(3)
South Tahoe MS EETT grant (2)
swap HS and MS expertise and technology in developing and implementing projects (1)
identifying and localizing lessons, the Teach Tahoe vision (0)
funding for field trips (0)
offering professional development (0)
Earth Day (both the official day and the school-based Earth Day at Tahoe Valley) (0)

These items are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and any one of them might include elements of others. It was expressed that the school-based Earth Day already has strong support, participation and history, so the group did not need to specifically support it as an additional item,

The South Tahoe MS BMP project, the top dot-getter, is new to the list. While TRCD and SWEP have been considering the middle school for a project next year, possible new funding sources, as well as the opportunity to have the BMP project merge with or complement the EETT grant was of considerable interest to the leadership group.

While the middle school BMP project was the top priority, I don't believe that it stands out enough from the next three to select it.

7. Next meeting: The group scattered before a meeting schedule was discussed, so an executive decision was made by those remaining that we would move the meetings to the SECOND TUESDAY. The third Tuesday schedule had a number of conflicts, particular for teachers. So, the meeting schedule for the remainder of the school year is:

February 8
March 8
April 12
May 10
June 14

The February 8 meeting will be at the Lahontan RWCQB offices, but the future meetings may well move to the middle school.

What's Next?

Dan will survey the leadership group membership (as defined by the email lists) to see if we can come to a decision via email on the single project from among the top four listed above. If this works, we will go into the next meeting with a work agenda and accomplish specific progress. If not, then the first order of business will be to select the project, and then get to work. Expect an email in the very near future surveying the group.