



VRUEC Strategic Plan

October 2021

VISION & MISSION

Vision: A Commonwealth of environmentally literate citizens with the intention of making informed decisions concerning the environment

Mission: To facilitate opportunities for collaboration between formal and non-formal educators in order to support environmental literacy instruction

KEY DEFINITIONS

Environmental Education: A process that enables people to acquire knowledge, skills, and positive environmental experiences in order to analyze issues, assess benefits and risks, make informed decisions, and take responsible actions to achieve and sustain environmental quality.

(Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence. NAAEE 2009.)

Environmental Literacy: Possessing knowledge about the environment and issues related to it; capable of, and inclined to, further self-directed environmental learning and/or action.

Informal Environmental Education: Any unstructured environmental education activity outside the formal system where people learn from exhibits, mass media, and everyday living experiences. Also referred to as free choice environmental education. The term is frequently used interchangeably with non-formal environmental education, especially within the science education community.

Formal Environmental Education: School-day environmental education provided by credentialed teachers.

GOAL 1. ENGAGE IN STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN STATE AGENCIES & INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS.

Objective	Objective Task Details	Actions	Metrics
<p>1.1 Provide non-formal and formal educators with accurate and up-to-date information about Virginia natural resources.</p>	<p>Collaborate with VDOE to ensure that formal and non-formal educators receive accurate and up to date environmental content and practices that align with appropriate Virginia Standards of Learning.</p>	<p>A VRUEC committee that includes VDOE meets annually to review VRUEC EE resources (e.g. <i>Virginia Natural Resources Education Guide</i>).</p> <p>Include environmental practices & potential stewardship actions in each <i>Virginia Natural Resources Education Guide</i> chapter.</p>	<p><i>Virginia Natural Resources Education Guide</i> is reviewed annually, updated as needed, and is made accessible through the VRUEC website.</p> <p>Each <i>Virginia Natural Resources Education Guide</i> chapter includes suggested environmental practices and possible stewardship actions.</p>
	<p>Provide information on current environmental issues in the Commonwealth.</p>	<p>Identify a VRUEC member or committee of members who will keep track of environmental issues and commit to sharing this information with members.</p> <p>Quarterly environmental issue updates to the VRUEC web page to support all educators</p>	<p>One or more members are designated to be responsible for this task.</p> <p>Quarterly environmental issue updates are made on the VRUEC website.</p>

<p>1.2 Share environmental education professional development opportunities with non-formal, pre-service, in-service, and post-secondary educators.</p>	<p>Seek and communicate professional development opportunities for formal and non-formal educators to support training of multiple audiences in and beyond preK-12 education (i.e., community audiences of all ages).</p>	<p>VP of Communications (new position) creates and manages a VRUEC listserv & Facebook page and manages the VRUEC website.</p> <p>Communicate professional development opportunities on the VRUEC website and through VRUEC member organization communication platforms.</p>	<p>VRUEC Website updated with current professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Listserv & Facebook page created & actively used by members.</p> <p>Number and types of communication platforms used for communication</p> <p>Number of communication posts</p>
<p>1.3 Communicate systemic implementation of “Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences” (MWEE) related to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Agreement.</p>	<p>Communicate strategies for implementing MWEE and share these strategies with member agencies. Leverage support in school divisions to implement MWEEs on and off school grounds.</p>	<p>VRUEC agencies report annually on MWEE implementation programs and activities (e.g., educator professional development and student programs).</p>	<p>Number of VRUEC agencies submitting annual reports</p>
<p>1.4 Identify gaps in audiences not being reached by environmental and natural resources education.</p>	<p>Identify specific audiences and their needs for and/or misconceptions about environmental and natural resources education.</p> <p>(Audiences can include, preK-12 school groups, adult and youth community audiences.)</p>	<p>Each VRUEC agency representative identifies environmental and natural resource gaps in their own outreach purview and reports to VRUEC.</p> <p>For K-12 audience gaps, use VA ELit and VDOE SOL performance data.</p>	<p>Annual assessment of environmental and natural resource education gaps during a VRUEC meeting</p> <p>VRUEC looks for commonalities in gaps and identifies areas where agencies can assess overlaps and</p>

		VRUEC prioritizes the gaps to address.	collaborate in identifying actions to address these needs.
		Evaluate previous attempts to take these actions and determine why they did or did not work.	
1.5 One VRUEC member will serve on VAEE Board.	A VRUEC member will serve on the VAEE board to facilitate communication and collaboration between VRUEC and VAEE.	Formalize inter-organizational communications between VAEE and VRUEC Create a process by which one VRUEC member annually is selected to become the representative to VAEE. The VRUEC representative will serve as a liaison between VRUEC and VAEE and will facilitate inter-organization communications.	Communication plan agreement is established between VRUEC and VAEE A VRUEC member is selected to serve on the VAEE Board. The representative will give a written and short oral report of VAEE activities and potential areas of VRUEC-VAEE collaboration at each VRUEC meeting as a standing agenda item.

GOAL 2. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMUNICATE AND SHARE RESOURCES BETWEEN MEMBER AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS TO SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND PARTNERS.

Objective	Objective Task Details	Actions	Metrics
Compile and communicate environmental education resources to share between organizations, education professionals, VAEE, and	Same as the objective stated	Update VRUEC website with pertinent environmental education resources	Web pages are up-dated on a quarterly schedule with environmental education resources, current environmental issues, environmental education

the environmental education community, at large.		Submit resources to the K-12 Environmental Science Repository	programming and funding opportunities Number of resources submitted to the Environmental Science Repository
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GOAL 3. INCREASE THE VISIBILITY, EFFECTIVENESS, AND SUSTAINABILITY OF VRUEC.

Objective	Objective Task Details	Actions	Metrics
<p>3.1 Increase VRUEC membership</p>	<p>Invite all eligible state agencies and institutions to have representation in VRUEC.</p>	<p>VRUEC Membership Chair will lead the following actions:</p> <p>Work with a committee of VRUEC members to develop, revise, and clarify membership criteria, as necessary</p> <p>Present the membership criteria for vote at a VRUEC meeting</p> <p>Identify, recruit, and follow up with potential new and/or absent VRUEC members that are not currently attending meetings or that are not represented on the Council.</p>	<p>Criteria for VRUEC membership is written, voted on, and shared on the VRUEC website.</p> <p>Eligible agencies and institutions that are not currently represented are invited to participate in meetings.</p>
<p>3.2 Increase effectiveness and sustainability of VRUEC through regular internal communications among VRUEC members</p>	<p>Identify and communicate opportunities to collaborate</p>	<p>Ensure that VRUEC digital platforms are current with up-to-date content and organization contact information.</p> <p>Members regularly share information with the VP of Communications for the digital platforms</p>	<p>Digital platforms are kept up-to-date by the VP of Communications</p>

		<p>Actively use the listserv for internal communications; i.e., for asking questions, seeking support, making announcements.</p> <p>Conduct VRUEC meetings, in-person or virtually, three times a year.</p> <p>Restructure VRUEC Council meetings to incorporate breakout and/or task subgroups for members based on audience-served (i.e. K-12 community or general public)</p> <p>Include mini-PDS during our VRUEC meetings to help us accomplish our strategic goals and objectives (Example mini-PD's: school principals talk about how to better reach principals or a web guru to help us with our web platforms)</p>	<p>Member attendance at the three annual VRUEC meetings</p> <p>Council meetings will include summary reports of activities by subgroups; there will be an increase in collaboration and information sharing</p> <p>Meeting agendas include engagement in mini-PD's designed to increase VRUEC and member agency effectiveness</p>
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