



Environmental Education

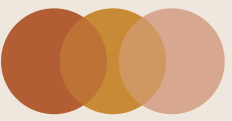


Accessibility



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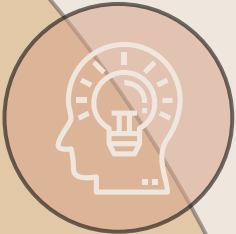


phases & stages

PHASE 1: DISCOVERY
Discovering our purpose and our desired future. The first phase focuses on gathering information and input.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT
Developing the road map & assessment tools for success, identifying priorities and strategic development. Finalizing.

PHASE 3: DISTRIBUTION
Release to public and begin implementation and assessment stages.



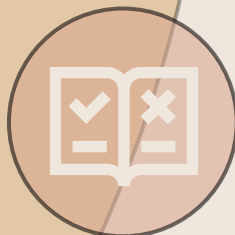
DEFINE
The goal of this stage is to acquire a contextual understanding of EL in VA, and stakeholders.



DATA
Collect in depth data and resources, synthesize information, and conduct qualitative analysis to identify themes.



DESIGN & DEVELOP
Present data & identify priorities. Develop initiatives, objectives & strategies to move from conception to action & outline plan.



DRAFTING
Produce a written SP & initiate the revision process. Completion & visualization conclude.



DELIVER
Public debut of plan

DEBUT
Begin implementation, including continuous assessment of SP aligned with the 2025-2026 school year

Our Numbers

1.5 YEARS

94
Individuals

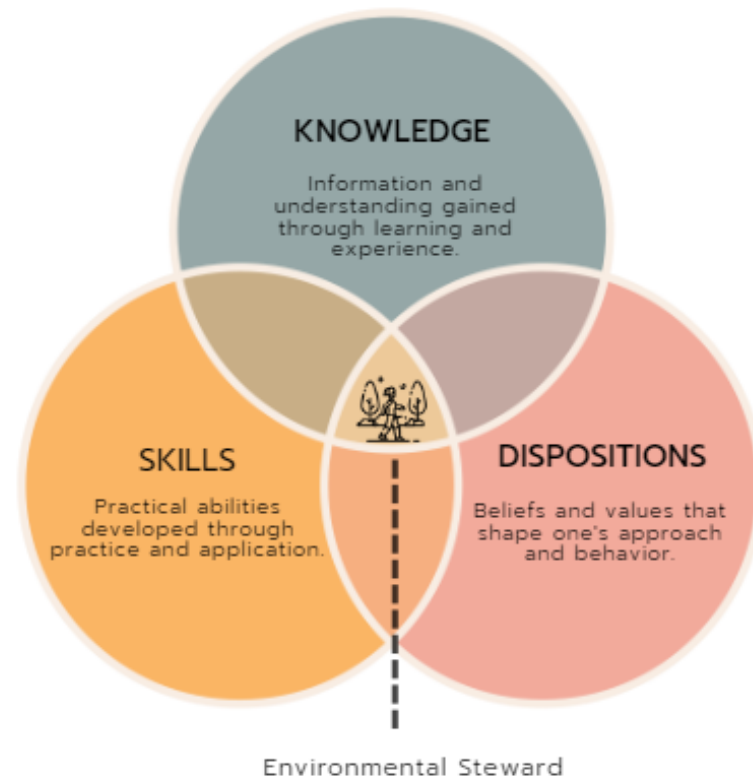
Collaborators Represent
Businesses
Government Agencies
Higher Ed Institutions
Non-Governmental Organizations
School Systems
Tribal Nations



CONTENT IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Encouraging new stakeholders with individualized and collaborative content

K-12 ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY FRAMEWORK FOR VIRGINIA



KNOWLEDGE

- Virginia Standards of Learning
- Environmental and Sustainability concepts
- Ecological principles
- Environmental issues
- Sustainability
- Earth's social, cultural and political systems
- Civic participation and action strategies

SKILLS

- Asking questions and defining problems
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating data
- Constructing and critiquing conclusions and explanations
- Developing and using models
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information
- Engaging in civic action strategies

DISPOSITION

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Civic Engagement/Responsibility

Participants
Administrators (Principals, Superintendents, Curriculum Coordinators)
Business and Industry Partners
Community-based/Non-profit Organizations
Health Care Professionals
Institutes of Higher Education
Networks (groups of connected people that share information or resources)
Parents, Caregivers and Community Members
Philanthropy
School and Facility Operations
State and Local Government Agencies
Teachers/Formal Education

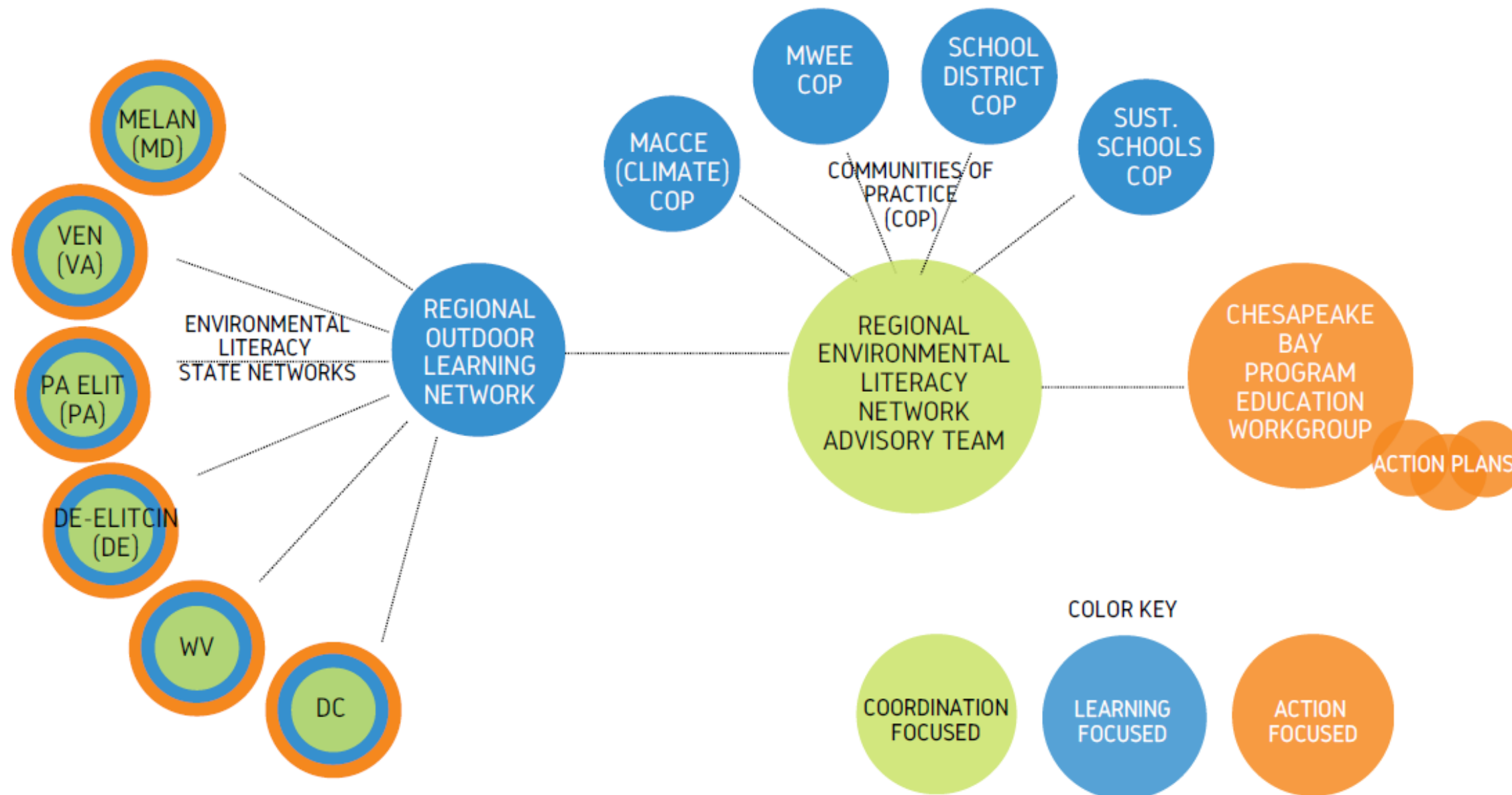
GOAL 1

Network and Capacity Building: Foster collaborations among environmental education entities with shared interests to cultivate a sustainable, interconnected network across Virginia.

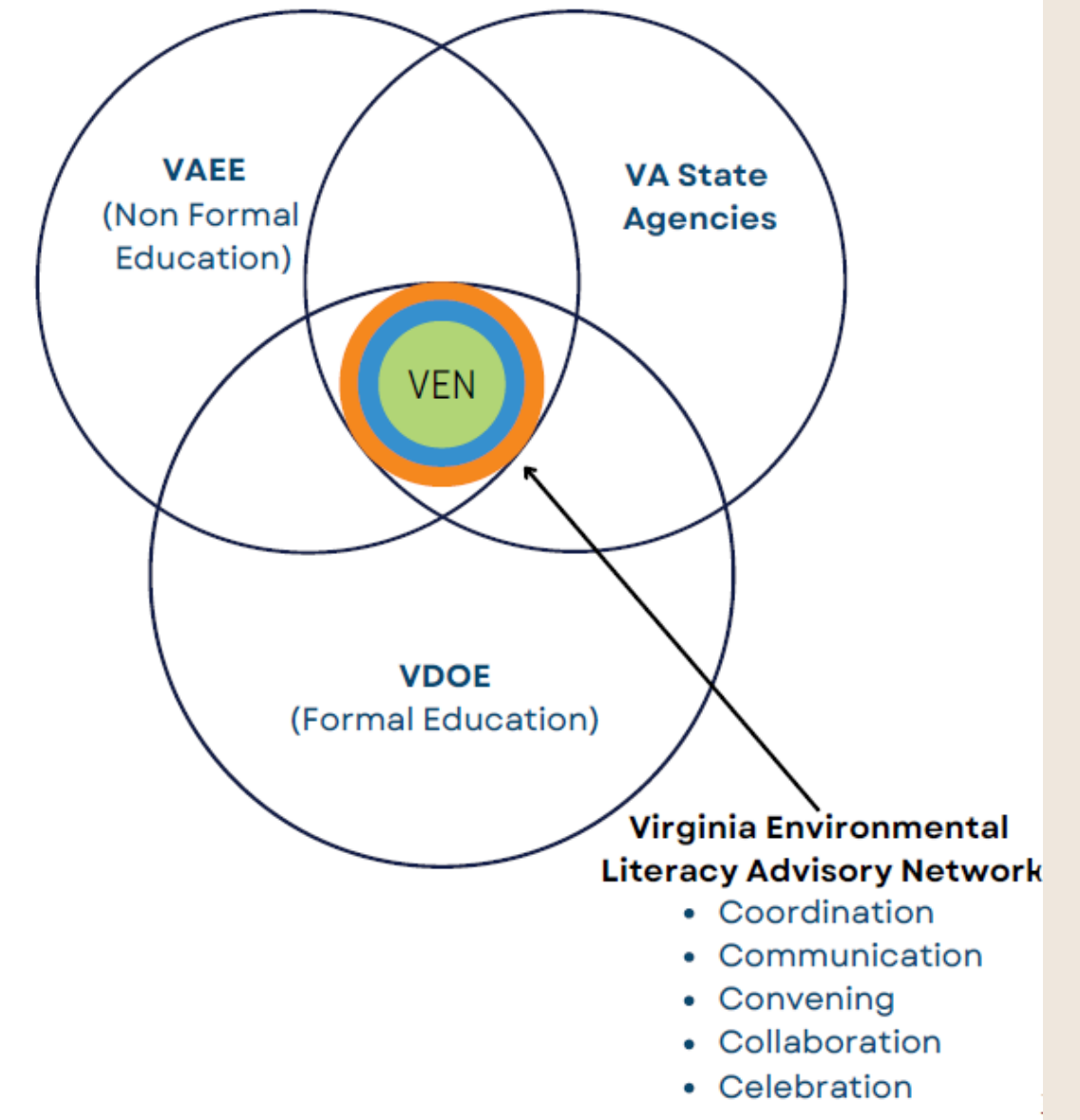
Environmental Literacy Ecosystem of Networks

Mid-Atlantic Region

This diagram visualizes some of the groups and networks that are interested in environmental literacy and are operating across the region. Currently, the region is defined as Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia, and Washington DC.



Virginia



goal 2

Educator Support: Provide accessible and interdisciplinary professional learning opportunities in environmental education.



Outreach Opportunities

- DOE Learning Modules
- Virginia Association of Environmental Education Certification
- Project Learning Tree
- Project Wild

Services Education

- Sound practices for outdoor instruction
- Available programs
- Funding Opportunities

Partnerships State Parks

- Aligning existing programs with VA SOLs

Solving Baseline Data

Determining methods to collect baseline data on existing opportunities to analyze future growth.

goal 3

Student-Centered Approach: Promote a student-centered instructional approach that includes strategies to develop the academic, physical, cognitive and emotional well-being of students and integrates outdoor learning experiences, career readiness education, and community engagement.

What is a MWEE?

MWEEs are learner-centered experiences that delve into local environmental issues, fostering informed action and civic engagement while aligning with grade-level standards.

VA Department of Education recommends MWEEs at each school level (elementary, middle, high). These experiences encompass field investigations and action projects, serving as a comprehensive platform for cultivating environmentally literate graduates.



GOAL 3/4: MWEE REQUESTED FUNDS

FY₂₅

\$1,052,062M

FY₂₄

\$700,500

FY₂₃

\$260,829

BUDGET

250k

INCREASED REQUESTS

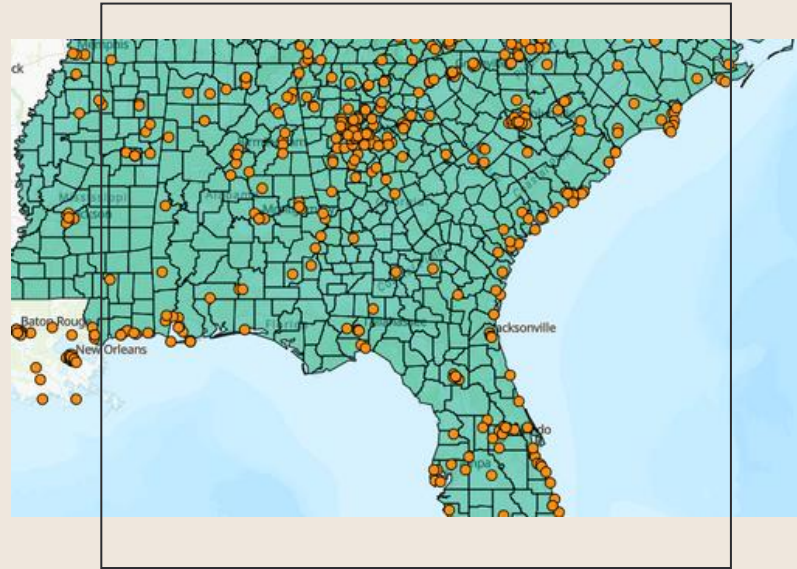
- Financially
- Geographically

DATA

New data avenues

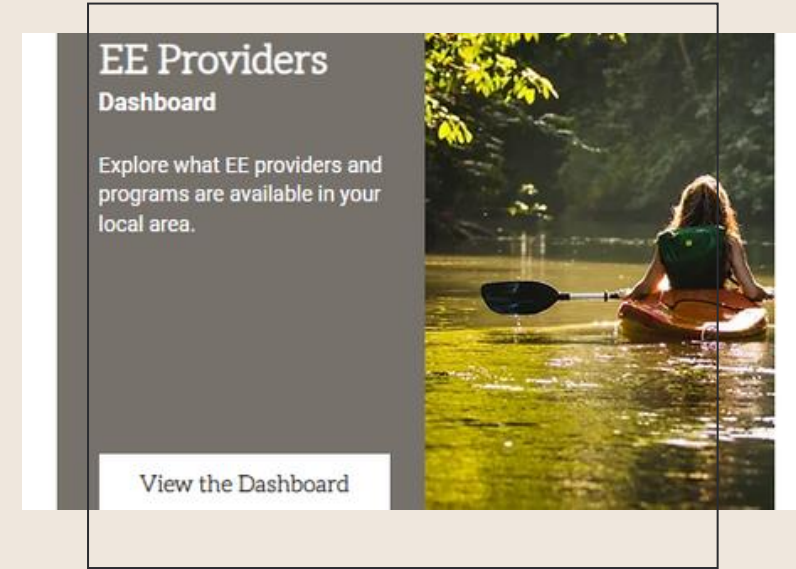
goal 4

Resource Optimization: Ensure sustainable promotion and optimization of resources to achieve equitable access to environmental education for all students statewide.



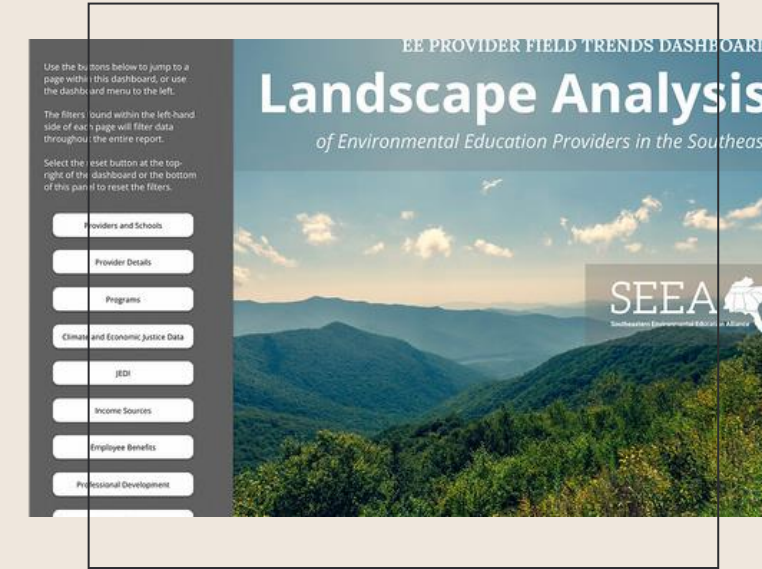
Interactive Map GIS

- Facilitates the mapping of environmental education service providers.
- Enables detailed data collection to visualize the distribution of resources across Virginia.
- Provides a dynamic tool for educators to explore and engage with local and statewide offerings.



Dashboard Directory

- Establishes a comprehensive directory of environmental education resources.
- Enables users to search and locate resources based on their geographic location and specific requirements.
- Fosters collaboration by connecting educators with resources that align with their teaching objectives. (SOL's)



Landscape Analysis Data Collection

- Systematically collects data on environmental education service providers.
- Identifies specific needs and areas with potential gaps in resources.
- Empowers providers to assess the environmental education landscape on both local and statewide scales.

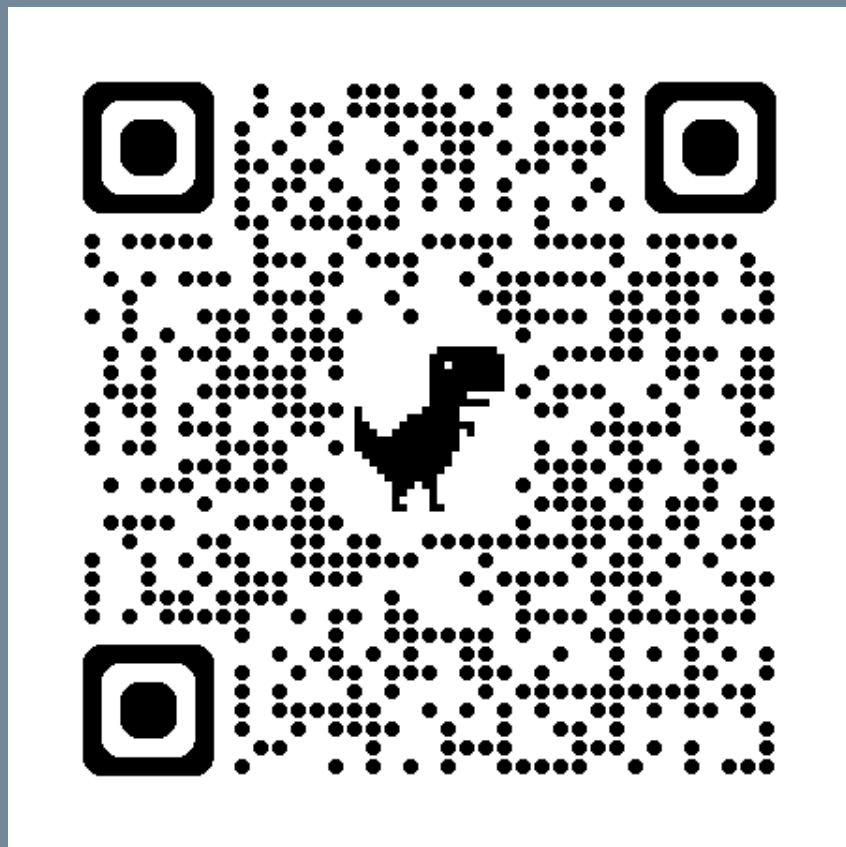


JOIN US
IN MAPPING

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

www.genthrive.org/virginia

ENVIROED NEWSLETTER



Statewide ee calendar
Resource spotlight
Funding opportunities
Share your info!

stay in the know!

Sign up for the new
Office of
Environmental
Education
Newsletter!



EnviroLearn
a professional learning series

Water Wise

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Food & Lodging
- Classroom Project Budget
- Expert Speakers
- Outdoor Adventures & Caving
- Macroinvertebrates Exploration
- Professional Connections
- VA SOL Integration

A NO COST hands-on experience for private, public, and homeschool educators!

 13-15 APRIL, 2025

 Natural Tunnel State Park
Duffield, VA

Dive into expert sessions, outdoor fun, and networking! Explore water health in Virginia and let us fund your ideas.

Drink in Knowledge
Pour out Impact

environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov



MWEE Grants

ANNUAL GRANTS ARE
AVAILABLE ON THE DCR
ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION WEBSITE.

Expect the 2026 grant application to be posted in end-December or early January.

accessibilit

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WHAT MAKES AN EXPERIENCE, AN
INTERACTION, OR A LEARNING
OPPORTUNITY POSITIVE FOR YOU?



WHAT MAKES AN EXPERIENCE, AN
INTERACTION, OR A LEARNING
OPPORTUNITY MAKE YOU FEEL ANXIOUS,
NERVOUS, OR CAUSE YOU TO JUST WALK
AWAY?

Working with Schools/Students

Main Challenges

1. Getting the opportunity for interaction
2. Knowing how to efficiently instruct individuals



Considerations:

IEP= Individual Education Plan -Supporting an achievement deficit

OT= Occupational Therapy - Skills of Daily Living

PT = Physical Therapy - Physical movement and stability

ELL - English Language Learners

ED - Emotional Disorders

Race, Religion, Age, Gender,

Past experience, Peer Interaction,

Home life, Nutrition, Sleep,...

THE TEACHER PERSPECTIVE

Before I give you my students' instructional time...



1. Accommodations: Can all my students participate and learn?
2. Safety: Can all my students participate safely?
3. Schedule: When are you beginning and ending instruction?
4. Standards: What standards are you going to cover?



CAN LANGUAGE MAKE LEARNING MORE
ACCESSIBLE TO STUDENTS? CAN
LANGUAGE OPEN THE DOOR TO AN
INVITATION?

Disclaimer:

NOT EVERYONE WILL RESPOND THE SAME WAY TO LANGUAGE STEMS. THIS IS NOT A FIX ALL, 100% EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUE. THERE WILL BE INDIVIDUALS THAT DO NOT RESPOND. SOME PEOPLE WILL KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND LOOK AT YOU SIDEWAYS. IN-LAWS MAY FEEL VALIDATED AND HEARD AND MAY WANT TO SPEND MORE TIME

with you. You will feel awkward and it will take time and trial to find success. Done correctly, you may avoid doors shutting, opportunities ending, and educators saying no.

Just trying it once won't work. Practice will increase success. Sometimes I use language stems with my family and it makes my day happier and they have no idea I'm using Jedi mind tricks.

COMMUNICATION ALLOWS FOR ACCESSIBILITY



Paraphrasing
Clarifying
Mediational Questions
Suggestions
Teachable moments
Non-judgemental responses

With practice, they become a casual part of your speech and have the ability to transform conversations into learning experiences for all.

Paraphrasing

PARAPHRASING COMMUNICATES THAT THE LISTENER HAS..

HEARD what the speaker said

UNDERSTOOD what was said

CARES

PARAPHRASING INVOLVES EITHER:

RESTATING in your own words

SUMMARIZING

SOME POSSIBLE PARAPHRASING STEMS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

So, ...

In other words, ...

What I'm hearing then, ...

What I hear you saying, ...

From what I hear you say, ...

I'm hearing many things, ...

As I listen to you I'm hearing, ...



Paraphrasing Practice



You set up a great outdoor lesson at a school. When the class arrives, you tell them what to look forward to including studying local water contamination and an invertebrate study in the creek adjacent to school property.

While most students are satisfied with the agenda, one student spots your Enviroscape kit that you brought as a backup lesson. The student shouts, “Are we doing the thing where you pour the water? I’ve seen that. I want to drop the poop sprinkles. Can I drop the poop sprinkles? When are we doing that?”

You notice the teacher and an aide are purposely standing close to this student. The teacher whispers something to the student. The student begins to get visibly agitated and is still saying, “The water thing is the best part. We have to do the water thing.”

Other students have stopped listening to you and are now looking at the student.

USE PARAPHRASING TO HELP THIS STUDENT FEEL HEARD WHILE NOT GIVING UP THE PURPOSE OF THE LESSON YOU PLANNED.

MEDIATIONAL QUESTIONS

Mediational questions help the student:

HYPOTHESIZE what might happen,

ANALYZE what worked or didn't

IMAGINE possibilities

COMPARE & CONTRAST what was planned with what ensued

Some Mediational question stems include:

What's another way you might ...?

What would it look like if ...?

What do you think would happen if ...?

What sort of an impact do you think ...?

When have you done something like ... before?

What do you think ...?

How did you decide ... (come to that conclusion?)

What might you see happening in your classroom if ...?



Mediation Practice



A small group of high school students has been working for longer than average to complete an activity that compares soil types. You've observed them working hard, and now they need to write a short summary of their findings. The group feels pressured to finish quickly and has begun arguing about what to write. Some students agree on a statement, while two others disagree. One student has written a different statement and is now refusing to put her name on the paper unless they agree with her answer. Another student has decided to walk away entirely.

HOW CAN YOU USE MEDIATIONAL QUESTIONS
TO HELP THEM FINISH THIS ASSIGNMENT
POSITIVELY?

SUGGESTIONS

“OPEN” suggestions...

Are expressed with invitational, positive language and voice tone

Offer choices to encourage ownership

Are often expressed as a question to invite further thinking

Are achievable: enough to encourage, but not to overwhelm

May provide information about the mentor's thinking and decision-making



Suggestion Stems:

One thing I've learned/noticed is ...

A couple of things to keep in mind ...

Something/some things to keep in mind when dealing with...

Something you might consider trying is ...

There are a number of approaches ...

Sometimes it's helpful if ...

Suggestion Practice



The scenario: You have led middle school students to a portion of wet trail. You challenge each team to construct a way to cross the puddling section of the trail so that they don't get their feet wet and they preserve the water for animal and plant use. The teacher points out that one small group will likely struggle because the students in it collectively don't get along with one of the students. The student in concern is confident and cares more about completion than teamwork. He has now taken over the project to complete on his own. The other students have given up and stepped back to let him. He doesn't want to compromise, and the other students have enough experience with him to realize that protesting isn't worth their effort or time.

USE A SUGGESTION TO ENSURE ALL STUDENTS
GET TO PARTICIPATE.

Recognize the need to create a positive situation. Some people will come to you already anxious and uncomfortable. You have the opportunity to make it more positive for them.



"CHILDREN CANNOT BOUNCE OFF
THE WALLS IF WE TAKE AWAY THE
WALLS."

-ERIN KENNY

accessibility &

SOLS

THE KEY TO THE DOOR OF VIRGINIA EDUCATORS IS SOLS. IF YOU LEAVE YOUR KEY AT HOME, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GET IN.



VDOE Science Update

December 2024



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Overview of the 2018 *Science Standards of Learning*

- Adopted in October 2018
- Fully Implemented in 2022-2023
- Standards are for K-Physics (13 grades/courses)
- Highlights of the 2018 Science Standards of Learning and Curriculum Frameworks
 - Use of themes in K-6 to support elementary teachers in providing cohesion between science concepts within a grade level
 - Scientific and Engineering Practices (SEP) are reflected in the first standard at each grade level/course and in the Essential Knowledge and Practices section of the curriculum frameworks
 - Increased vertical alignment of science concepts and SEPs to support student conceptual understanding
 - Explicit integration of the 5C's

Science SOL Assessments

- SOL Assessments are given for multiple grades/courses
 - Grade 5 assessment covers Grades 4-5
 - Grade 8 assessment covers Grade 6, Life Science, and Physical Science
 - Biology
 - Earth Science
 - Chemistry

Resources to Support Science Instruction

- [Curriculum Frameworks](#) (transitioning to Instructional Guides in Spring/Summer 2025)
- Science Instructional Plans in [#GoOpenVa](#)
- High Quality Instructional Materials

Supporting Virginia Learners



Framework Overview



School Data Toolkit



Supporting Virginia Learners



Family Supports



Educator Supports

Family Supports



Framework Overview



School Data Toolkit



Supporting Virginia Learners



Family Supports



Educator Supports

Family Supports

Families can access resources, tips, and at-home activities to support their child in the areas below.

- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Chronic absenteeism
- Readiness

In Reading, Mathematics, and Science, families can explore materials in the Grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-12 grade bands.



VDOE Newsletters

Teacher Direct



Virginia Education Update



SOL Identification Practice

1. READ THE SOLS

2. READ THE LESSON PLAN

3. WHICH SOLS IS THIS PLAN
ADDRESSING?

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THANK YOU!
&
REACH OUT
ANYTIME

