

MINUTES: SD8 Local Chapter of EEPSA (Env'l Education Provincial Specialist Ass'n) AGM

June 8, 2017 - 4:00 to 5:00 pm
Held at the Kootenay Smokehouse Restaurant
at the Junction

Present: Linda Out, Nashira Birch, Graeme Marshall, Megan Jamison, Shanon Bennett, Ashley Long, Monica Nissen, Hali Raines, Shelley Wiltshire, Nicole Murray, Marj Jmaeff

- Attendance (11 people)
- Introductions - each person told us their name and where they work.
- Next, Graeme suggested we have a moment to reflect on Alvin Dunic, the teacher at Crawford Bay School who has been missing since May 29th. Shelley gave us a short update on the search so far.
- Linda then previewed the agenda for today's meeting.
 - Monica made a motion to adopt the agenda.
 - Hali moved to second the adoption of the agenda.
- Linda then gave a recap of the local EEPSA chapter activities to date:
 - last spring (2016), Jill Gingrich participated in the CBEEN Leadership Clinic at Nipika Resort;

- this past February 2017, she organized a meeting of teachers and educators with an interest in environmental and outdoor education
- we held a second meeting in March 2017 and we planned a Pro-D event
- we held a Pro-D event for teachers on April 10th, 2017, including a Bridges and Barriers activity and sharing of teaching resources for outdoor and env'l ed.
- four teachers from SD8 participated in the CBEEN Leadership Clinic from April 29th to May 2nd at Nipika Mountain Resort. We solidified the local chapter executive and constitution and made plans to create more momentum for environmental education locally.

- Next, we had a conversation about the importance of outdoor education and place-based education for kids. This included a discussion about its importance for the health of kids and adults too. We talked about how time spent outside is essential to develop a deep appreciation for nature. Halii mentioned that developing this appreciation can then lead to a desire to take care of nature later on.
 - Megan made a motion to adopt Linda's report.
 - Nashira seconded the motion.

- Graeme gave the Treasurer's Report: after we formed the local chapter constitution, we applied for some money to support our AGM. We were approved for up to \$225. Graeme will submit the receipts in order to get reimbursed for the appetizers.

- To become an official member of EEPSA, the fees for each teacher are \$30 / year.
- Nashira made a motion to adopt the Treasurer's Report. Linda seconded the motion.

- Next, we officially formed the executive for this local chapter.
 - Linda nominated herself for President.
 - Linda nominated Nashira for Vice-President.
 - Linda nominated Megan for Secretary.
 - Linda nominated Graeme for Treasurer.
 - Everyone voted for the Executive.
 - Halii offered to help with recruiting new members.

- Sharing of successful environmental education activities this year:
 - Linda talked about a field trip to Summit Lake with her grade 5/6 class from Winlaw where they met up with Anita Vibe's 5/6 class from Nakusp Elementary. They had set up various stations outside for the students to learn more about the local environment, such as the Western Toads.
 - Graeme talked briefly about the ATLAS program that he teaches, including the "Hug a Tree and Survive" program that his grade 12 students teach to to younger students throughout the district. His students are learning outdoor skills, leadership/mentorship, and service to the community.
 - Nicole is the Garden Manager for SEEDS in Nelson. She talked about hosting Nashira's Kindergarten class at the garden recently, where the kids learned the names and uses of many garden plants. She said that the kids were very

thankful for the experience, and that she really liked seeing the kid's excitement. SEEDS is happy to host more school classes at their garden and greenhouse. They are open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 9 am to noon at Lakeside Park. <http://seedsnelson.org>

- Marj is an Educational Assistant at Mt. Sentinel School. She coordinates the Green Team for the students. They are very involved with beekeeping and Bokashi composting, among many other things.
- Megan talked about a field trip she coordinated for the grade 4/5 class at Blewett Elementary. Brad Gretchev, the Curator of the Chamber of Mines in Nelson, welcomed the students and had stations set up for them to learn much more about identifying minerals, panning for gold, and finding fossils. We were also able to go to one of his mineral claim sites near town where the students searched for quartz crystals and each found many to take home. Brad is keen to host more school classes at the Chamber of Mines. Megan also mentioned some hands-on STEM activities that she did with the grade 3/4 class including building solar ovens and windmills.
- Shelley talked about a recent project at Erikson Elementary in Creston that she was involved with in collaboration with Gillian Cooper. The whole school from Kindergarten to grade 7 in involved with the creation of a school garden including creating nutrient-rich soil from composting.
- Ashley talked about taking the Kindergarten students at Brent Kennedy Elementary outside where they had a scavenger hunt. The students also built insect hotels with toilet paper rolls and created other art projects outdoors.

- Nashira said that this spring she's been taking her Kindergarten students outside every Tuesday through Friday from 8:30 to noon, with help from parent volunteers. They go on walking field trips to various locations including Gyro Park, Lakeside, and the forest above LVR School. Activities have included learning mapping skills and practicing reading by sounding out the letters on street signs. The students are learning awareness of their local place.
- Monica is involved with making videos with examples of successful environmental education occurring locally. She is also creating a book of teaching resources, including lessons, units, ideas, etc. She encourages all teachers to submit an inspiring example and also to check it out at KBEE.ca
- Shanon is an environmental educator who does programs for students in all seasons. This spring, her programs have included pond, river, and lake ecology, Aboriginal Education, wild food, forest ecology, Honing in on Habitat, and Know Your Watershed (for grade 9's). Her "Know Your Watershed" programs this spring involved filming and a puppet show with kids. She mentioned that the students will be presenting their puppet show on June 20th at 10 am in the Drama Room at Mt. Sentinel.
- Next, Linda mentioned the "Get Outdoors" resource created by WildBC / HCTF Education. It can be ordered at this link: <https://hctfeducation.ca/product/get-outdoors/>, or is provided for teachers who take a Get Outdoors workshop through WildBC. It contains Teacher Tip Sheets and checklists covering group management, materials, field trip planners and the value of the "100-Metre Field Trip".

- Linda talked about the importance of providing students with very clear expectations of behaviour before going outside. She also mentioned CBEEN as a great resource for teaching resources and professional development related to place-based learning. Linda recently won a CBEEN Award of Excellence: <http://cbeen.ca/awards-of-excellence/>
- We discussed the name of our local chapter, and decided to keep the name the same for now: SD8 Kootenay Lake Local Chapter of EEPSA.
- Next, we discussed professional development opportunities coming up this fall and winter.
 - There is interest in offering a Below Zero or Project Wild workshop for teachers locally.
 - Wade Davis is coming to SD8 for the professional development day in September (Sept. 22nd). We are waiting for more information about this.
 - David Sobel is coming to SD8 on October 27th in Creston. There is also a workshop on Risky Play being offered for Early Child Educators that weekend.
 - Nashira will contact Lori Fehr (SD8 Director of Innovative Learning) about our local chapter offering a pro-D event either before or after David Sobel's talk.
 - The PSA SuperConference is October 20th and 21st in Vancouver. EEPSA is one of many PSA's presenting workshops at this conference. They are hoping for one representative from each local chapter to do a brief presentation on highlights of place-based learning that is taking place (Friday afternoon at 1:30 pm).

- On March 1st to 3rd, 2018, there is a gathering in Nelson on Climate Change Education.
- Graeme mentioned the posting for a new Superintendent for SD8. He is hopeful that the new Superintendent understands the value of environmental and outdoor education and is wondering how we as a local chapter can have some influence on this.
- Monica mentioned that the KBEE (Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education) has incorporated more questions related to env'l education into the student survey.
- Halii said the hiring committee has already been formed.
- We will contact Selina to ask for more information about how we as a local PSA chapter can impact the hiring of the superintendent or have some influence once the superintendent is hired.
- Graeme made a motion to close the meeting.
- Linda seconded the motion.

NEXT MEETING - Thursday, September 14th at approximately 5:00 pm (a dinner meeting in Nelson). Discussion will include the opportunity to co-host a pro-d event at the beginning of March (with CBEEN and Wildsight) in Nelson around Climate Change Education. Following the meeting, Duncan Whittick, executive director of CBEEN, is planning a Green Drinks event to introduce Rebecca Bershoeff, the new Wild Voices Program Manager.

- Exact time and location are TBA.