

Minutes

Harbor Educator Seminar

New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program

Hudson River Park Trust

Hudson River Estuary Program and Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve

March 6, 2019 10:00 AM –1:00 PM

Location: Hudson River Foundation

17 Battery Place, Suite 915

New York, NY

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATIONS ICE BREAKER ACTIVITY:

Groups of 4-6 gathered to discuss examples of assessments or evaluations used in current or past programs. Examples shared are available here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1fBQHjJ3CF8YXICBy0-rdE4V1M6DB023A>. The following are recommendations and take aways from the discussion:

- Build in buffer time for your evaluations
- Incorporate questions that capture behavior changes (i.e., I am afraid of science – Strongly Agree, Agree, etc.)
- Level with your student audience, change surveys to use emoji's
- Sharing evaluations in advance provides a primer to the student when surveying them at the end of a lesson or program

BUILDING RESOURCES:

NEEDS ASSESSMENT – Chris Bowser (NYSDEC), Tanasia Swift (BOP), Christina Tobitsch (BBPC), Hazel England (GSWA), Maddie Taylor (NYC H2O), Nicolle Martinez (BOP), Karen Roos, and Adem Tairi

We spent most of our time determining the different audiences that a NA might include, and what are some of the key questions we would want to ask each of those audiences. We discussed how “community/neighborhood” has a strong geographic and place-based aspect to it. By contrast, the “Public” is a wider range, people who may or may not be from a particular region but possibly share a loosely defined set of interests.

A. COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD

1. How do you prefer to receive your information?
2. What locations (real or virtual) do you frequent as information sources or hubs?

B. “PUBLIC”

1. What is your previous experience with being outside/engaged with the outdoors?
2. What are your main interests, as well as obstacles to those interests?
3. What time/days are most accessible for you?

C. TEACHERS/CLASSROOM EDUCATORS

1. Where do you see our programs fitting into your class/school system/school year?
2. What do you want your students to accomplish this year (through our program?)
(can be answered many ways, and how they answer is important)

D. INFORMAL EDUCATORS

1. Do you feel like your ed staff is fully equipped to meet the needs of your audience?
-- If not, what is lacking?
2. What are your barriers to funding?

NEXT STEPS: Generate a google sheet to get some internal feedback on questions proposed.

MAPPING – Anna Koskol (HRPT), Katie Lamboy (BxRA), Devin Gorsen (NY Parks), and Walter Hutcheson (Sprout Up NYC)

We discussed the needs of Harbor Educators to identify information that a map would be helpful and then rated existing models against how many of the eight needs would be met. Existing models considered include Explorable Places, Mommy Popping, NFS maps, and Google Maps. The needs include:

1. Space – visualization of programming locations
2. Communication and collaboration between educators
3. Facilitating access
4. Communicating logistics
5. Identify existing networks and partnerships
6. Shareable
7. Platform and/or profile control
8. User friendly and index search capability

Based on needs, Explorable Places and Google Maps addressed the most needs. Cost was identified as a barrier for Explorable Places and that it may be an issue if not able to include NJ

NEXT STEPS:

- Reach out to Explorable Places for Harbor Educator filter, internal communication options, and input existing networks to share with group. Model would be the preferred example to follow.
 - Google myMaps is embeddable and free. This could be a better option to build.
- Collaborate with Resource Sharing group regarding online portal to identify access logistics, resources available, and permitting procedures.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT – Tina Walsh (HRPT), Christine Petro, Makela Elvy, Toland Kister, Marina Delgado

We discussed our impact as a group to build organizational buy-in of supervisors and executive directors regarding the benefits of this collective which includes: networking; increased content knowledge; funding opportunities; identifying gaps and roles in the Harbor; building organizational reputation and awareness; partnerships; and improved practices.

We then asked ourselves, how do we measure these?

- Year-end report or state sheet (via surveying this fall)
- Develop a report for our December 2019 meeting

The elements of the report should include:

- Number of attendees

- Number of new partnerships
- Number of shared resources
- Identify practices changed/improved
- Identify and fill gaps of knowledge
- Total number of served volunteers
- Group engagement

NEXT STEPS:

- Develop a survey for 2019 to capture the benefit of the group and benefit to the Harbor
 - Look at organization's existing year-end reports to identify overlap of metrics
- Meet to discuss ecological/environmental collective impact
- Release a 2019 year-end report
- Collaborate with Needs Assessment group for baseline information needed in the report and work with Mapping to link organization (highlight missions, expertise, and resources).

RESOURCE SHARING – Rosana Da Silva (HEP), Toniann German (BxRA), Shino Tanikawa (NYC SWIM), Lisa Scheppeke (ALS), Melissa Rex (TRP), Agata Poniatowski, and Annie Lederberg (BOP)

We discussed what a platform could look like for internal and external uses as well as how we could elevate our collective resources and programs across the Harbor Estuary. One of the first projects was working with the Needs Assessment group to collect general information that could be served as developing a Harbor Educator's Yellow Pages.

Harbor Educator's Yellow Pages:

1. Develop a database (Google Excel) of the metadata needed for the Yellow Pages
2. Create an external communication Yellow Pages – could be a brochure or printable document
 - a. If possible, being able to query the Yellow Pages would be great, but platform would be the limiting factor
3. Distribute Yellow Pages for partners in the Harbor Educators to utilize
4. Identify how often this would need to be updated – annually? Biannually?

Resource Sharing Platform:

1. Consider utilizing available platforms: Slack and Google Drive, Map (see Mapping group), or develop a website (must have admin access to support internal communication)
2. What will the platform be used for? Grant scheduling/writing, relationships as a resources (with schools and/or individuals), list and link to organization's websites and/or newsletters, and act as a "Craigslist" for Harbor Educators to keyword search for curriculum, space, tools, professional development, events (attend & participation), and job/internship opportunities.
 - a. Admin Access would enable us to: collect annual data (collective impact),

upcoming events, curriculum (share, evaluate, write or create), space and tools (physical or online) that organizations are willing to share, relationships, grant scheduling and writing, bartering, link to the Google Drive, evaluations and assessment reviews

- b. External Access would provide users with access to: events calendar, jobs, professional development, available curriculum, organization information (Yellow Pages), and sign up option for schools or Harbor Educators

We then spent some time considering what support would be needed to achieve developing a Yellow Pages and creating a platform. An administrator would be needed to manage the public site and maintain it. Who has the capacity to build a platform or website? And how is the information shared to upload to the platform or website? What are the rules of conduct for the platform and who enforces it? Costs associated include labor and, if creating a new platform, web design building.

NEXT STEPS:

- Identify whether Slack and Google Drive would serve the group as a means for internal communication
- Identify fields needed for Yellow Pages that provides enough information for a school, but does not need to be updated every year
 - Environmental Education Advisory Council of New York City has had a similar brochure, this could be a model to follow
- HEP will explore whether a website could be supported and what limitations we may have