

Exemplary Environmental Leadership/Sustainability Program or Initiative

School Board Near North District School Board

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Name of Program/Initiative Nipissing University and Near North District School Board Educating for Environment (E4E) Partnership

Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative

1. E4E Mattawa Project 2013: Working with a School as a Community
<http://www.nearnorthschools.ca/documents/e4e-2013.pdf>
2. Educating for Environment (E4E) 2014: Nipissing University and Phelps Central Public School
<http://www.nearnorthschools.ca/documents/e4e-2014.pdf>

Description of Program/Initiative

The Educating for Environment (E4E) Partnership between the Schulich School of Education at Nipissing University and the Near North District School Board is intended to build professional capacity in Environmental Education for both classroom teachers and teacher candidates. Over the course of a month in the spring a small group of teacher candidates, under the guidance of Drs. Astrid Steele and Jeff Scott (Schulich School of Education), and Lotje Hives (NND SB Program Coordinator), offer a series of indoor and outdoor learning experiences for students in selected schools.

In-service and pre-service educators engage in co-planning for inquiry-based learning with their local school environments in mind, and in response to their students' interests and wonderings.

Educators, with students, engage in Pedagogical Documentation to make visible the shifts in thinking about the impact of environmental inquiry. Evidence of the learning process (photos, video, narratives and artifacts) is shared with schools, families and community partners. It invites us to reflect as influencers of learners today and tomorrow.

Funding is shared by Ministry of Education Outdoor Education Funding and the Schulich School of Education, to ensure educator release, transportation costs, sustainable use of natural and accessible resources (human and material) and digital publication of documentation.

What has been the Impact on Student Learning?

The described E4E initiative has resulted in a positive impact on student learning.

- Educators documented an increase in student knowledge, skills and articulated perspectives

that foster environmental stewardship.

- Documentation to make student thinking visible is evidence of students' increased capacity to take action on locally relevant environment issues.
- Leadership support and facilitated modeling, through the E4E partnership, is building professional capacity by way of gradual acceptance of Environmental Education instructional strategies, and leading to an increase in time spent learning about, for and in the natural environment.
- Educators are collaborating (face to face and online) and sharing experience and documented evidence of learning leading to an increase in environmental inquiry-based learning.
- The annual documentation of the journey is provoking further professional dialogue and reflection, and each year a new school is invited to engage in this partnership initiative that benefits pre and in-service educators, students and school communities.