



The State of Maryland

Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2017.12

(Rescinds Executive Order 01.01.2008.06)

Project Green Classrooms

- WHEREAS, Maryland recognizes that in order to create a future generation of environmental stewards, all youth should have the opportunity to learn about the environment, develop a connection with nature, and have a sense of place in their local natural surroundings and that maintaining a connection with nature is a vital element in protecting their health and the future of Maryland's great natural resources, which also affects the State's economy and quality of life for our citizens;
- WHEREAS, Sustaining Maryland's natural resources, including the Chesapeake Bay, its waterways, and hundreds of thousands of acres of diverse land and habitat requires stewardship and innovation by current and future generations;
- WHEREAS, Youth's physical and mental wellness are improved when they spend time outdoors engaging in physical activity which helps them make healthy lifestyle choices and develop life and career skills including critical thinking, self-sufficiency, and collaboration;
- WHEREAS, Maryland's school systems need support and assistance in the creation of required Environmental Literacy curriculums;
- WHEREAS, Outreach to diverse individuals and organizations is important for the promotion of the conservation, restoration, and preservation of natural resources;
- WHEREAS, Maryland has signed the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and is committed to supporting all of its goals, including Environmental Literacy through education, Public Access through existing and new local, state, and national parks, refuges, reserves, trails, and partner sites, and Stewardship through increased numbers and diversity of trained and mobilized citizen volunteers;

WHEREAS, Maryland needs a future generation of innovators to solve our environmental challenges and Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act State Plan prepares youth for 21st century environment-based careers and "green" jobs, by and through identifying opportunities for workforce development, student leadership and enrichment programs, and connecting students with those programs.

WHEREAS, Maryland has made measurable, nationally-recognized progress in its work to ensure that our youth become informed and responsible stewards of the environment; in order to continue that progress, Maryland youth must be equipped for future environmental challenges and stewardship opportunities as citizens and as members of the workforce;

WHEREAS, A variety of resources, capabilities, and perspectives is necessary to assure our youth succeed in academics, civics, economics, and quality of life related to our environment and natural resources;

WHEREAS, Expanded outreach is needed to ensure that all individuals in all communities have the opportunity to experience Maryland's natural resources;

NOW THEREFORE, I, LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR., GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER SHALL TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY:

A. Established. There is a Maryland initiative titled Project Green Classrooms ("Initiative") to promote outdoor activities and environmental education through schools, in communities, and on public lands to benefit Maryland's young people.

B. Mission. The Mission of the Initiative is to mobilize resources to ensure that Maryland's youth experience, understand and learn to conserve the natural environment. The Initiative is an advisory body, working to make recommendations to decision-makers regarding solutions that will support environmental literacy programs in schools, increase access to "nearby nature" and promote the use of the outdoors for learning, discovery, healthy play, and career exploration.

C. Membership. The Initiative shall include high-level representatives from state agencies and other partner entities, providing for a well-rounded public-private stakeholder group. The Partnership shall consist of:

(1) State Agencies: The following agencies will assign a representative to participate in the Initiative to advise and implement actions in their areas of responsibility:

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources (the Secretary of Natural Resources serves as co-chair);
- Maryland Department of Education (the State Superintendent of Schools serves as co-chair);
- Maryland Department of Agriculture (to integrate agricultural priorities into educational and experiential efforts);
- Maryland Higher Education Commission (to implement measures to include environmental literacy content and practice into teacher pre-service education and other applicable disciplines);
- Maryland Department of the Environment (to provide technical advice, guidance, and partnerships regarding water quality, waste, and other sustainable practices that can be applied at/with schools to contribute to student learning and career preparedness);
- Maryland Department of Planning (to provide guidance on policies, practices, and partners focused on improving access to green space in all communities);
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (to address matters of youth community health as relates to the outdoors and active pursuits in nature);

- Maryland Department of Transportation (to provide guidance on transportation of students to field experiences, and regarding community access to green space).

(2) Other Partners: Maryland's excelling in the areas outlined in this Order requires cooperative engagement of leaders in science, education, business, government, and policy in contributing services and advice. The following organizations shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Initiative:

- Alice Ferguson Foundation;
- Audubon Maryland-DC;
- Chesapeake Bay Trust;
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation;
- Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation;
- Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education;
- Maryland Recreation and Parks Association;
- National Aquarium;
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- National Wildlife Federation; and
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

D. Structure of Membership. The membership of the Initiative shall consist of the entities designated in section C (1) and C (2) of this Executive Order. The entities in C (1) shall be the voting members. Members in C (2) are advisory and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor, in his discretion, may appoint additional members.

(1) Chair. The Initiative shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee, and the State Superintendent of Schools, or the Superintendent's designee.

(2) Staff Coordination. The Department of Natural Resources shall provide staff support for the Initiative in coordination with the Maryland State Department of Education, other state agencies, and other partners as agreed upon by the chairs including local school systems.

(3) Leadership and Steering Committee. Each voting member entity shall designate both a Leadership representative and a representative to serve on the Steering Committee. Advisory members shall designate representatives to serve on the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall meet regularly and report to the Leadership at least bi-annually. The Steering Committee makes recommendations on actions of the group, for decision by the Leadership.

(4) Operations. The Initiative shall do its work under a work plan approved by the Leadership describing specific actions to achieve established priorities, and outlining requirements for reporting progress. The work plan will outline the structure and expectations of each working group. Each voting member entity may engage additional staff as needed to conduct actions. The Initiative may consult outside organizations for advice and assistance.

E. Responsibilities. The Initiative shall:

(1) Promote the well-being of youth by increasing opportunities for time spent outdoors in both structured and unstructured opportunities for play, outdoor recreation, learning and scientific study in their communities and on public lands throughout the State of Maryland;

(2) Recommend and facilitate statewide actions needed to meet established priorities, convening partners (state agencies and nongovernment entities) to address gaps, recommending realignment of resources such as funding and improvement of coordination among and across public and private programs to efficiently advance outcomes;

(3) Develop recommendations to help shape State policy and stakeholder practices to address barriers, needs, and opportunities identified by the Initiative;

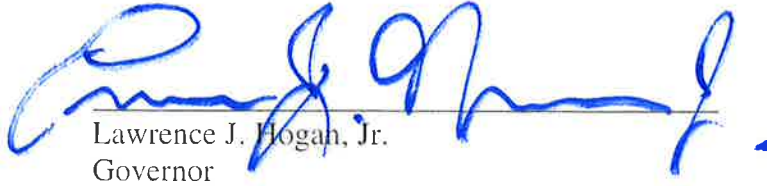
(4) Broaden the engagement of stakeholders in the Initiative's work, and help establish the tools and resources necessary to advance the work of the group;

(5) Advise and support state leadership in the implementation and tracking of relevant Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement goals and outcomes as they relate to environmental education; and

(6) Report to the Governor annually on the status of the Initiative's work and provide a report by each January 31 on the prior year's progress.

F. Executive Order 01.01.2008.06 is hereby rescinded.


GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 8th Day of June, 2017.



Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor



ATTEST:



John C. Wobensmith
Secretary of State