

Request	Agreed Partner action	Due date
Build strategic statewide efforts to reduce barriers to schools using public lands by convening ed. and natural resource leaders.	Two weeks before the July 9 MB meeting, the education workgroup will provide the MB with descriptions on potential actions for the MB, including details on current barriers to schools using public lands. MB will then identify actions during the July MB meeting.	Education workgroup: June 25 MB: July 9 MB meeting

Public lands with potential for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences include state forests, wildlife management areas, boat ramps, state parks, and open public spaces.

Action: Convene state meetings with the Parks/Natural Resource contacts and Education leadership contacts identified by the Management Board to facilitate and increase the use of public lands for environmental literacy instruction by schools, by sharing best practices and successes among states; identifying solutions including potential changes to funding streams, policies, programs; and setting targets for implementation as part of the 2-year action plans, with accountability identified among multiple CBP partners.

Current Barriers:

- Insufficient funding (for substitutes, transportation, park fees)
- Burden of paperwork, administrative approval, logistics (availability of substitutes, etc)
- Access to outdoor public spaces is not equitable
- Professional Development for Teachers does not consistently include outdoor learning
- Need for Professional Development for public land managers on how to best serve schools
- Lack of awareness about public lands near schools
- Lack of partnership between schools and public lands
- Lack of integration between school curricula and public land managers
- Insufficient communication about testing windows and other scheduling constraints to support planning for outdoor learning away from school campuses

List of Best Practices* for Each State to Consider:

- Creating protocol that streamlines paperwork for field trips to partner organizations
- Training public land managers and staff (e.g., foresters, biologists, scientists, natural resource professionals) on Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences which is an instructional practice that aligns to student-centered learning.
- Providing professional development for teachers at state parks and other public lands
- Developing programs on public lands that are driven by Education Standards
- Ensuring the information about where outdoor experiences are available and offered are up to date on Bay Backpack and Find Your Chesapeake and that all partners consistently share links to these resources. Utilize decision-support tools such as the Park Equity Mapper/ Environmental Justice Screen (and similar) to help improve

equitable access, by identifying green spaces available to schools and actively working with [especially] high need schools to promote and support visiting them.

- Identifying a school system point of contact for public land managers and NGOs with programming on public lands. This single school system point of contact would ensure the relationship with the public land or NGO endures if a teacher leaves.
- Parks and school systems have complementary resources that have the potential to fulfill each other's needs, and these need to be engaged for mutual support. In most states the communication and connectivity between these groups is too infrequent, not strategic, or fails to get to the practitioner level. States should identify and implement means to facilitate connection between school systems and parks.
- Active support among school administrators at all levels for outdoor learning, including encouragement and assistance to help make it happen..
- State grants to support transportation (or grants for professional development, site fees, and additional resources). Consider pooled resources, new allowable uses of existing funding, creative partnerships, and other mechanisms not currently in place.

*Note: Some states have already developed and implemented some of the best practices. Each state should review all best practices to synergize parks and schools efforts to meet the goal.