

Notes from

Sustaining Secondary Environmental Education

Kansas Environmental Education Conference

November 3, 2011 – Great Bend, KS

KACEE Education Committee evaluating perceived gap in EE/Sustainability Ed continuum

- Strong programs in K-8, high school environmental science, developing programs in higher education
- How are we doing with preparing students for green job and sustainability programs?
- What needs are there, and how can KACEE and others better support educators?

Overview of current programs in higher education (see slides)

- Johnson County Community College
- Emporia State University/Flint Hills Technical College
- Pittsburg State University

Current opportunities/challenges

Secondary Education

- Environmental science classes don't have the same level of respect as other disciplines
 - o Incentives for AP biology, chemistry, physics
 - o Environmental science and agriculture on the fringes
 - o Have to maintain rigor while opening the door to new opportunities
- No standards for sustainability
 - o 21st Century Learning Skills support EE and sustainability education
- Need for funding/grants that support new opportunities
- Need for focused professional development in EE/sustainability
 - o KACEE could help develop partnerships in this area
- Career pathways more clearly defined for those that are directed toward "hard sciences"
- Clubs/service-learning opportunities are another avenue
- Real-world projects and connections to the community – bring experts to the classroom
 - o Partnerships with community organizations and local businesses
 - o Partnerships with higher education
- Need administrators who get it!

Higher Education

- Leadership Studies – KSU Leadership Studies program might be a strong partner or model
- Sustainability offices can provide leadership
- Develop discussion-based courses around sustainability themes
- Need to help faculty that are strong in technical areas deal with controversial topics
- Are funding opportunities focused on sustainability through NSF, others
- Undergraduate and graduate research – could also partner with secondary education
- Teacher Degree Programs
 - o Need courses that effectively provide EE background
 - o Support in developing outdoor experiences