



SELF-ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

The New Mexico Environmental Education Certification Program (NMEECP) establishes high standards for the professional qualifications of environmental educators in New Mexico. Candidates will submit a self-assessment and portfolio that demonstrate their teaching skills and knowledge of EE.

2.2b - Environmental Education Facility Site Visits

At least 2 site visits to New Mexico's many Environmental Education Centers. A site visit consists of touring a recognized EE center and should involve activities such as viewing educational exhibits, exploring interpretive trails or gardens and speaking with educational staff. Site visits are not part of workshops but are typically done on your own with the purpose of familiarizing yourself with the facility. For example, you may stay after a workshop held at an Environmental Education Center to tour the center on your own time or you may explore a center with your family on a weekend trip.

3.1c - Outdoor Experiences

A total of at least 10 hours of structured Outdoor Experiences must be completed by each candidate. Each activity should extend a minimum of 1 hour, with a maximum of 8 hours allowed per experience. The intent of these experiences is to introduce environmental educators to skills that affect the learner vividly and demand use of the senses. The candidate should participate in a variety of outdoor experiences that are led by qualified instructors (i.e., rangers, guides, teachers, facilitators, professors), with at least 60 percent of the entire event spent outdoors. EEANM provides a calendar of statewide events that may qualify for this component.

Other qualifying opportunities include:

- University/college courses such as ecology, forestry, etc., which include an outdoor lab.
- Instructional workshops or field trips held in an outdoor environment.
- Organized nature hikes led by environmental education professional(s) at parks, forests, zoos, aquariums and other Environmental Education Centers.

Sample Documentation for Outdoor Experiences

Type of Activity _____ instructional workshop _____ outdoor experience _____ conference

Date of Activity _____ Location _____

Title of Activity _____

Description of Activity

Instructor/Speaker Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____ Position _____ Agency _____

3.3 – Professional Development

Professional development activities include those that provide educators with the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to deliver high-quality environmental education programs to a range of audiences in both non-formal and formal educational settings. These activities should go beyond the instruction of nature or science content knowledge and provide candidates methods for teaching, instructional skills and resources for educating the public in the classroom, in the outdoors and in non-formal settings such as nature centers, parks and museums. In addition to trainings and classes, you may include webinars, readings, online courses, conferences, etc.

4.3 – Planning for Instruction

(Lesson plans and correlations may also support competencies 3.1b, 4.1, 4.8b, and 5.2b.)

Though candidates may not be formal educators, it is important that they understand and support the educational standards taught in formal educational settings. Educators need to facilitate instruction that is compelling and forces students to utilize 21st Century skills in order to learn, invent, collaborate, and communicate ideas. They must promote critical thinking, problem solving, and information and communications technology literacy. Through building lesson plans and teaching activities, candidates practice appropriate teaching methods and provide hands-on, interactive experiences for a range of audiences (which can include students, youth groups, faith-based groups, scouts, 4-H clubs, and various adult groups). Each teaching opportunity should support the definition of environmental education and reinforce the themes of EE outlined by NAAEE.

Sample Documentation for Lesson Plan

Title of Lesson _____ Lesson Date _____

Location _____ Number of Participants _____ Grade Range _____

Total Hours _____ Indoor Hrs _____ Outdoor Hrs _____ Hrs of Preparation _____

Description of Lesson (Include covered topics.)

Techniques (Describe how project was lead and what participants did during the lesson.)

How did this lesson address the EE themes established by NAAEE?

4.4 – Community Partnership Project

Environmental education should result in understanding, commitment, informed decisions and constructive action. The Community Partnership Project provides candidates with the opportunity to lead a partnership that will have a positive effect on the community and will increase awareness and understanding of the environment. (A community can be defined as a group of persons with common characteristics such as geographic, professional, cultural, racial, religious or socio-economic similarities; communities can be defined by location, race, ethnicity, age, occupation, interest in particular problems or outcomes, or other common bonds).

The Community Partnership Project should include the following key elements:

- **Leadership** – the candidate is the primary coordinator, planner and leader of the project.

- **Partnership** – the candidate must work with at least one community partner other than their own school, agency or workplace.
- **Community Need and Participation** – the candidate must identify a need their particular project will address and design a project that engages the members of a community. The Candidate should create a project, event or program that will benefit that community and increase environmental awareness and understanding.
- **Relationship to the Objectives of Environmental Education** – projects should address at least one of the five main objectives of environmental education: awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, participation

Please contact EEANM before beginning your project to make sure it meets all the program criteria. Examples of successful Community Partnership Projects include the following:

- A candidate learned from teachers at a local elementary school that there was interest in integrating environmental education into their lesson plans using an outdoor area. They worked with PTA members and an environmental educator at a nearby nature center to develop a manual and workshop to help the teachers use their schoolyard as an outdoor classroom.
- The candidate met with the neighborhood association to identify an environmental need in their community. They determined that the neighborhood had a problem with residents using the storm drains for dumping trash, paint and other polluting substances. The candidate partnered with the neighborhood association to stencil neighborhood storm drains with an educational message and distribute materials to residents explaining the project and its purpose. Information about the project was included in the neighborhood’s newsletter.

Sample Community Partnership Project Documentation:

Title of Project _____

Partner(s) _____

Description of Project *(Include tangible components.)*

Describe your leadership role.

What principles of Environmental Education are incorporated into the project? *(Include a description of all themes of NAAEE incorporated into your project and specific information on how the project accomplishes them.)*

Describe how the project affects the community.

Describe how the project is accessible to the general public.