

Teach ME Outside
“Out of the Classroom, Out in Community, Outside the Box”

Environmental Education Evaluation Collaborative

What is Teach ME Outside?

The goal of Teach ME Outside is to support and work in partnership with Maine communities to ensure that all Maine youth have access to powerful, hands-on environmental learning opportunities. This project builds on the results of the [2019 Census of Community-Based Environmental Learning \(CBEL\)](#), Maine's first statewide snapshot of the creative and innovative programming occurring across Maine, both in-school and out-of-school, to connect youth to their environments and communities. This collaborative effort focuses on reducing barriers and sharing creative community-designed solutions to increase the capacity of schools and organizations to implement community-based environmental learning. This effort will also increase opportunities for professional learning, data sharing, policy development, networking, and partnership development for Maine educators.

Where does EE program evaluation fit in?

One of the biggest take-aways from the CBEL census was that Maine educators need to develop methods for the evaluation of CBEL projects. The CBEL field should support training on how to evaluate and assess impacts of CBEL projects as well as how to incorporate that feedback into revising project design to support continued project growth and development.

Evaluation was expressed as a high priority need in addition to being a characteristic of high-mastery projects. Projects that use multiple and/or more evidence-driven methods seem to be able to iterate and optimize their projects in ways that they would not be able to do without those evaluative methods.

Goals of the EE Evaluation Collaborative

To meet the evaluation needs of the field we are starting up an **EE Evaluation Collaborative** for any and every type of educator interested in learning more about EE evaluation! This collaborative will meet quarterly and work toward addressing the following goals:

- 1) Share information and evaluation methods “hot off the presses” from across the country;
- 2) Build on existing culturally relevant EE frameworks as a starting point to begin conversations to support an EE evaluation community in Maine;
- 3) Build a collaborative group of diverse stakeholders interested in EE evaluation to co-design professional learning opportunities in evaluation and its use in understanding programmatic impacts;
- 4) Brainstorm potential statewide shared evaluation metrics that could help us understand the impact and growth of our field as a whole.

Please fill out the [EE Evaluation Collaborative Interest Form](#) to apply. Register soon - we only have 30 spots available for this opportunity at this time!

What to expect if you join the conversation:

- Network with others interested in understanding and advancing program evaluation
- Participate in a community driven co-design process where the group will determine the evaluation topics we want to focus on
- Advance your understanding of how evaluation methods can incorporate and support the diverse needs and contexts of the audiences CBEL serves
- Contribute to systemic, field-wide change that moves Maine towards the vision that every child in our state will have access to powerful CBEL opportunities in their preK-12 experience.
- Expand your knowledge of validated evaluation tools and increase your confidence in applying these tools to your programs
- Co-design shared measures to understand field-wide impact that are of interest to the entire CBEL field in Maine
- \$50 stipend for participation in each gathering

All gatherings will be held virtually using Zoom. The first Zoom gathering will occur on Monday August 10th from 1-3pm. Follow-up gatherings will occur in October and December (dates TBA).

[Teach ME Outside](#) builds on the collaborative work of many different organizations and individuals over the past decade and is led today by a partnership between the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance, Maine Environmental Education Association, and Nature-Based Education Consortium. This project is made possible with support from the Pisces Foundation and the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation.

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