



The Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation

For immediate release:

Contact: Katie Ginsberg

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(914) 238-4743

CEL and Local School Districts Chosen for National Grant Project

CEL is pleased to announce that it has been selected as the community partner for two Westchester County school districts—**Scarsdale** and **Somers Central**—in a national educational leadership project led by Eastern Michigan University (EMU) in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the project, called "Building Leadership for Sustainability Education," will provide strategic planning assistance to four American school districts that are using sustainability education (SE) as an approach to improve student learning.

The participating schools were chosen based on their efforts to reorient curriculum with an interdisciplinary, community-based focus through issues such as renewable energy, water and air quality, "green" construction, and sustainable food systems. The two other participating school districts are Proctor Public Schools in Proctor, Minnesota and Souhegan Cooperative School District in Amherst, New Hampshire.

In early December, CEL joined representatives from the districts at a two-day retreat at EMU. There, the participants received training and networking opportunities as they began to develop comprehensive strategic plans for their SE initiatives. After the retreat, teams will be supported as they complete their plans, which will focus on defining goals and assessment methods to evaluate gains in student achievement, community involvement, and district leadership. Teams will receive ongoing technical assistance from EMU and project partner Creative Change Educational Solutions, an Ypsilanti-based nonprofit SE institution.

Scarsdale's and Somers' efforts will contribute to the development of national models for curriculum redesign and educational improvement, based on the principles of SE: **integrated content**, **research-based teaching methods**, and **school-community collaborations** that promote environmental, economic and social well being. The project outcomes will be disseminated nationally through conferences, educational networks, and the ongoing leadership efforts of CEL and district administrators.

The project will strengthen the capacity of these districts to re-orient them around sustainability and become models for other schools. Sustainability is an educational approach that is gaining increased attention at the national and international levels. It's based on the view that schools have a critical role in preparing young people for the local and global economic, environmental, and social challenges of the future. **CEL is honored to collaborate with Scarsdale and Somers** in this project to build their capacity as leaders in SE, both locally and nationally.

For more information about the project, contact [Katie Ginsberg, Executive Director, CEL](mailto:Katie@celfoundation.org), Katie@celfoundation.org or visit the project's website: www.blcse.org.