

MAINE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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June 17, 2019

Dear Ecology Learning Center,

The Maine Association for Environmental Education (MEEA) is pleased to write this letter of enthusiastic support for the Ecology Learning Center (ELC), the proposed environmental charter high school in Waldo County. By endorsing the charter school, we meet our mission "to enhance and amplify the efforts of individuals and organizations building environmental awareness, appreciation, understanding, and action in Maine." We look forward to bolstering the charter school's efforts in ecological learning through participation in our professional development workshops, annual statewide conference, and Maine Environmental Changemakers program. Based upon our work with ELC leadership in the past we are confident that you have a deep understanding of best practice in place-based teaching and learning and are very enthusiastic about this new school in our state.

MEEA offers professional development for Maine educators in many topics related to enhancing best practice in ecological teaching and learning, evaluation, developing curriculum that is culturally competent, and strategies on how schools and education institutions can work to build a more equitable and inclusive sector. We are hopeful we can support the development of the Ecology Learning Center faculty as well as your students through leadership and ESTEM support with our Changemakers program. We also share the latest environmental education research with our network and connect Maine educators with national trends in environmental education best practice as we serve as the affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education. We know your connection to MEEA will advance the level of teaching and learning at your school.

At our annual spring conference, MEEA continually seeks to increase the number of classroom teachers and faculty and high school students representing public schools represented at the conference. This March, we were delighted that the ELC hosted an informational table at our conference at the UMaine Hutchinson Center in Belfast. We hope your charter school faculty lead workshops at future MEEA conferences to share your curriculum strategies with other high school educators.

MEEA is especially excited to collaborate with the ELC through our Environmental Changemakers program. Changemakers is a youth-led intergenerational network that connects young Mainers (ages 15-30) from diverse backgrounds who are passionate about the environment with peer mentors and established professional mentors. Changemakers provides the training and resources needed to support the environmental actions that participants organize in their communities. MEEA would warmly welcome and recruit students and teachers from the ELC to participate in the Changemakers program.

Thank you for creating an opportunity where Maine students can deeply study how their health and the health of the natural world, and this state are deeply connected. We are very excited for your school to advance environmental literacy in Maine!

Sincerely,
Olivia Grisct

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Olivia L. Grisct". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "O" and "L".

Executive Director, Maine Environmental Education Association