

State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster  
Department of Public Instruction  
125 S. Webster Street  
P.O. Box 7841  
Madison, WI 53707-7841

RE: Department of Public Instruction's Environmental Education Consultant

Dear Superintendent Burmaster:

We are writing to ask that you reinstate Wisconsin's Environmental Education (EE) Consultant for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). On behalf of the Wisconsin Association of Environmental Education (WAE), we feel this once active position is crucial to all citizens of Wisconsin. Although the DPI's Education Consultant Shelley Lee's subject areas include EE, we feel it is impossible to give it the attention it deserves when she is also the consultant for Wisconsin's Science Education, Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, WKCE Science Assessment, WASDI Liaison and the WEEB Liaison. Furthermore, Environmental Education is a fully integrated subject and is not the same as Environmental Science.

Wisconsin has adopted EE standards, yet many teachers are still uncertain as to how to incorporate them into their curriculum. A report issued in 2000 by the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation reviewed schools that adopted EE as the central focus of their academic programs. The study showed: reading and math scores improved, students performed better in science and social studies, students developed the ability to transfer their knowledge from familiar to unfamiliar contexts, and classroom discipline problems declined.

We are asking you to reinstate the DPI's EE consultant position and to consider the positive effects we have just summarized. Your decision will be one of significance to our state.

Sincerely,

(All WAE Board Members signed)