

# The California Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education

---

ANNUAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020



# Executive Director's Message

Dear Environmental and Outdoor Education Community,

This past year was one of the most rewarding and challenging in AEOE's long history. We experienced tremendous highs, like being named the *Outstanding Affiliate of the Year* by NAAEE, experiencing the joy of convening and learning together at our fall conferences and Environmental and Outdoor School Manager retreats, and planning for the launch of our pilot Environmental Educator Certification Program. And, the pandemic dealt our field a crushing blow: educators and naturalists furloughed and unemployed; managers and directors worried about their staff and their organizations' ability to keep the lights on; millions of young people sheltering in place, without access to the natural world or meaningful learning experiences in the outdoors. On top of that, the vivid reminders that our country is founded on racism, inequality, and violence, and that those persist to this day in the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

We have so much work to do in the coming months. Work to rebuild our field. Work to remain relevant in a changing landscape. Work to rebuild trust and relationships. Work to examine our relative privileges and identify ways we can amplify and champion those at the margins. Work to help young people (re)connect to the natural world. If anyone can face these challenges head on, it is you, and it is us. And yes, these past months have been exhausting. We have been tried and tried again in more ways than we could have imagined.

And yet, we are strong. We are resilient. We are kind. We share a belief of the power of education to change lives and are rooted in a deep appreciation of the natural world. We are committed to using environmental and outdoor education as a tool to create lasting environmental change. No matter where we sit, we share a love for the beauty that is California, and a hope that future generations will continue to care for this place we call home. We are so glad you are a part of our community.



**Estrella Risinger**

Executive Director

AEOE



The California  
Association for  
Environmental and  
Outdoor Education  
(AEOE)

2066 N. Capitol Ave.  
Suite 3028  
San Jose, CA 95132

[www.aeoe.org](http://www.aeoe.org)

[info@aeoe.org](mailto:info@aeoe.org)





## Our Mission:

To advance the impact of environmental and outdoor education in California.

# Board of Directors



### President & Chair

Reed Schneider  
reed@aeoe.org

### Vice-President

Tracey Weiss  
tracey@aeoe.org

### Secretary

Katie Andersen  
katie@aeoe.org

### Treasurer

Andrew Boyd-Goodrich  
andrew@aeoe.org

### Awards Chair

Kat Montgomery  
kat@aeoe.org

### Communications Chair

Leah Callan  
aeoe@aeoe.org

### Conferences Chair

Angie Kemsley  
angie@aeoe.org

### Marketing Coordinator

Tom Drake  
aeoe@aeoe.org

### Membership Chair

Sarah Foglesong  
sarah@aeoe.org

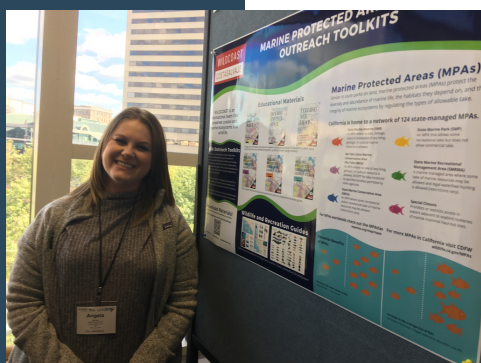
### Professional Development Chair

Ryan Mayeda  
ryan@aeoe.org

### Members-At-Large

Kelly Prendiville  
kelly@aeoe.org

Nathan Taxel  
aeoe@aeoe.org



Photos, Top to Bottom: AEOE Board of Directors at the last in-person statewide conference in 2019 at Westminster Woods; Conferences Chair Angie Kemsley presents a poster at the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) 2019 Conference in Kentucky; AEOE Board Members participate in the 2019 California Coastal Cleanup in Imperial Beach, CA.



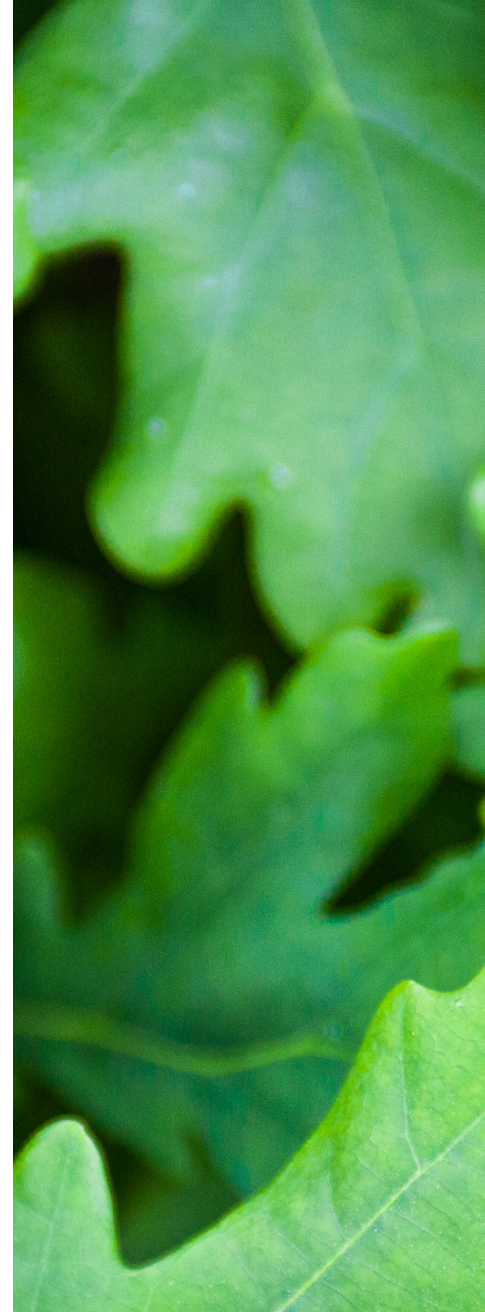
# Financial Overview

## Main Accomplishments:

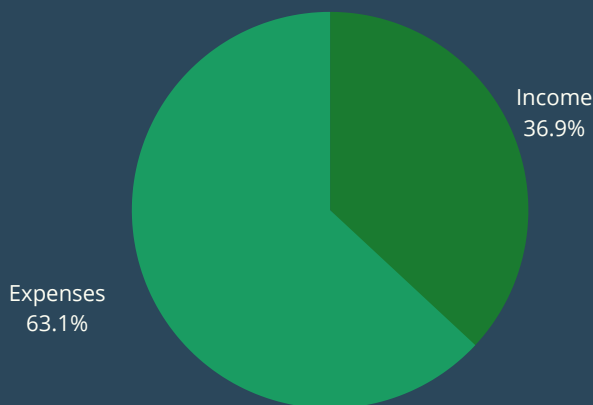
- Transitioned from one Treasurer to a new one.
- Integrated and adopted many new policies, procedures, and forms in line with identified considerations.
- Hired a bookkeeper, yet ended up spending less money than budgeted.
- Navigated financial effects of COVID-19.
- Applied for and received a federal Payroll Protection Program loan/grant.

## Looking Toward the Future:

- Continue committee focus on financial health as differentiated from simply tracking finances.
- Strengthen structures/tools for tracking and analyzing financials.
- Diversify committee, with a specific goal of “training” a future Treasurer.



Fiscal Year 2019-20



Fiscal Year 2018-19



- The fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic are illustrated by these graphs comparing the current fiscal year with the previous. Due to the pandemic, AEOE had to cancel our signature program, the 2020 Annual Statewide Conference. As an organization we are using this data to re-think our fundraising strategies for the future. A more detailed financial summary can be found on the next page of this report.
- When AEOE made the decision to transition from an all volunteer-run organization to a staffed organization with a part-time Executive Director, the Board of Directors agreed to draw down reserve funds, with the likelihood that this would result in a negative variance in the budget. As of June 30, 2020 the organization had an account balance of \$103,705.40; assuming other costs remain the same, this reserve will allow for a staffed position for 1-2 more years as the Executive Director collaborates with the Board of Directors to build the organization's capacity and explore alternative sources of revenue.



# Financial Overview

## Profits and Loss Statement

### 2019-2020 2018-2019

#### Income

Contributions	\$19,054	\$9,194
Membership	\$11,119	\$12,645
Merchandise	\$70	\$646
Job Posting	\$2,400	\$3,150
Program Services	\$15,129	\$47,073
Square Income	\$903	\$4,403
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$48,674</b>	<b>\$77,110</b>

#### Expenses

Admin	\$14,207	\$12,848
Cash Out	\$140	\$0
Insurance	\$3,046	\$4,083
Marketing	\$1,290	\$229
Merchandise	\$0	\$992
Newsletter	\$30	\$2,168
Payroll Expenses	\$50,027	\$22,679
Prof Networking	\$708	\$1,826
Professional Development	\$0	\$3,299
Program Expenses	\$11,583	\$40,709
Purchases	\$37	\$0
Uncategorized Expense	\$120	\$0
Webmaster	\$1,975	\$1,250
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$83,164</b>	<b>\$90,084</b>

<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-\$34,490</b>	<b>-\$12,974</b>
-------------------	------------------	------------------

#### Notes:

-Fiscal impacts of COVID-19 are reflected in this statement.

-Expenses in the Payroll category increased in FY 2019-20 due to the fact that the Executive Director position began in January, 2019 and was only an expense for half of the previous fiscal year. When AEOE made the decision to transition from an all-volunteer run organization to a staffed organization with a part-time Executive Director, the Board of Directors agreed to draw down reserve funds, with the likelihood that this would result in a negative variance in the budget.

# Donors and Financial Contributors

---

We have so much gratitude for the many individuals, businesses, agencies, and organizations who contributed to AEOE's success this past year. Some of our generous contributors include:

## **Businesses, agencies, and organizations**

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Gorjana

Green Teacher

The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)

## **Individuals (those listed donated \$50 and up)**

Andrew Boyd-Goodrich

Andy Risinger

Angela Kemsley

Bobbie Mayer

Brandy Lively

Celeste Royer

Estrella Risinger

Jim Sims

Katie Andersen

Kat Montgomery

Kelly Prendiville

Leah Callan

Margaret Miller

Michael Charnofsky

Reed Schneider

Robb Stolberg

Ryan Mayeda

Michael Shanahan

Shannon Culpepper

Tom Drake

Tracey Weiss



**Thanks as well to our many supporters who gave through our Facebook page and Network for Good account. We also want to acknowledge and appreciate the community members who contributed goods for our auctions and who supported us via Amazon Smile.**



# COMMITTEE REPORTS

---





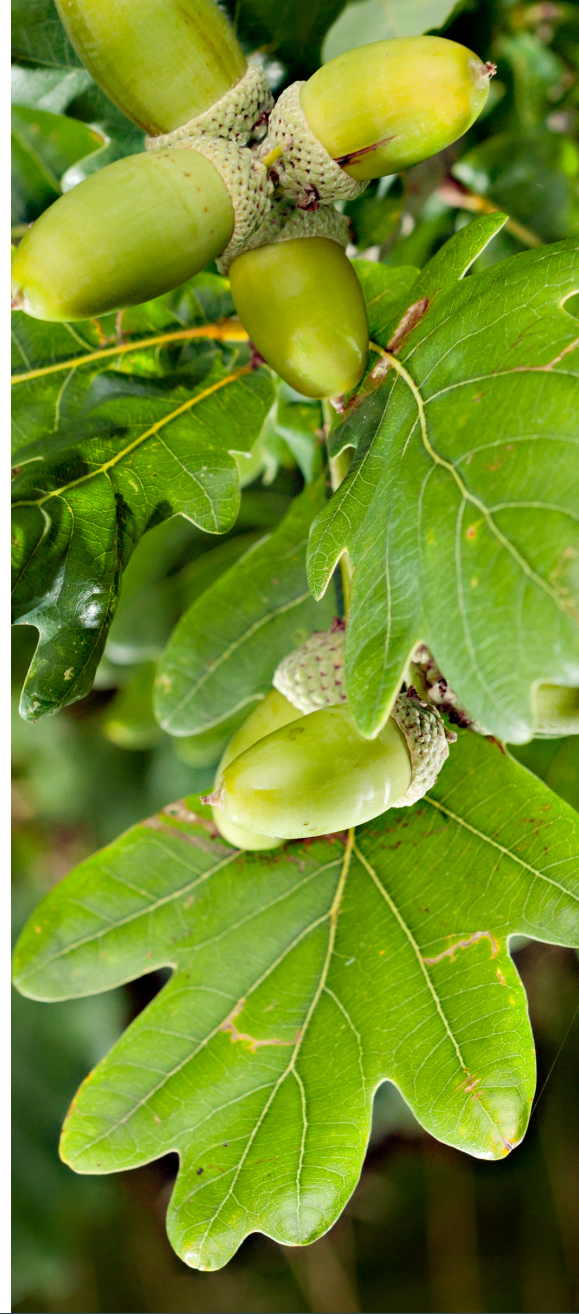
# Awards Committee

## Main Accomplishments:

- Gave out EE of the Year Awards on schedule in the fall
- Gave out Howard Bell Award in the spring; adapted the schedule and ceremony to fit a virtual platform after COVID-19 forced us to cancel the in-person Statewide Conference. It's worth mentioning that the virtual awards ceremony was awesome!!!

## Looking Toward the Future:

We had planned to roll out the brand new Organization of the Year Award in spring 2020 - decided to push it to next year after making the decision to cancel the in-person Statewide Conference. We look forward to honoring a deserving organization at the 2021 Statewide Conference.



## 2019-2020 Award Recipients



### Howard Bell Award

**Kevin Beals**

Director

BEETLES Program

Lawrence Hall of Science

### Environmental Educators of the Year



**Michael Shanahan**

Naturalist

San Joaquin Outdoor Education

Assistant Camp Director

YMCA Camp Jones Gulch



**Katie Andersen**

Outdoor Education Specialist

Cuyamaca Outdoor School

San Diego

County Office of Education





# Communications Committee

## Main Accomplishments:

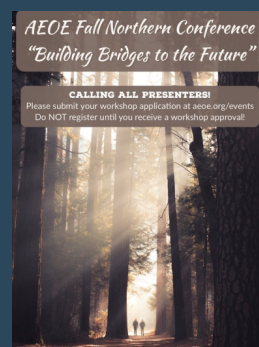
- Canva utilized as team resource for collateral generation; several templates generated
- Style guide (guidelines, fonts, colors, etc.) established
- New committee! Expanded marketing to include messaging opportunities through new communications committee
- Outreach efforts through CSTA Environmental Literacy Committee and several tabling events (EEC, NAAEE, CSTA)
- Extensive website research

## Looking Toward the Future:

We continue to research the redesign of our website in order to increase its function and capabilities. At the time of the publication of this report we were in the final phases of review and should have a brand new website to launch in FY 2020-2021!

## Digital Communication Tools

AEOE's Communications Committee has created several digital tools via web-based graphic design program, Canva. Being web-based allows for committee members across the state to collaborate on projects seen here.



Promotional flyers used to advertise our three conference events. AEOE has switched to all-digital marketing for conferences, using email, Facebook and Instagram.



# Conferences Committee

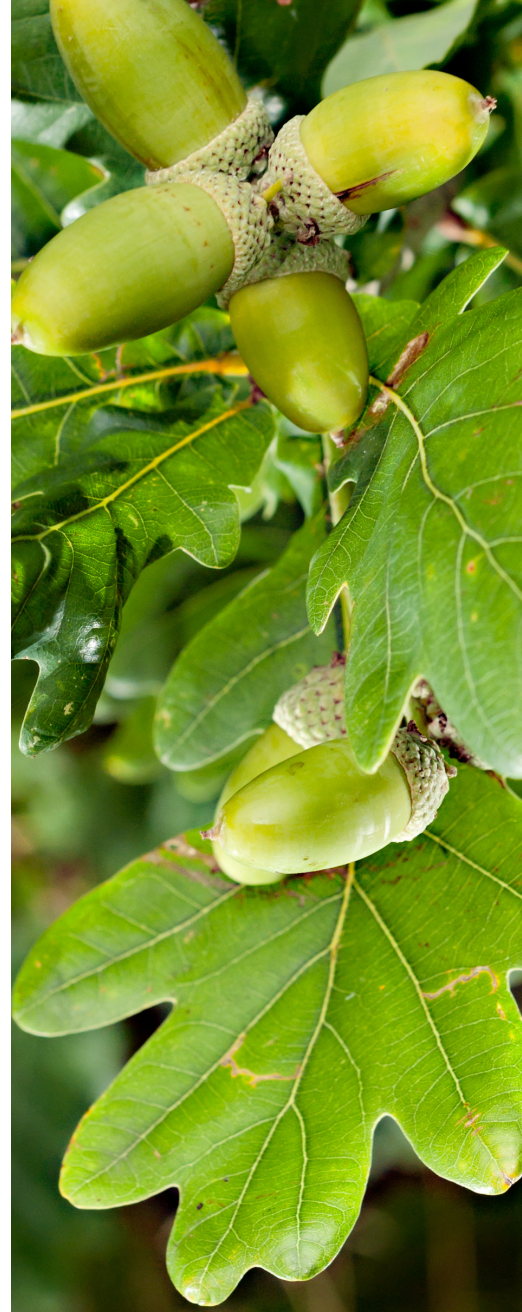
---

## Main Accomplishments:

- Successful northern and southern regional conferences.
- Registrar stipend implemented in Spring 2020.
- Offered a virtual statewide Spring conference in lieu of an in-person event due to COVID-19 restrictions.

## Looking Toward the Future:

- Offer virtual conference(s) and opportunities for networking in fall 2020 (in-person conferences canceled due to COVID-19).
- Offer in-person statewide conference in spring 2021.
- New registration and communication systems in place by statewide conference 2021.
- Pre-conference workshop at statewide conference 2021.



Workshop participants Southern Fall Conference at Pathfinder Ranch in Mountain Center, CA



Opening ceremony led by Kimberly Shining Star Petree at Northern Fall Conference at Sly Park Environmental Education Center in Pollock Pines, CA





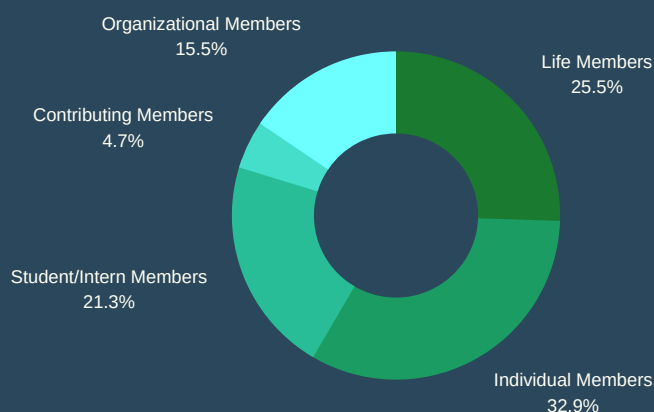
# Membership Committee

## Main Accomplishments:

- Completed the bulk of the work on a tiered Organizational Membership plan. This includes the centering of equity as a component of membership and introduction of an Equity tier.
- Made a final decision in favor of changing from “Institutional” members to “Organizational” members in AEOE language once we’re able to move forward with the new tiered Organizational Membership Model.
- Monthly, deep and meaningful conversations about purpose of membership, it’s role in AEOE, and who we serve/should serve.

## Membership by the Numbers

**Total AEOE Members 380**



## Looking Toward the Future:

- Reassess Organizational Membership rate increases in light of COVID-19 developments
- Anticipate around a 5% drop in overall membership as well as the majority of individual memberships being purchased in Spring as a result of COVID realities for our field
- Recommend overall expectation for board members to promote AEOE at an outreach event each year - either formally or informally
- Continue to make membership structuring decisions with diversification of membership base in mind
- Identify groups not currently well-represented in AEOE membership that can be served & develop/implement plan for promoting membership with those groups

# Professional Development Committee

## Main Accomplishments:

- **Environmental/Outdoor School Managers (EOSM) Events:** Provided two regional day meetings, breakout workshops at each conference, and one retreat.
- **Professional Development Events:** Partnered with NatureBridge, SCA and Outward Bound to host an SEL Summit in February.
- Planned several new events for 2019-2020, but not all took place due to COVID-19 pandemic event cancellations.
- Partnered with the Conference Committee to provide a Virtual Conference in lieu of the spring statewide conference that was cancelled.
- Created a [Digital Professional Learning Library](#) via YouTube.
- Paved the way for planning new events on different topics that'll attract a wider variety of educators.



## Looking Toward the Future:

- Planning a wider variety of events and topics will hopefully attract different networks and types of educators than our historical membership.
- Some Fall 2020 events might have to be changed to virtual settings and/or rescheduled to spring 2021. If Fall Conferences don't take place, we could provide open space conference calls for program managers in lieu of the EOSM Breakouts.



Participants of the Environmental/Outdoor School Managers Retreat held in the Fall of 2019 at Camp Ocean Pines in Cambria, CA.



# PARTNER REPORTS

---



# North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)

After 65 years of advancing environmental education, the California Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education (AEOE) received the 2019 Outstanding Affiliate Organization Award from the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) at NAAEE's 48th Annual Conference in Lexington, Kentucky. In 2019, AEOE hired its first Executive Director, expanded its professional network for managers and field practitioners and further established its Environmental Education Certification Program. It received recognition as part of NAAEE's network of 56 state, regional and provincial affiliate organizations working to advance the professionalism and prominence of environmental education.

"AEOE has been a leader in supporting environmental and outdoor education throughout the state of California for generations," said Judy Braus, Executive Director. "We're so excited to see their reach and impact continue to grow, and we look forward to working together to create a more equitable and sustainable future throughout North America and around the world."

"We believe that all people have the right to the benefits of meaningful learning experiences outdoors," said Estrella Risinger, Executive Director for AEOE. "We work to provide programs and practitioners with the tools, resources and expertise to ensure that future generations are equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to respond to an ever-changing world."

The Outstanding Affiliate award is presented annually to Affiliates that demonstrate substantial accomplishments in the prior year that contribute to the field of environmental education. The award has recognized over 20 affiliate organizations in various states in the US and one province in Canada since it began in 1994.

- Colby Parkinson, NAAEE

## About NAAEE

For nearly five decades, the North American Association for Environmental Education has led efforts to use the power of education to advance environmental literacy and civic engagement and create a more equitable and sustainable future. NAAEE supports a network of more than 20,000 educators and 56 state, regional and provincial affiliate organizations working in environmental education in more than 30 countries.



In attendance at the award ceremony for Outstanding Affiliate at the 2019 NAAEE Annual Conference in Lexington, KY were: (L-R) AEOE Board Member Angie Kemsley, AEOE Executive Director Estrella Risinger, NAAEE Executive Director Judy Braus, and AEOE Member & Volunteer Robb Stolberg.



# Featured Partnerships

---

## Environmental Educator Certification Program (EECP)

AEOE and a dedicated group of EE leaders throughout the state (the Steering Committee) have been working for the past few years to design a certification program for EE professionals in our state. Certification helps to legitimize the field and establish a uniform foundation in effectively teaching about the environment in California. We are deeply indebted to the following Steering Committee Members for the time and expertise lent to the program's design and development:

- Greg Ira, California Naturalist
- Shannon Gordon, California Department of Education
- Jennifer Ortega, Humboldt State University
- Emily Jacobs, National Association for Interpretation
- Reed Schneider, AEOE Board President & Chair, Formerly with NatureBridge
- Tracey Weiss, AEOE Vice President, Formerly with Exploring New Horizons

We are eagerly anticipating the pilot launch of EECP during the 2020-2021 school year.

## Thriving in the Outdoors: Social & Emotional Learning Summit

In February of 2020, AEOE partnered with NatureBridge, Student Conservation Association, and Outward Bound USA to offer *Thriving in the Outdoors: Social and Emotional Learning in Nature Summit*. More than 100 educators attended from the Bay Area and beyond, participating in workshops and field excursions led by NatureBridge educators. Deb Moroney from American Institutes for Research, and a leading champion of youth development, was the keynote speaker.



Participants of the Social & Emotional Summit  
in Sausalito, CA.

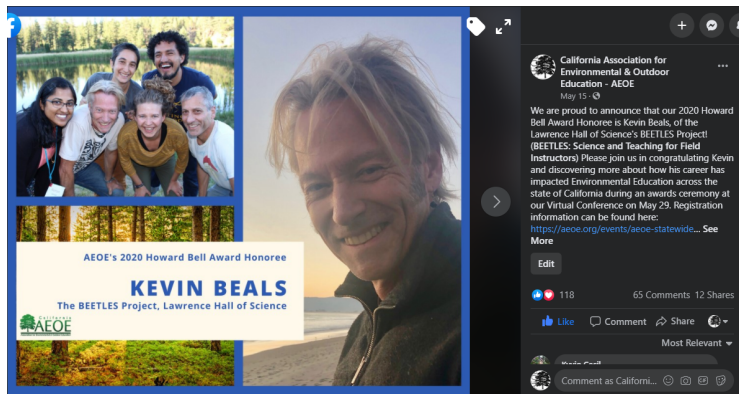


# Social Media Highlights



Our presence on social media increased this year, as we relaunched our Instagram account and created social media-friendly graphics for our events and programs. We also created a YouTube channel and a Professional Learning Library playlist. Check out our most popular Facebook posts here!

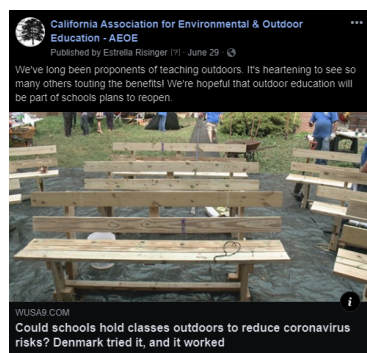
## Post with the Most Engagements: 1307



## Post with Greatest Reach: 12,479



## Post with the Most Comments, Reactions, and Shares: 1,142



## Facebook Photo with the Most Views: 81



## AEOE Social Media Channels



@CAEOE



California AEOE



California Association for  
Environmental and  
Outdoor Education