

PA CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Pennsylvania's Link to the Environment



April 13, 2011

Re: Letter of Affirmation for STARS Innovation Credit 3
The Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education, housed at Slippery Rock University

To whom it may concern:

The Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education (PCEE) was established through an Executive Order issued by Governor Tom Ridge on December 20, 1996 and further established in statute through Act 71 of 2009. Working to “provide increased public and private access to quality environmental education,” the Center is funded through a state grant to the PA State System of Higher Education and administered by Slippery Rock University. PCEE is a statewide clearinghouse for environmental information and resources, partnering with a wide variety of organizations to make environmental education relevant and valuable to the people of Pennsylvania.

PCEE’s mission - to link all Pennsylvanians to environmental resources - is primarily accomplished through its website, www.pcee.org. Able to reach citizens all across the Commonwealth through the internet, PCEE functions primarily as a virtual resource center. Reaching 10,000+ subscribers and many more online readers, the Center’s free monthly electronic newsletter provides up-to-date information about professional development, grants and resource opportunities for educators and the general public.

PCEE's website provides more than 5,000 links to valuable resources and includes a searchable directory of nature centers, an events calendar for Pennsylvania and surrounding areas, job postings, links to environmental teaching resources and online learning activities for all ages.

Classroom teachers can use the embedded **Thrive! Green Guide to Pennsylvania** to search through 2,000+ useful activities, curricula and educational resources by grade level, topic or PA’s Environment & Ecology Standards. Educators can also access online environmental activities (such as the popular **Question of the Week** or the recently updated **Critter Quest PA**) that are easy for students to use on their own or as part of a lesson. PCEE's audience continues to expand, as views of the site's homepage are up almost 33% over last year's and the site has received more than two million cumulative page views.

While PCEE offers many environmental education resources for teachers, it also reaches out to other professionals as well. Pennsylvanians involved in business & industry, agriculture, environmental non-profits and local government can find links to environmental services, products, funding and educational opportunities that they need to successfully integrate environmentally-friendly practices into their personal and professional lives.

Cont'd...

Housed at Slippery Rock University

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PCEE partners with a wide variety of organizations; over 850 environmental education providers to date have been given free marketing and publicity through PCEE's online resources. Future plans include organizational sponsorships of the Thrive! Green Guide to Pennsylvania website sections in which the identified area (Sustainable Agriculture, Local Government, etc.) is maintained by a statewide organization and their members are directed to use www.pcee.org resources. In this way, PCEE will keep this extensive website relevant and current while attracting new users at little to no cost. PCEE is also pursuing a **Non-formal Environmental Education Certification Project** in partnership with the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators, which is looking at the possibility of instituting a certification process for non-formal educators in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Reynolds".

Melissa Reynolds, PCEE Education Coordinator

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