

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA Administrative Order NAO 216-106A	
NOAA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SERIES	DATE OF ISSUANCE	EFFECTIVE DATE
SUBJECT NOAA Education and Outreach Policy		

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

This Order establishes a National Oceanic and Atmospheric (NOAA) policy encouraging employee participation in education and outreach activities, particularly related to science, engineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM).

SECTION 2. SCOPE.

1. This directive is applicable to all NOAA offices.
2. All document citations are assumed to be the latest version unless otherwise noted.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

1. Education. The process by which individuals develop their knowledge, values, and skills. Education encompasses both teaching and learning.
2. Engagement. A two-way relationship between a service provider and society. It implies a commitment of service to society through a partnership based on reciprocity and sharing of goals, objectives, and resources. Implicit to engagement is a respect for each partner that involves listening, dialogue, understanding, and mutual support.
3. Outreach. Opportunities designed to build awareness, develop relationships, and inspire action. Involves information exchange between provider and target audiences. Frequently designed to reach diverse audiences, but can be personal and interactive, designed to identify and appeal to an individual's personal interest or motivation for information.

SECTION 4. POLICY.

It is NOAA's policy to support and encourage employee participation in education and outreach activities related to the Agency's mission, as part of an employee's official duty activities. This includes NOAA programs, projects, events, and activities that seek employee volunteers to engage, educate, or inspire audiences using technical or non-technical components of NOAA's mission. This also includes select mission-related education and outreach activities administered by NOAA partners, collaborators, grantees, or other organizations.

This policy supplements and expands the existing NOAA Education Policy, NAO 216-106, issued 07/11/05: Effective 06/27/05. The focus of this policy is to encourage employee participation specifically on education and outreach activities.

SECTION 5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. The Director, NOAA Education and the NOAA Education Council in collaboration with the Director, NOAA Office of Communications are responsible for the implementation of this policy directive.
 - a. The Director for Education will ensure education activities support NOAA's strategic goals for education and education outreach.
2. The Director, NOAA Education will collaborate with the Director, NOAA Office of Civil Rights and the Director, NOAA Office of Workforce Management to ensure employee participation in education and outreach activities supports NOAA's strategic goals for diversity and inclusion.
3. All employees are encouraged to participate in mission-related education and outreach activities, based on an employee's interest in and value to the agency mission of such activities in accordance with this policy.
4. Employee supervisors, shall:
 - a. Encourage and support employee participation in mission-related education and outreach activities.
 - b. Jointly with the employee, ensure that employee participation in education and outreach activities does not interfere with employees' primary job duties. This includes discussing potential conflicts with the employee beforehand.
 - c. Jointly with the employee, seek education and outreach activities that maximize benefit to NOAA's mission requirements.
 - d. Respond to employee requests to participate in mission-related education and outreach activities and authorize the expenditure of official time on such activities, as appropriate.
5. Participating employees shall:
 - a. Possess sufficient knowledge of the subject matter they will be sharing with external audiences.
 - b. Possess sufficient knowledge of how to appropriately interact with and engage target audiences
 - c. Obtain advance supervisory approval to participate in education and outreach activities; this includes identifying and notifying the supervisor of all potential conflicts created by participation.
 - d. Jointly with the supervisor, ensure that participation in education and outreach activities does not interfere with the performance of their primary job. Optional education and outreach activities are in addition to the employee's regular job duties and are not a substitute for completing assigned work. Participation in such activities is intended to benefit the agency and is not intended to have an adverse impact on work operations or employee performance
 - e. Conduct themselves in a manner that represents NOAA favorably.
 - f. Not engage in partisan political activities while participating in NOAA education or outreach activities or violate conflict of interest laws and ethics regulations.
 - g. Not share non-public information as a result of their participation in these activities.
 - h. Not accept additional compensation from an outside organization.

SECTION 6. REFERENCES.

1. Statutes for NOAA Education:
 - a. America COMPETES Reauthorization Act (P.L. 111-358)
 - b. America COMPETES Act (P.L. 110-69)
 - c. Coral Reef Conservation Act (P.L. 106-562)

- d. Coastal Zone Management Act (P.L. 109-58) § 1461, National Estuarine Research Reserve System
- e. Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (P.L. 109-479)
- f. National Marine Sanctuaries Act (P.L. 106-513, Sections 1431 et seq.)
- g. National Sea Grant College Program Act (P.L. 107-299)

2. Applicable Documents:

- a. NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan (2010)
- b. NOAA's Education Strategic Plan 2009-2029
- c. National Research Council: NOAA's Education Program: Review and Critique (2010)
- d. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report: Mitigation of Climate Change (2007)
- e. Report of the Academic Competitiveness Council (2007)
- f. Conference on Ocean Literacy Report (2006)
- g. The President's U.S. Ocean Action Plan (2005)
- h. National Academies Report: Rising Above the Gathering Storm (2005)

3. Examples of Education and Outreach

Several organizations have had long-term partnerships and/or MOUs with NOAA and offer opportunities to engage, educate and inspire people in science, technology, engineering, and math. Among them include:

- a. Science fairs. The Office of Education supports student research on issues related to NOAA's mission: <http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/outreach/scifair.html>
- b. The National Ocean Sciences Bowl. <http://www.nosb.org>
- c. The Science Olympiad. <http://www.soinc.org>
- d. Aquariums and zoos. <http://www.aza.org/findzooaquarium>
- e. Science Centers. <http://www.astc.org/sciencecenters/find.php>

NOAA offices and staff have opportunities to host students and teachers in a variety of capacities which include:

- a. The Office of Education needs many volunteers to work with student interns by providing internship opportunities, serving as mentors and science judges and student scholarship applicant reviewers. Contact: studentscholarships@noaa.gov for additional information.
- b. The NOAA Teacher at Sea Program regularly seeks scientist mentors for teacher placements. Contact: teacheratsea@noaa.gov for additional information.

SECTION 7. EVALUATION.

The NOAA Education Council along with the NOAA Office of Education shall assess compliance with this policy by conducting qualitative assessments of employee participation in mission-related education and outreach activities with NOAA line offices every three years.

SECTION 7. EFFECT ON OTHER ISSUANCES.

This policy supplements and expands the existing NOAA Education Policy, NAO 216-106

An electronic copy of this Order will be posted on the NOAA Office of the Chief Administrative Officer website under the NOAA Administrative Issuances Section.

<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~ocao/index.html>

Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere

Offices of Primary Interest:

Office of Education (OED)

Office of Communications (PCA)

Workforce Management Office (WFMO)

NOAA Civil Rights Office (CRO)