



Guidance for Writing Learning Outcomes & Sample Proposal

Developing clearly written learning outcomes supports learn shop proposal writers in drafting a proposal that is well organized and, when the learn shop is presented, delivers thought-provoking, engaging and actionable content.

Learning outcomes that are clear, specific and actionable have several benefits including:

- Keeping session clear, concise and to the point – avoiding presenters over-promising or trying to deliver an overly ambitious or disjointed presentation that may leave attendees confused or with unmet expectations.
- Creating a strong connection to content delivery approaches that are grounded in adult learning principles. Contrasted with a lecture format, content delivery approached that are engaging can stimulate and expand attendee learning (e.g., incorporating storytelling, diverse voices, opportunities for small group conversations or practice, polls, handouts).
- Provide the opportunity for measurable and actionable change – for attendees to engage deeply enough with the session to take ideas “back home” for implementation.

Learn shops at the Network Meeting are scheduled for 75 minutes. This is important to note in writing your learning outcomes. Most presenters have so much they want to share with attendees. Our hope with including learning outcomes as part of the proposal process is for you to elevate the most important concepts and potential action items from your work/experience for attendees to take with them after the session.

Additional Tips:

- For an example of how learning outcomes are included in a proposal, please see a sample of a successful learn shop presented at a previous Network Meeting below.
- For additional support, technical assistance is available during the submission process.

Words to avoid when writing learning outcomes:

Understand, appreciate, learn, know, grasp, consider.

These are all great words, but they are highly subjective and difficult to measure.

Words that can be helpful to use when writing learning outcomes:

Identify, discuss, develop (as in a plan), critique, practice.

Sample Accepted Learn Shop Proposal

Speaker Information

Redacted for sample

Session Overview

Have you presented at a previous Network Meeting (virtual or in-person) on this topic or another? [**Yes/No**]

Have you presented the proposed presentation at another conference in the field? [**Yes/No**]

If accepted, do you agree to participate in a planning meeting to review best practices, learning outcomes and logistics for your session? [**Yes/No**]

Session Topic

Select the Network Meeting area(s) of focus that best describes your presentations (select all that apply).

Note this sample shows focus areas from 2024

- Lifting Family Voices through Advocacy, Activism, and leadership
- Building School Culture, Climate, and Community
- Trauma-Informed Care & Healing-centered Engagement for Educare families, Staff, and Communities

Session Details

Submission Title: *Closing the Nature Gap - Assuring Safe and Equitable Outdoor Experiences for ALL Children*

Audience: Provide a short description of the ideal audience for your session. i.e. This session is ideal for Educare staff interested in engaging, empowering and educating parents about policy, advocacy and leadership. Please note: Sessions are open to all meeting participants to attend. The description provided will be used to promote your session on the meeting website.

This session is ideal for Educare staff and parents who are interested in learning about how they can help support equity and access to nature for ALL children. Attendees will walk away with valuable hands-on resources they can use at their schools to put easy, affordable changes into place today!

In one or two sentences state the topic/issue your presentation aims to address/solve:

In addition to the Achievement Gap, many children who attend Educare schools also face the daunting reality of the "Nature Gap" - limited access to safe and equitable outdoor experiences. By providing intentional opportunities and safe environments, Educare schools across the country are removing barriers that threaten a childhood without nature and are offering opportunities for ALL children to confidently experience quality early education in and with the outdoors.

Session Description: Summarize your learn shop session; state the objective, relevance, and impact for attendees. Please note: This description will be used to promote your session on the meeting website.

We live in a world of natural wonders. While many children are afforded the opportunity to grow up in nature; this is not the case for all. In addition to the looming threat of falling behind developmentally, young children living in poverty also face the daunting reality of the "Nature Gap" - limited access to safe and equitable outdoor experiences. They are also highly impacted by the effects of climate change. During this expert panel, you will learn why and how different Educare

Schools from across the country have made the shift towards providing safe nature-based opportunities for children of all ages, as well as how their passion for equitable access to nature is slowly but surely closing the Nature Gap. Attendees will walk away with hands-on resources that they can use in their own programs to implement meaningful changes today.

Educare Network Member Requirements: Please describe how your presentation will speak to one or more of the Network Member Requirements (Strong Organizational Foundation & Leadership, Practice, Research, Policy and Field Impact).

Strong Organizational Foundation and Leadership - this presentation will showcase how different Educare schools across the country have worked to establish safe and equitable outdoor and indoor nature based learning spaces for children. The development of these intentional and well designed spaces comes in a large part from the support of private funders and community partnership efforts that will be highlighted throughout the presentation. Practice- Prioritizing and implementing nature based learning experiences comes from Educare staff who are dedicated to delivering holistic and comprehensive high quality education opportunities to our children. Spending time in nature supports multiple domains of development and is crucial to the health and well-being of children and staff alike, especially the realm of social and emotional success. The Educare schools in this panel presentation will highlight their dedication to implementing high quality education outdoors and provide data that supports how their practice is positively impacting children's development. Field Impact and Influence- Nature based learning is a fast-growing movement across the nation and the world right now. This expert panel aims to highlight how Educare schools remain on the cutting edge of this critical initiative and are influencing licensing, schools and programs throughout their respective states and the country, helping to change policies, regulations and mindsets in a mission to provide equitable access to nature for ALL children.

Does the work described in your proposal utilize a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) approach or lens? Please provide a summary of these efforts.

This proposal is based on Educare schools providing equitable access to nature for all children. Research shows that "People of color, families with children, and low-income communities are most likely to be deprived of the benefits that nature provides. Nature is supposed to be a "great equalizer" whose services are free, universal, and accessible to all humans without discrimination. In reality, however, American society distributes nature's benefits—and the effects of its destruction and decline—unequally by race, income, and age" (americanprogress.org). The practices highlighted in this presentation panel will speak directly to the efforts that Educare schools in very different parts of this country (Maine, Chicago and Tulsa) have put forth to assure that our less-resourced children and families are provided the same opportunities as their better-resourced peers. Children from low-income families face several barriers to outdoor play, including reduced access to safe neighborhoods or playgrounds. Transportation limitations also present hardship because, without a car, families cannot access desired and safe natural outdoor play spaces. Another challenge is the lack of education about the value and benefits of quality time spent outside in nature. This includes key components such as: understanding danger vs. risk, appreciating messy play, and seeing how physical/mental health are positively impacted. Isolation often hinders some families' understanding of quality programs and outdoor spaces and lacking the knowledge of resources is a barrier to increasing their own and their children's health and well-being. By providing safe and supervised places and times in nature-rich environments, Educare schools across the country are playing an important role in increasing children's time outdoors. We work to try to reduce the children's risk of obesity, promote lifelong health, and increase the knowledge and skill-sets around the benefits of nature-based education, as well as community climate resilience.

Does the work described in your proposal engage parents/caregivers and/or families? Please provide a summary of these efforts.

We always take a collaborative approach when considering nature based learning and what that looks like - from curriculum implementation to environment planning, parents and caregivers have been a part of the process. The natural environments we will be discussing throughout this presentation serve as extensions of the traditional classroom, therefore parents, caregivers and families are involved in all aspects of the creation and utilization of these spaces. During this panel, Educare Central Maine will highlight our Community Charette, an event where staff, community members and families came together to co-create natural playground designs that encompass what they would like to see for their children and encouraged family involvement in every step of the process from “dream” to “done”. Tulsa Educare will highlight some of their unique nature-based spaces where families can come to interact with their children. These interactions range from risky play in spaces designed for non-mobile infants to preschoolers. They include outdoor provocations to spark imagination to mud, music, water and gardening spaces and include small group studio spaces promoting inquiry skills and language development.

Describe the facilitation strategies/engagement approaches you will use to engage the audience. Clearly state the strategy and the percentage/amount of your time spent using each. e.g., attendee discussions, Q&A sessions, and visual aids. Meeting rooms will include a mix of tables and theater-style seating. Note that some learn shops will be hosted in a traditional classroom setting – not in rounds.

This panel style presentation will begin with a short (2-5 minute) visualization activity and large group share-out. The presentation itself (30-40 minutes) will rely heavily on beautiful visual aids (video and photos) to demonstrate each school's unique innovations around nature based learning and providing equitable access to the outdoors. The panel will be guided by facilitated questions in which each school will have an opportunity to answer using photos and short videos to demonstrate their responses. The panelists will engage the audience by sharing personal stories, asking questions and using visual aids (Ex:polls). Educare Central Maine will show a recently developed short film (10 minutes) about how their school has worked to assure equitable access to nature. At the end of the panel presentation, attendees will be given time (10-15) to work at their tables and use the Guidebook (Quality Play Environments: How Good Design Integrates Nature and Loose Parts to Support Healthy Play and Development in Young Children – a Guidebook for Creating Nature-based Play Environments: <https://forms.gle/tH7sFpbpFoqLvjZK8>) to complete a Site Assessment of their school's outdoor spaces. The guidebooks contain numerous valuable resources and will be given to each attendee to take back to their schools.

Identify the learning outcomes for your proposal. Please utilize the resources in the CEU section of our website to learn more about developing learning outcomes.

Participants will be able to identify the concept of the nature gap and its impact on children's physical and mental health.

1. Participants will be able to offer solutions to barriers that prevent equitable access to outdoor experiences for all children, including socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental factors.
2. Participants will be able to design inclusive outdoor programs that cater to diverse populations, ensuring accessibility for children from various backgrounds.

