

Certified Environmental Educator Portfolio Planner and Summary

This level of certification is for environmental educators who are not yet experts in the field, but can demonstrate fundamental knowledge and skills. Successful applicants must show general understanding of each of five overarching themes. Competencies provide additional detail about skills and understandings within each theme, however, applicants do not need to show evidence for each of the competencies for this level of certification. If later the applicant seeks certification as a Master Environmental Educator, they will need to show evidence from each of the competencies and use the Certified Master Environmental Educator Portfolio Planner. Completion of this portfolio planner is a required part of the certification process to help you organize and explain the various evidence you provide and assist reviewers in evaluating your portfolio. The planner also provides benchmarks the reviewers will use to evaluate your portfolio, suggestions for evidence to include, and space for you to self-assess your own progress.

Applicant Review Component

This review should be completed and submitted with your final portfolio to help guide reviewers to specific evidence in your portfolio. Please complete the following steps:

Step 1. Evidence: For each theme, list the evidence in your portfolio and if necessary, how you think this evidence meets the theme.

Step 2. Evaluate: Review each of the themes and benchmarks listed under novice, adequate, and target. Evaluate yourself based on your ability to provide evidence of your knowledge, experience and comfort level. Decide which level is best for you for each competency – novice, adequate, or target and for each theme.

Step 3. Summary: Use the summary sheet to easily see areas of strength or gaps in your professional background. If you find you assessed yourself at the novice level, reflect on how you will increase your understanding for these themes.

This assessment is for you and the reviewers of your portfolio. Please provide enough information to make it easy for the reviewers to become familiar with the knowledge and experience presented in the evidence in your portfolio. This self-assessment will be considered in the portfolio review process.

Reading the Rubric

The rubric describes specific themes and competencies (or desired knowledge and skills) for certification, benchmarks for evaluating portfolio elements, suggested responses, and provides space for a self-assessment by the applicant. The benchmarks will be used by the peer review panel to evaluate each application. Applicants who receive adequate or target ratings will likely be approved but the final decision will rest with the review panel. In cases where the majority of ratings are novice, applicants will receive comments and recommendations from the panel regarding how to strengthen pertinent aspects of their application.

An applicant can use any item from past experience to demonstrate understanding of the theme and must include a description of how the item meets the theme. The suggested responses are given to help provide examples or further describe expectations.

**Note: For this certification, you must submit evidence showing understanding of the theme, NOT individual competencies.. The themes and competencies for both Certified and Certified Master Environmental Educators are the same, the benchmarks for novice, adequate and target are different.*

The rubric has these elements:

Theme				
General description of a specific set of skills, knowledge or experience.				
1.1 Guideline				Suggested Response:
These guidelines further describe each theme through the skills and knowledge that must be mastered to gain competency in this area.				
Competency	Novice	Adequate	Target	An optional assessment that could be used if applicant has no existing element from prior experiences.
Indicator that suggests ways of assessing the ability of educators to meet the guideline.	Description of an unsuccessful attempt.	Description relating to the ability of the environmental educator that needs to be improved.	Description of the ability of master level environmental educators	
<i>Applicant Review (see details below)</i> __Novice __Adequate __Target <i>List evidence and describe how it meets the theme:</i>		<i>Peer Reviewer:</i> __Novice __Developing __Master <i>Strengths/Areas of Improvement:</i> <i>This is the area for reviewer comments</i>		

Abbreviations

(GEEC) – reference to Guidelines for Environmental Educators in Colorado

This process may at first seem daunting, but remember CAEE and an optional mentor can help you figure out ways to document your understanding. Please call 303-273-9527 or email info@caee.org.

Theme 1 - Environmental Literacy	Novice	Adequate	Target	Suggested Response:
<p>Environmental educators possess the knowledge and skills associated with environmental literacy. Environmental educators should not only possess the competency to help their learners achieve these objectives but also embrace the spirit of environmental literacy by modeling it in their own endeavors.</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate understanding of the importance of environmental literacy.</p>	<p>Provides several pieces of evidence indicating knowledge and skills associated with environmental literacy and/or personal environmental responsibility.</p>	<p>Provides several pieces of evidence indicating knowledge and skills associated with environmental literacy and/or personal environmental responsibility.</p>	<p>Include transcripts or resume showing any experience/coursework or professional development that has contributed to your own environmental literacy and submit an essay similar to one of the choices below.</p>
<p>1.1 Questioning, Analysis and Interpretation Skills Developing environmental literacy depends on a willingness and ability to ask questions about the surrounding world, speculate and hypothesize, seek and evaluate information, and develop answers to questions. Environmental educators understand and can communicate the processes of investigation; and design, conduct, and evaluate such investigations. (GEEC 1.1) 1.1.1: Understand the nature of inquiry. 1.1.2: Critically analyze sources of information for accuracy and reliability.</p>	<p>Does not provide evidence of personal environmental literacy.</p>		<p>Describes the importance of environmental education in developing environmental literacy.</p>	<p>Submit a lesson plan/program outline and write a reflection on several components of environmental literacy from the competencies that are addressed in the lesson or program.</p>
<p>1.2 Knowledge of Environmental Processes and Systems Environmental literacy hinges on understanding the processes and systems that comprise the environment, including human social systems and their influences. That understanding is based on knowledge synthesized from across the traditional disciplines (especially the natural and social sciences). (GEEC 1.2) 1.2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the processes and systems that comprise each of these concepts: biological change; cycles, physical processes that shape the earth, and energy flow; biodiversity; cultural, political and economic systems; human interactions with the environment; and ecological consequences.</p>				<p>Include reflection on the resources used to design the lesson/program and the validity of the information/ perspectives included.</p>
<p>1.3 Processes of Addressing Environmental Issues Environmental educators understand that environmental literacy includes the abilities to research, evaluate, and act on environmental issues. The skills and knowledge outlined in the first two guidelines are applied and refined in the context of these issues. (GEEC 1.3) 1.3.1 Identify a local environmental issue and, for that issue, design a plan to investigate, analyze, and evaluate its scope, causes, and consequences; and investigate and evaluate alternative solutions.</p>				<p>Write a short essay describing how you would select and teach an environmental issue as well as appropriate sources of information for</p>

<p>1.4 Personal and Civic Responsibility Environmental educators understand how people exercise the roles, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels - local, state, national, and global. (GEEC 1.4) 1.4.1 Describe an environmental issue and various societal values that play a role in it. 1.4.2 Articulate how to empower learners to take action. 1.4.3 Engage in responsible environmental actions.</p>				
<p>THEME 1 <i>Applicant Review:</i> ___Novice ___Adequate ___Target List evidence and describe how it meets the theme:</p>		<p>THEME 1 <i>Peer Reviewer:</i> ___Novice ___Adequate ___Target Strengths/Areas of Improvement:</p>		

Theme 2 - Foundations of Environmental Education	Novice	Adequate	Target	Suggested Response:
<p>Environmental educators have a basic understanding of the goals, theory, practice, and history of the field of environmental education. This knowledge provides a solid foundation on which educators can build their own practice</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate understanding of the field or goals of environmental education.</p>	<p>Explains the goals of environmental education.</p>	<p>Explains the goals of environmental education and can site examples of how they are accomplished.</p>	<p>Select a lesson plan/program outline that you teach or from another source and write a reflection describing why you chose the lesson/program, how the it meets the goals and objectives of environmental education, how you would change the lesson/program to incorporate more of the goals of EE, and several EE providers that could provide support in helping an instructor to teach the lesson/program or learners to expand their experience with the material.</p>
<p>2.1 Fundamental Characteristics and Goals of Environmental Education Environmental educators understand environmental education as a distinct field and know its defining characteristics and goals. (GEEC 2.1) 2.1.1 Understand environmental education as a distinct field and know its defining characteristics and goals. 2.1.2 Knowledge of the Colorado Environmental Education Master Plan.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a lack of awareness of key regional, state, and national EE providers and support services.</p>	<p>Identifies regional, state, or national EE providers and support services and indicates the benefits of association with those groups.</p>	<p>Identifies regional, state, or national EE providers and support services and indicates the benefits of association with those groups.</p>	
<p>2.2 How Environmental Education is Implemented Environmental educators understand that environmental education encompasses a variety of settings, audiences, providers, and methods and that sources of support, program requirements, and other factors vary from context to context. For a statewide listing of environmental education programs and resources, visit CAEE’s online database/directory at www.caee.org. (GEEC 2.2) 2.2.1 Understand environmental education encompasses a variety of settings, audiences, providers, and methods, sources of support, program requirements, and other factors vary from context to context.</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate ability to critically evaluate EE materials.</p>	<p>Identifies and uses quality EE materials from respected sources.</p>	<p>Can describe strengths and weaknesses of quality EE materials.</p>	
<p>2.3 The Evolution of the Field of Environmental Education Environmental educators are familiar with the growth of the field of environmental education. (GEEC 2.3) 2.3.1 Be familiar with the growth of the field of environmental education, and the connection between research and practice.</p>				

<p>2.4 Knowledge of Environmental Education Materials and Resources Environmental educators are aware of a range of materials and resources for their environmental education efforts and understand how to access, evaluate, and use these resources. See http://www.caee.org for an online database/directory of environmental education resources. (GEEC 4.8) 2.4.1 Demonstrate familiarity with, and ability to critically evaluate, a variety of EE materials, programs, and resources.</p>				
<p>THEME 2 Applicant Review: ___Novice ___Adequate ___Target List evidence and describe how it meets the theme:</p>		<p>THEME 2 Peer Reviewer: ___Novice ___Adequate ___Target Strengths/Areas of Improvement:</p>		

Theme 3 – Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator	Novice	Adequate	Target	Suggested Response:
<p>Environmental educators understand and accept the responsibilities associated with practicing EE. Environmental Educators maintain consistent and high standards for instruction and professional conduct.</p>	<p>Makes no attempt or attempts incorrectly to model appropriate behavior.</p>	<p>Provides a signed Code of Ethics and is able to describe the importance of modeling appropriate behavior.</p>	<p>Provides a signed Code of Ethics and evidence of previous responsible, respectful behavior with learners, co-workers and peers.</p>	<p>Signed Code of Ethics. Letter of reference regarding experience as an environmental educator.</p>
<p>3.1 Exemplary environmental education practice Environmental educators understand their responsibility to provide environmental education that is appropriate, inclusive, constructive, and aligned with the standards of the field. NAAEE 3.1 Model responsible, respectful and reasoned behavior as an environmental education professional.</p>	<p>Makes no attempt at professional development.</p>	<p>Provides evidence of professional development opportunities attended.</p>	<p>Provides evidence of professional development activities and reflects about the benefits.</p>	<p>For one professional development opportunity you participated in within the last year, explain: Why you chose to participate in that professional development How you applied what you learned professionally, and How the training benefit you professionally.</p>
<p>3.2 Ongoing Learning and Professional Development Environmental educators are active learners in their professional lives. (GEEC 3.2) 3.2.1 Examine and improve skills through ongoing learning and professional development.</p>				
<p>THEME 3 Applicant Review: ___Novice ___Adequate ___Target List evidence and describe how it meets the theme:</p>		<p>THEME 3 Peer Reviewer: ___Novice ___Adequate ___Target Strengths/Areas of Improvement:</p>		

Theme 4 – Planning and Implementing Environmental Education Environmental educators combine high-quality education with the unique features of environmental education to design and implement effective instruction. Environmental educators enable learners to engage in inquiry and investigation, especially when considering environmental issues that are controversial and require learners to seriously reflect on their own and others’ perspectives. Proper preparation should enable environmental educators to provide the interdisciplinary, place-based, hands-on, investigative learning opportunities that are central to environmental education. Environmental educators foster an environment such that student interactions are conducive to learning.	Novice Does not identify the distinctions between advocacy and education. Does not demonstrate understanding of learner needs, teaching strategies, or learner interests. Can not describe the importance of state standards (if applicable), goals and objectives within a lesson/program.	Adequate Identifies the distinctions between advocacy and education. Describes the age-appropriate teaching strategies used and accommodations made to address learner needs, interests, and background as they relate to a particular lesson/program. Describes the importance of state standards (if applicable), goals and objectives within a lesson/program.	Target Identifies the distinctions between advocacy and education. Demonstrates accurate and objective instruction. Describes the age-appropriate teaching strategies used and accommodations made to address learner needs, interests, and background as they relate to a particular lesson/program. Identifies skills they want to develop within planning and implementing environmental education. Describes the importance of state standards (if applicable), goals and objectives within a lesson/program. Identifies activities/strategies within a lesson/program that help achieve standards, goals, and objectives.	Suggested Response: Select a lesson plan/program outline that you have used and write a reflection describing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • why you chose the lesson/program, • how it demonstrates education rather than advocacy, • appropriate teaching strategies or strategies you would use as the instructor to facilitate learning, • how state standards, goals or objectives are addressed and • several skills you would like to improve in order to effectively teach the lesson/program.
4.1 Emphasis on Education, Not Advocacy Environmental educators provide accurate, objective, balanced, and effective instruction that acknowledges different views and opinions about environmental conditions, issues or actions. (GEEC 3.1) 4.1.1 Illustrate the differences between advocacy and education. 4.1.2 Provide accurate, objective, balanced, and effective instruction that acknowledges different views and opinions about local environmental conditions, issues or actions. 4.1.3 Identify instructional strategies and curriculum materials/resources and explain how they can be used to encourage learners to gain/explore different perspectives, form their own opinions and support their beliefs.				
4.2 Knowledge about Learners and Learning Environmental educators tailor instructional approaches to meet the needs of different learners in an engaging and challenging way. Whenever possible, accommodations for learners with special needs will be made. (This range may include adults, especially for educators in informal settings.) (GEEC 4.1) 4.2.1 Knowledge about learners and learning.				
4.3 Knowledge of Various Teaching Methods Environmental educators are familiar with and can employ a range of instructional methods. (GEEC 4.2, 4.9, 4.10) 4.3.1 Knowledge of various teaching methods, strategies, and tools. Methods examples include: inquiry; hands-on; cooperative; service learning; problem-solving; role playing; case studies; discovery; models, etc.				
4.4 A Climate for Learning About and Exploring the Environment Environmental educators provide an age-appropriate environment for learning that is physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe, relevant and engaging for learners (GEEC 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7) 4.4.1 Provide an age-appropriate environment for learning that is physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe, relevant, and engaging.				

<p>4.5 Planning for Instruction Environmental educators plan environmental education instruction and programs that meet specific instructional goals. (GEEC 4.6)</p> <p>4.5.1 Plan for instruction that meets specific instructional goals and objectives. Instructional objectives should be drawn from state standards and/or EE goals and objectives.</p>				
<p>THEME 4 <i>Applicant Review:</i> __Novice __Adequate __Target <i>List evidence and describe how it meets the theme:</i></p>		<p>THEME 4 <i>Peer Reviewer:</i> __Novice __Adequate __Target <i>Strengths/Areas of Improvement:</i></p>		

Theme 5 - Assessment and Evaluation	Novice	Adequate	Target	Suggested Response:
<p>Environmental educators possess the knowledge, abilities and commitment to make assessment and evaluation integral to instruction and programs. Proper preparation should give environmental educators tools for assessing learner progress and evaluating the effectiveness of their instruction.</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate understanding of the importance of assessment and evaluation.</p>	<p>Demonstrates understanding of the importance of assessment (checking learner progress) and evaluation within a lesson/program</p>	<p>Demonstrates understanding of the importance of assessment (checking learner progress) and evaluation and can site an example of the effective use of assessment and evaluation within a lesson plan/program outline</p>	<p>Select a lesson plan/program outline that you have used and write a reflection describing examples of effective strategies to assess learner understanding and progress or suggest ways that assessment and evaluation could be incorporated in the program and why.</p>
<p>5.1 Learner Outcomes Environmental educators understand the importance of tying assessment to learning. (GEEC 5.2)</p> <p>5.1.1 Demonstrate the use of assessments to measure cognitive, affective and/or psychomotor outcomes that align with instructional objectives.</p>				
<p>5.2 Assessment that is Part of Instruction Environmental educators incorporate assessment into environmental education. (GEEC 5.3)</p> <p>5.2.1 Demonstrate how formative assessment was used to shape instructional planning and/or delivery.</p>				
<p>5.3 Improving Instruction Environmental educators use instructional experiences and assessments to improve future instruction. (GEEC 5.4)</p> <p>5.3.1 Demonstrate how summative assessment data and evaluation results were used to improve instruction.</p>				
<p>5.4 Evaluating Programming Environmental educators understand the importance of evaluation, and how evaluations can be used to change environmental education programming. (GEEC 5.5)</p> <p>5.4.1 Explain how evaluation is used before, during, and after to alter environmental education programming.</p>				
<p>THEME 5 <i>Applicant Review:</i> __Novice __Adequate __Target <i>List evidence and describe how it meets the theme:</i></p>		<p>THEME 5 <i>Peer Reviewer:</i> __Novice __Adequate __Target <i>Strengths/Areas of Improvement:</i></p>		

Summary Sheet

Theme 1 - Environmental Literacy

Novice Adequate Target

- 1.1 Questioning, Analysis and Interpretation Skills
- 1.2 Knowledge of Environmental Processes and Systems
- 1.3 Processes of Addressing Environmental Issues

Summary of Strengths:

- 1.4 Personal and Civic Responsibility

Summary of Limitations or Need for Growth:

Theme 2 - Foundations of Environmental Education

Novice Adequate Target

- 2.1 Fundamental Characteristics and Goals of Environmental Education
- 2.2 How Environmental Education is Implemented
- 2.3 The Evolution of the Field of Environmental Education

Summary of Strengths:

- 2.4 Knowledge of Environmental Education Materials and Resources

Summary of Limitations or Need for Growth:

Theme 3 – Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator

Novice Adequate Target

- 3.1 Exemplary environmental education practice

Summary of Strengths:

- 3.2 Ongoing Learning and Professional Development

Summary of Limitations or Need for Growth:

Theme 4 – Planning and Implementing Environmental Education

Novice Adequate Target

- 4.1 Emphasis on Education, Not Advocacy
- 4.2 Knowledge about Learners and Learning
- 4.3 Knowledge of Various Teaching Methods

Summary of Strengths:

- 4.4 A Climate for Learning About and Exploring the Environment
- 4.5 Planning for Instruction

Summary of Limitations or Need for Growth:

Theme 5 - Assessment and Evaluation

Novice Adequate Target

- 5.1 Learner Outcomes
- 5.2 Assessment that is Part of Instruction

Summary of Strengths:

- 5.3 Improving Instruction
- 5.4 Evaluating Programming

Summary of Limitations or Need for Growth: