

## Inventory of Schoolyard LTER Programs (2009-2010)

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The Schoolyard LTER (sLTER) was formally established in 1998 through supplemental funding from the Division of Environmental Biology. For thirteen years, each LTER site has received annual funding supplements upon request, currently \$24,000, to design their own program in relation to the ecological research conducted at the site and in light of the particular needs and resources of the local school districts and communities. Supplements are also available to support the Research Experiences for Teachers program (RET). The sLTER program has provided an infusion of resources for LTER sites to develop and pilot test a diverse array of education activities and programs. This site autonomy has fostered tremendous creativity and has resulted in a wide array of programs for local and national audiences. At the same time, the plethora of programmatic approaches makes it challenging to draw general conclusions about the sLTER program as a whole without a centralized coordination of evaluation activities.

The Learning Partnership, under the direction of Steven McGee (LUQ), has conducted an inventory of the sLTER programs conducted during the 2009-2010 school year. This inventory was developed through an analysis of published materials on each site's sLTER web site as well as from interviews conducted with 21 of the 26 sLTER coordinators. McGee identified four general types of programs targeted at students and three general types of programs targeted at teachers. Tables 1 and 2 show the distribution of sLTER programs targeted at students and teachers, respectively. The tables also show the average number of participants per site for each type of activity as well as the percentage of sites that have leveraged the sLTER and RET supplements to secure additional funding to support the activities. In aggregate the sites reported that they served **1,355 teachers** and **40,918 students** during the 2009-2010 school year.

McGee is currently working on a qualitative analysis of the interviews to summarize the range of practices that the site coordinators used in each of the categories of activities. This summary of practices will be helpful for sites to learn from each other on how to implement sLTER programs. The full report will be completed and disseminated through the Education Committee intranet by August 2011.

<b>Student Programs</b>	<b>Sites</b>	<b>Teachers Per site</b>	<b>Students per site</b>	<b>% Leverage</b>
Curriculum	13	31	483	62%
Support for Data Collection	10	30	2775	70%
Field Trips	8	114	3684	88%
On Site Research	7	22	384	83%

**Table 1: Distribution of sLTER programs targeted at students**

<b>Teacher Programs</b>	<b>Sites</b>	<b>Teachers Per site</b>	<b>% Leverage</b>
Professional Development	17	41	88%
Research Experiences for Teachers	9	2	33%
Implementation Support	4	4	25%

**Table 2: Distribution of sLTER programs targeted at teachers**