ELE members gathered for a meeting at Illinois State University on January 18th to hear reports from three subcommittees, and discuss their recommendations for the final report to be submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education in June. The report is to explain the plan for the ELE to achieve nine functions of the learning exchange, plus areas of strength and weakness, key resources, areas of perceived need, and a description of all public-private partnerships and funds to support implementation.

Dr. David Loomis, of the lead entity Illinois State University, facilitated the discussion. Jason Tyszko, of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, presented on the Illinois Pathways Initiative and STEM Learning Exchanges. Jeff Mays, of the Illinois Business Roundtable, also provided insight regarding STEM Learning Exchanges.

Dr. David Loomis (Illinois State University, Institute for Regulatory Policy Studies and Center for Renewable Energy, welcomed the members to the meeting.

Abbreviated recommendations:

**Curriculum, Equipment, Student and Teacher Support Committee**
Co-Chairs: Dr. Willy Hunter (Illinois State University) and Dr. Tod Treat (Richland Community College)

- Create a repository/clearinghouse, master energy database/catalog to share information of what is already available for teachers, and what students may access. The standards/framework for what is to be included must be defined, using the DOE energy literacy guidelines. Items that meet standards will be included, not judged, and may include courses, modules, or equipment.
- Develop a rating system for teachers that use the items to rate them. The database will help identify what is available and gaps/resources.
- Adopt or modify the U.S. Department of Energy Literacy Standards. Specify at a minimum that all students be able to demonstrate the 6 energy literacy outcomes in various ways at various grade levels.
- Address career readiness, identifying characteristics of those who are career ready including the importance of soft skills, such as teamwork, forms of communication, etc. Formally adopt career orientated outcomes specifically aligned with skills, knowledge and dispositions believed to be important for those entering energy careers.
Internships, Collaboration, & Career Development Committee
Co-Chairs: Jim Monk (Illinois Energy Association) and Jolene Willis (Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois Univ.)

- Encourage collaboration with the Agriculture Learning Exchange for statewide student challenge.
- Create an “Energy Fair Day or Week” to increase awareness and celebrate student-lead research, interaction with guest speakers, career fair opportunities, etc. This could be one location in IL or a designated timeframe to be replicated across the state at universities, community colleges, school districts, etc. similar to IMEC’s Manufacturing Day concept.
- Develop a repository of innovative workforce development and career mentoring programs, internships, websites, and initiatives for educators, guidance counselors and employers to access.

Personalized Education Plans & Performance Evaluation Committee
Co-Chairs: Julie Elzanati (Illinois Green Economy Network) and Dr. David Loomis (Illinois State University)

- Catalog existing energy programs and work towards making these programs available to high school students especially those in school districts involved in the Energy Learning Exchange.
- Work with Illinois Pathways staff to implement personalized education plans for energy learning exchange students.
- Clarify entrance requirements for all Energy Learning Exchange programs of study for post-secondary academic and training programs.
- Report on the performance of STEM programs of study and work with partners to continuously improve performance.

What’s Next?
In March, ELE members will be presented with a draft of the report for ISBE, and will be asked to provide final input by April. The final report submittal is due in June. An implementation grant will be pursued, and matching funds will be needed to qualify.