

DEMONSTRATION SITE STEERING COMMITTEE: OCP SBC

A one-page description of the Santa
Barbara County Outdoor Classroom Project
Demonstration Site Steering Committee



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY OUTDOOR CLASSROOM PROJECT® DEMONSTRATION SITE NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

As part of its implementation of the Outdoor Classroom Project for the Orfalea Foundation in Santa Barbara County (SBCOCP), the project implementation team from the Child Educational Center (CEC) facilitated centers in the county achieving Outdoor Classroom Project “Demonstration” or “Recognized” site status. As in other parts of the state, when a sufficient number of such centers are established in a given location, a network is created. To ensure the beneficial functioning of a network, a network *steering committee* is then established. Members are drawn from network participants who volunteer their time. The Network’s primary goal is to support the participating centers in maintaining and enhancing achievements in their development. Through the Committee, new centers are confirmed as Demonstration or Recognized sites and become part of the SBCOCP network, as well as the greater collection of Demonstration and Recognized centers outside Santa Barbara County.

In the case of the Santa Barbara Project, the creation of the steering committee has a greater than normal purpose. As the SBCOCP evolved, part of the effort to sustain all of its achievements was included in the creation of the Steering Committee. Along with its normal duties, the Steering Committee is the vehicle by which centers in Santa Barbara County will be engaged and supported in the future to continue evolution of the Outdoor Classroom at individual centers, and as part of a movement throughout the county.

During the seventh and concluding year of Orfalea’s funding of SBCOCP, a significant focus was placed on strengthening the Steering Committee’s functioning to enable it to direct sustainability efforts in the future. In addition to teaching participants the skills required to confirm new Demonstration and Recognized sites, training was provided in mentoring less developed centers to continue to make progress with both Outdoor Classroom and Preschool Food Initiative development. This mentorship training also includes a focus on sustaining center development under the Preschool Food and Healthy Habits Initiative.

Leadership training was also a part of this final year of Foundation support. Its aim was to ensure that the Steering Committee will have the best opportunity to further evolve the transformation in the delivery of Early Childhood Education throughout the county that the Foundation has so successfully manifested. This support of the Steering Committee includes connecting the Santa Barbara network with the other networks outside the county and with the greater Outdoor Classroom Project nationwide, so that it can benefit from the support offered by that organization.