



Teacher Workshops in the US: Goals, Best Practices and Impact

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Abstract

1. Introduction

The DPS Education and Public Outreach Committee will put on teacher workshops in the host cities of the annual DPS meetings beginning with the meeting in Reno, Nevada in 2012. 2012 will be a very exciting year for NASA with the arrival of the newest rover, Curiosity, to Mars in August. With all of the press surrounding Curiosity, it will be a great time to get teachers and students excited about space science.

2. Goals, Best Practices and Impact

The goal of the workshop is to educate the teachers on a few focused topics so that they can transfer the knowledge they gain to their students. We will recruit scientists who are attending the meeting to participate in the workshops and will also pair the teachers with scientists in the field who can serve as a resource for the teacher and their class throughout the school year. The scientists can answer questions the teachers may have, be available to do video lectures or interactive question and answer sessions over skype, and work with the teachers to develop hands-on classroom activities.

We will partner closely with EPO professionals in NASA's Science Mission Directorate to ensure that best practices for the workshops are employed, including ensuring that the workshop and workshop materials are designed within the framework of the state standards, surveying participating teachers before the workshops about their needs and goals, assessing the participants pre-workshop knowledge, and engaging participants as learners during the workshop [1].

The impact of the workshop will be increased by providing the teachers and students with a scientist who will serve as a long-term resource. We will maintain contact with the teachers after the workshop to ensure that the scientists are still actively engaged in their classroom and to collect feedback.

References

[1] Shupla C, et al. (2011) Lessons Learned: Best Practices in Educator Workshops. 42nd Lunar and Planetary Science Conference, no. 2828.