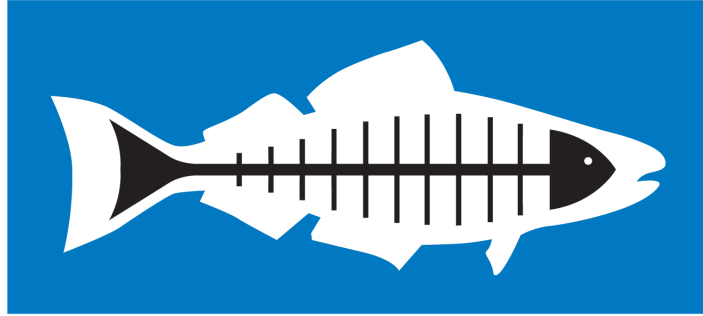


# KEY TO THE SEA



where your classroom meets the ocean

## Annual Report: 2013-2014 School Year

### Mission Statement

In the spirit of openness and through collaboration, communication and resource sharing, Key to the Sea strives to provide teachers with supportive professional development and multi-disciplinary, marine science curricula, which meets state and national science standards. Key to the Sea also endeavors to promote environmental stewardship among youth by stimulating their sense of wonder, and fostering learning and empowerment through key experiences in the natural environment.



## **Introduction and Program Overview**

Key to the Sea celebrated its 14th year as one of Heal the Bay's core educational programs during the 2013-2014 school year. Since 1999, the program has served thousands of local students and their teachers (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade), providing them with high-quality, science-based, environmental education focused on watersheds, coasts and our ocean. Since the early days of the program when a group of Los Angeles informal educators came together to create an environmental education program to meet the requests of classroom teachers, the Key to the Sea Program has continued to successfully offer teacher training workshops, in-class teacher led lessons, and student field trips to promote ocean conservation and stewardship messages.

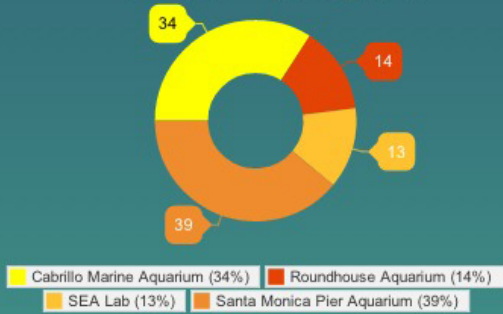
The program has been revised and refined over the years so that it currently consists of two 6-hour workshops for teachers: Workshop I focuses on individuals and their connection to the local watershed and our coasts where the students and teachers will be visiting on their field trip. Workshop II delves more deeply into the watersheds and the local action impact on our global ocean. Both workshops have a written curriculum full of hands-on activities and scientific explorations that a teacher can use in the classroom. While attending workshops, teachers receive the curriculum, the training to use it in their classroom, and all the materials to put a Saturday workshop's training into use come Monday morning. Once teachers have completed both workshops, they are considered to be Veteran participants and no longer need to attend a workshop to participate in a field trip.

After 14 years, all four partnering aquaria still participate in the partnership, leading workshops, promoting the program, and offering the field trips at their sites. The program couples the teacher training with a field trip to one of the partnering aquaria: Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps' SEA Laboratory in Redondo Beach, the Roundhouse Marine Studies Lab and Aquarium in Manhattan Beach, and Heal the Bay's own Santa Monica Pier Aquarium. USC Sea Grant has maintained a very active role in the partnership as well, while the Los Angeles County Office of Education continues to assist the Key to the Sea Program in promotion and advertisement among teachers. It's a rare feat that so many partnering organizations have maintained their commitment to a program for such an extensive period of time, and a true testament to the strength of the program itself.

On the field trip, each site has tailored the program's particulars to their individual location, but the content and learning objectives remain the same: 1) inspire curiosity and growing understanding of the beach environment and the animals that call it home 2) and connect the students and their daily lives to the impact that they have on the environment, encouraging stewardship behaviors over negative impacts. Students look at the beach through the eyes of a scientist, going beyond the place of recreation and relaxation to a greater grasp of the delicate and dynamic beach habitat. All program partners are thrilled to be able to introduce students and teachers to the sandy beach environment through the lens of scientific exploration, and for many students, just allow them to experience the beach and the ocean for the first time.

# Key Highlights 2013-14

% of Field Trips by Site



126 total trips

Teacher Workshop Status



265 Teachers

Grant Sponsored Trips



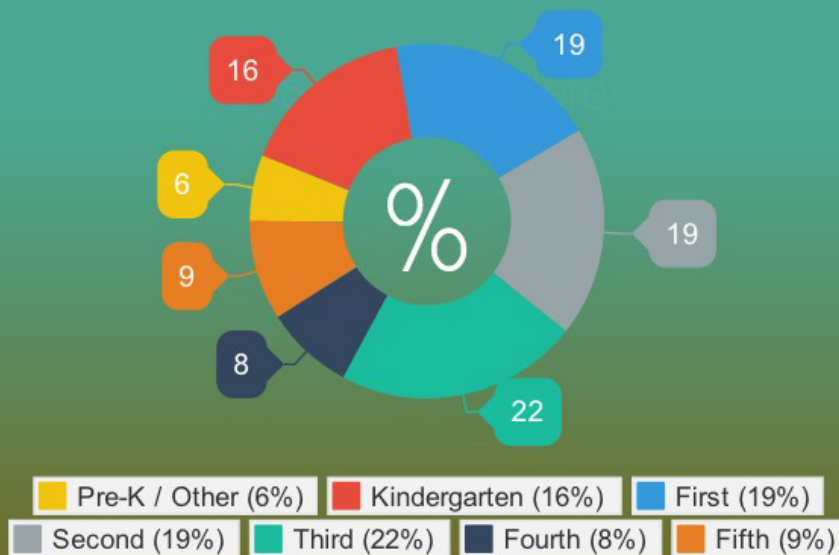
52%

% Title 1 Students



87.5%

Grade Level of Participating Teachers



## **Participant Data**

Summary Table of the Key to the Sea 2013-2014 School Year

Total # of Teachers Participated	265
Workshop I Attendance	69
Workshop II Attendance	37
Veteran (3+ years) Attendance	154
Attended field trip only	5
Field Trips	126
Bus Stipends Awarded	66
Schools Participated	79
Students	6143
Title 1 Students	5368
% of Title 1 students	87.5%

During the 2013-2014 school year, Workshop I took place five times and II was offered four times, from September to February. A total of 106 teachers attended these workshops, and an additional 154 veteran teachers participated in the program (veteran teachers no longer need to attend workshops). An additional five teachers participated in the field trip only. In some schools a field trip or science coordinator implements the field trips and the Key to the Sea curriculum in the school, therefore the classroom teachers do not need to attend the workshops. This accounts for the 5 teachers who attended the field trip only.

Through the field trip component of the program, 6,143 students representing 79 schools from nine districts participated in the program. Students who attend Title 1 schools, or those schools whose income level is so low as to qualify for additional federal funding to provide students with free meals, accounted for 87.5% of the students we served (5,368 students).

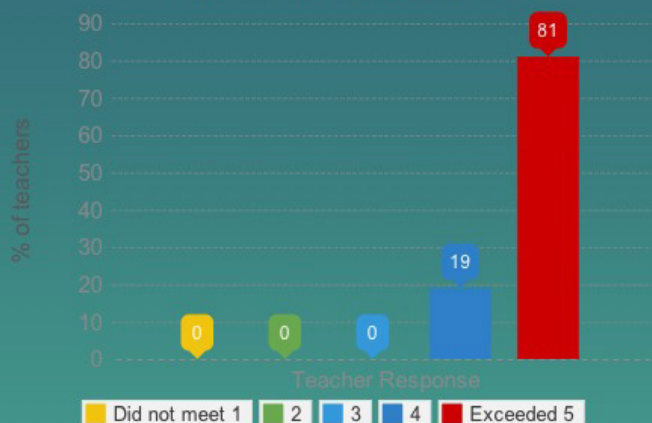
There were a total of 126 field trips that took place at four partnering aquaria. The Key to the Sea program was able to provide \$350 transportation stipends to offset the cost of the bus for 66 field trips due to our generous sponsors/foundation grants. Of the remaining field trips, some were sponsored by grants that the partnering aquaria received, so the classes were not necessarily without assistance. Without transportation assistance, some field trips were cancelled as the schools could not afford to pay.

In looking at the teachers we serve, we can see that the program reaches many grades. This past school year saw the highest percentage of first through third grade participants. Participants described here as “other” may be science or field trip coordinators that teach multiple grades or special consideration for veteran teachers that have changed grades or special needs classes.

# Teacher Program Evaluation Data

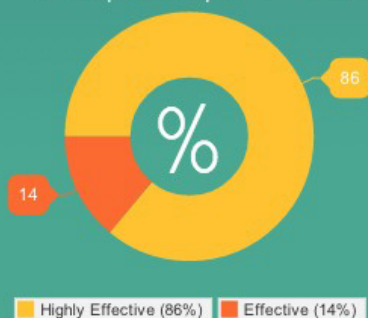
## Expectations for Workshop

Workshop 1 & 2 responses combined

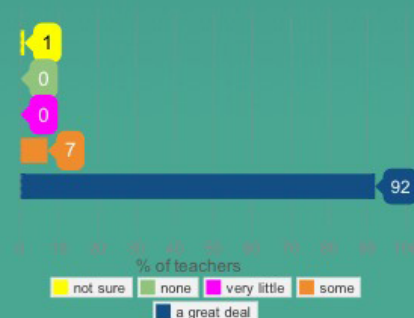


## Teacher Opinion on Curriculum Effectiveness

Workshop 1 & 2 responses combined



## Effect of Workshop on Teachers Comfort Level Teaching Environmental Concepts



## What Effect has Participating in the Key to the Sea Program had on your Students

in regards to environmental stewardship and pollution prevention



## **Teacher Program Evaluations**

We ask teachers to complete evaluations of both their workshops and field trip experience to better understand how the program is being received and where we can make improvements. Overall, teachers are overwhelmingly pleased with their Key to the Sea experiences. The end of this report includes some direct quotes from teacher about their experience. Many teachers filled out a post program evaluation to help us better gauge the effectiveness of the program as a whole. The “Teacher Program Evaluation Data” infographic highlights combined responses from Workshop I and II regarding teachers’ opinions of their workshops.

In 2013 we added questions to the post-program evaluation comparing knowledge and behavior before and after participation in the Key to the Sea program. We wanted to better understand the increase in teacher’s comfort level after attending a workshop, as well as the effect that Key to the Sea curriculum and field trips had on students (see “Teacher Program Evaluation Data” infographic.)

## **Additional Highlights:**

This past year saw many changes in the role of the Key to the Sea Manager. With restructuring of the Education Department at Heal the Bay, the Key to the Sea Program is now run by long time Key to the Sea Partner, Nick Fash. Nick has worked intimately with the program for the past 11 years, as lead naturalist and partner. Now running the entire Key to the Sea Program out of the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, we are looking to make a number of changes in the upcoming months to streamline the registration process with ARCTIC, an online registration program, as well as update the workshops and the materials the teachers are given.

Program Support:

The following funders generously sponsored the Key to the Sea Program during the 2013-2014 school year:

City of Long Beach Department of Public Works – Storm Water and Environmental Compliance Division

Macy's Corporate Giving

Santa Monica Seafood RSVP Program with FishWise

Southern California Gas Company

Wells Fargo Foundation

SMART Family Foundation

Without the generous support of these funders and community partners, the Key to the Sea program would not be possible. Every penny donated helps to provide participants with high-quality environmental education curriculum designed to promote an interest in science, exploration and a healthy respect for nature, which serves as the foundation of environmental stewardship.

Additionally, we would like to thank the interns, naturalists and support staff that generously gave their time to share their knowledge and passion with teachers and students.

## **Key to the Sea Teacher Feedback**

The teacher workshop was really informative and the activities were engaging. The curriculum guidebook was a great resource full of information and activities that were easy to do in the classroom.

-Anita Hawatian, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at Canterbury Elementary

My students are much more aware of the impact that they and others have on the environment, and they incorporate that in classroom discussions. It is clear that they learned a lot of information that stuck with them well after the field trip.

-Jennifer Nagelin, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at Wilder's Preparatory Academy Charter

Thank you so much for an AMAZING experience for my children. They are still talking about it and regularly pick up trash in our hallway. They are concerned about ocean animals. The day was incredible for them in every way. The naturalists were truly amazing and engaged all of the children.

-Carol Wright, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at Roosevelt Elementary

THIS IS one trip that I will continue to bring my new students to every year so long as you will have us. They learn so much all in one afternoon/morning. Some kids have never been to the beach and some have been but have never looked at the beach through those lens. It's such a great service that you are providing for the community! Thank you!

- Tiffany Khaou-Melgar 4<sup>th</sup> Grade at Ambassador School of Global Education

This program instilled an atmosphere of wonder and inquiry about our role as participants in creating our environment in a more thoughtful way. These decisions students learned must include the considering of how our choices can be impactful on the lives of other living things. This is the concept that led to endless classroom discussions since our field trip.

-James Mendoza, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at Roosevelt Elementary



This is one of the best field trips I have ever been on. It was organized, fun, and the staff was super friendly and engaging. I LOVED it and I hope I can do it again.

-Lizet Noriega, Kindergarten at Madison Elementary

Field trip provided my students with an eye opening learning experience that they will never forget. Field trip opportunities like this are what make teaching special.

-Jose Duarte, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Cesar Chavez Elementary