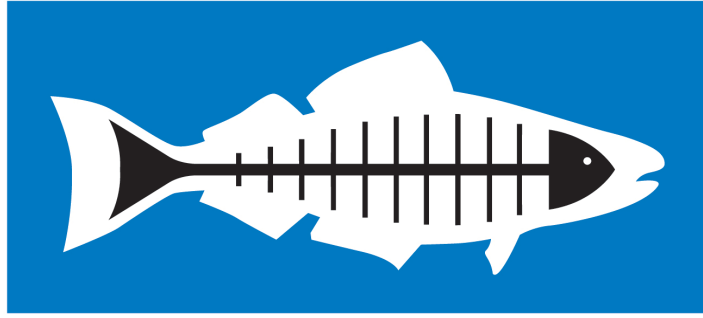


# KEY TO THE SEA

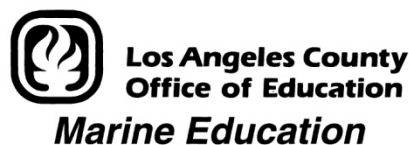


where your classroom meets the ocean

## Annual Report: 2011-2012 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 endeavors to promote environmental stewardship in students by stimulating their sense of wonder, learning and empowerment through key experiences in the environment.



## **Introduction and Program Overview**

Key to the Sea celebrated its twelfth anniversary in the 2011-2012 school year. Since 1999, the program has been serving area elementary (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) students and teachers, providing them with high quality, science-based, environmental education focused on watersheds, coasts and our ocean. Since those early days when a group of Los Angeles informal educators came together to create an environmental education program to meet the requests of teachers who wanted to teach more about our local environment and individual impact on that environment, the Key to the Sea Program has used a formula of teacher training workshops and student field trips to spread its message.

The program has been revised and refined over the years so that it currently consists of two, six-hour workshops for teachers: Workshop I focuses on individuals, their connection to the local watershed and how they connect to our coast, which the students and teachers visit 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. At the workshops, the 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. The trips are held at one of the four partnering aquaria that offer the Key to the Sea programs: Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps' SEALaboratory in Redondo Beach, the Roundhouse Marine Studies Lab and Aquarium in Manhattan Beach, and Heal the Bay's own Santa Monica Pier Aquarium.

After twelve years, all four partnering aquaria still participate in the partnership, leading workshops, promoting the program, and offering the field trips at their sites. 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.

Field trips are tailored to the particular program's, but the content and learning objectives remain the same: 1) inspire a curiosity and burgeoning understanding of the beach environment and the animals that call it home; 2) connect the students and their daily lives to the impact they have on the environment, encouraging stewardship behaviors over negative impacts. Students look at the beach through the eyes of a scientist, grasping its importance not only as a place for recreation, but also as a 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, allowing them to experience the beach and the ocean for the first time.



## Summary

**SUMMARY TABLE KEY TO THE SEA FOR THE 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>
Total Teacher Participation	373
<i>Workshop I Attendance</i>	101
<i>Workshop II Attendance</i>	74
<i>Veteran (Year 3+) Attendance</i>	175
<i>Attended Field Trip Only</i>	23
Field Trips	349
Bus Stipends Awarded	70
Schools Participating	100
Districts	19
Students	8,858
Title 1 Students	7,867
Percentage of Title 1 Students	89%

## Details

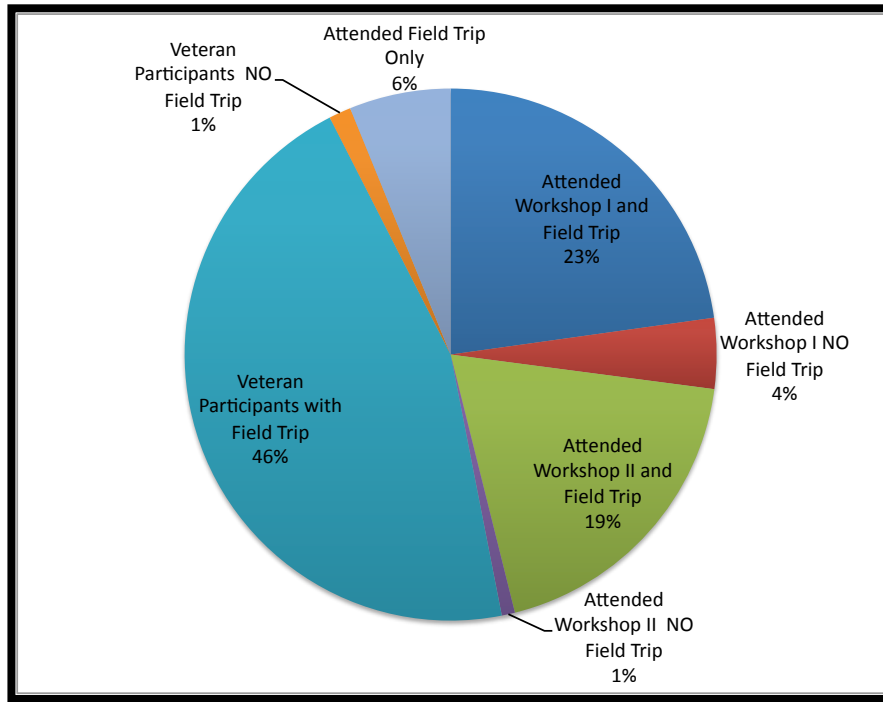
During the 2011-2012 School Year, September 2011-June 2012, Workshops I and II were held five times – one each in November, January and February, and two held in October. These workshops served 175 teachers; an additional 198 teachers also participated in the program this year (see Table 1 and Chart 1 below). Of the 198, 175 were Veteran teachers; these teachers have completed both workshops and are welcome to participate in field trips without additional workshop trainings. Five of those teachers chose to attend a workshop again to refresh their content knowledge, even though they were unable to bring students on a field trip this year. In some schools, a field trip or science coordinator implements the field trips and the Key to the Sea content at the school. At those schools, the classroom teachers themselves do not need to attend the workshops -- this situation is what accounts for the 23 teachers who attended only the field trip but not a workshop.

**TABLE 1: 2011-2012 TEACHER PARTICIPATION DATA**

<b>Teacher Participation Status</b>	<b># of Teachers</b>
Attended Workshop I and Field Trip	85
Attended Workshop I / NO Field Trip	16
Attended Workshop II and Field Trip	71
Attended Workshop II / NO Field Trip	3
Veteran (Year 3+) Participants with Field Trip	170
Veteran (Year 3+) Participants / NO Field Trip	5
Attended Field Trip Only	23
<b>TOTAL TEACHERS / PROGRAM PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>373</b>

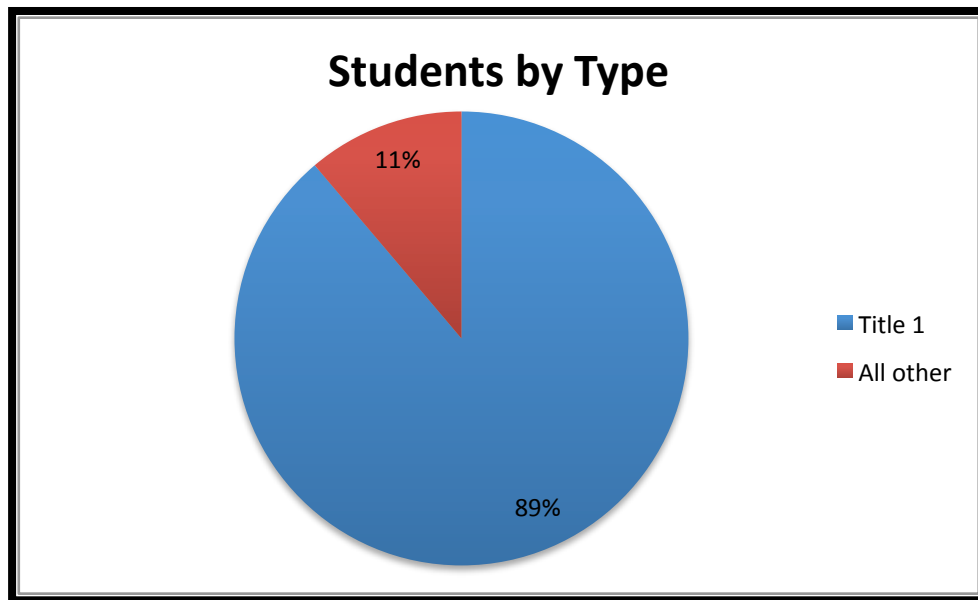


**CHART 1: 2011-2012 TEACHER PARTICIPATION BY TYPE**



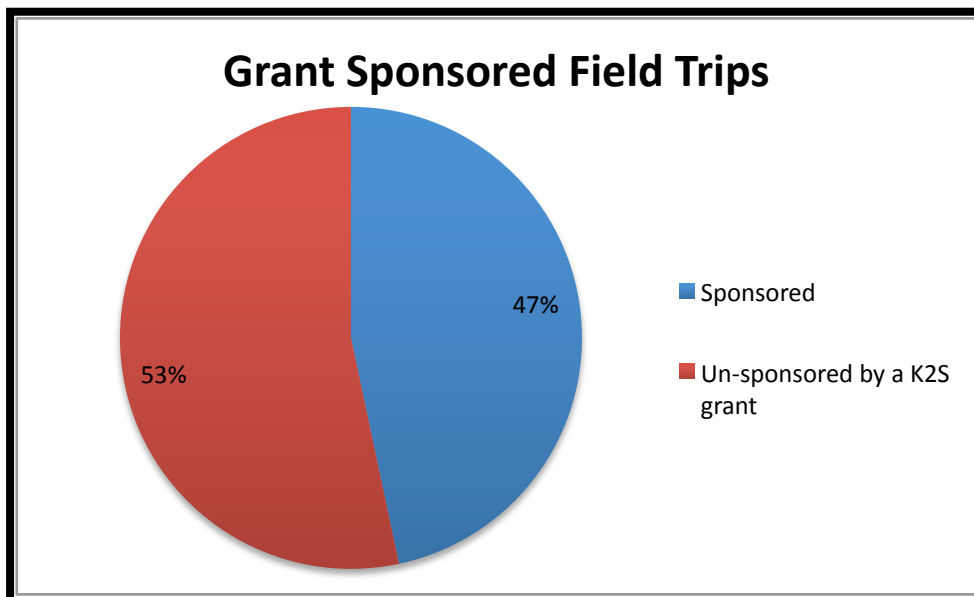
The program served 8,858 students, attending 100 schools, and more than 19 districts (see Attachment 1 for the complete list of schools and their corresponding data). Students who attend Title 1 Schools, or those schools whose income-level is so low as to qualify for additional federal funding to provide students with free meals, account for 89% of the students we served (7,867 students).

**CHART 2: STUDENTS BY THEIR TITLE 1 STATUS**

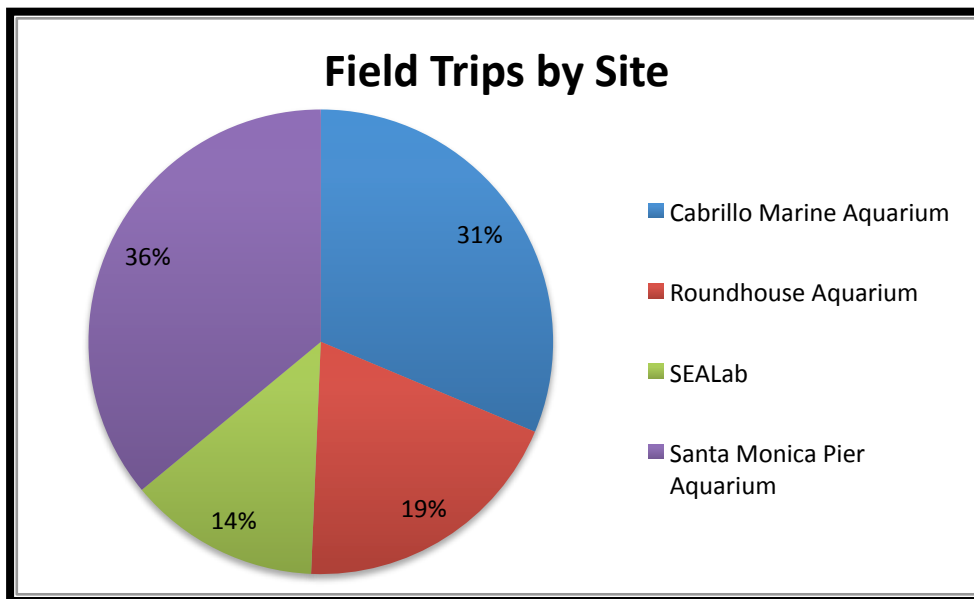


There were a total of 150 Key to the Sea Field trips to the partnering sites and the Key to the Sea Program was able to provide \$300 transportation stipends to offset the cost of the bus for 70 field trips due to our generous sponsors. Many of the 80 that the program was unable to sponsor were sponsored by grants that the partnering aquaria had received, so these classes were not necessarily without supplementation.

**CHART 3: FIELD TRIPS THAT RECEIVED GRANT-SPONSORED TRANSPORTATION STIPENDS**



**CHART 4: FIELD TRIPS BY PARTNER SITE**

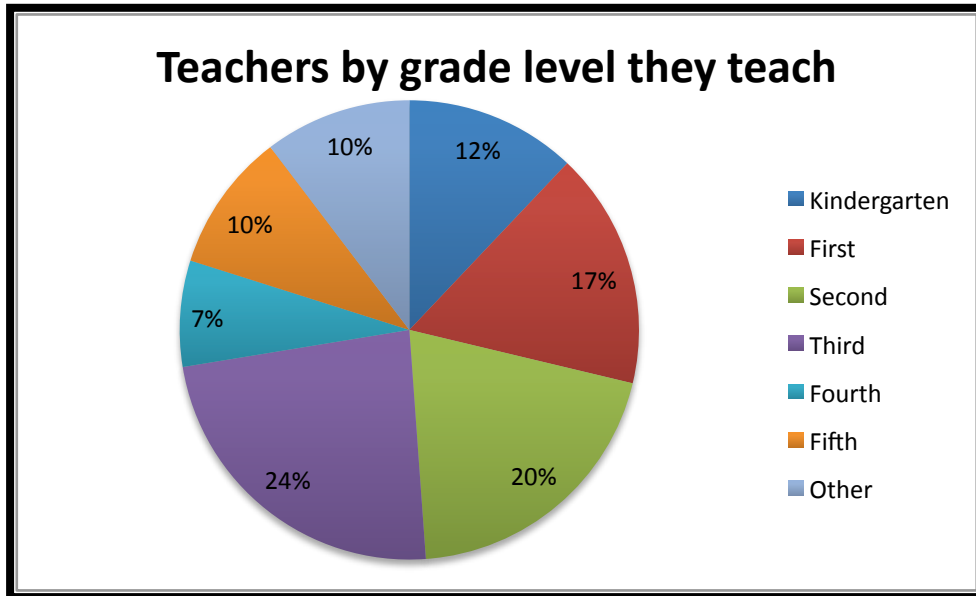


It is interesting to look at the teachers that we serve. We ask them to complete evaluations at the end of each workshop and at the end of the year. In looking at the teachers we serve, we can see that the program serves many grades. Chart 5 details their breakdown. The 10% of teachers that describe themselves as *Other* include science or field trip coordinators that teach



multiple grades, as well as a few high school special education teachers whose students are at an elementary level.

**CHART 5: TEACHERS BY THE GRADE THAT THEY TEACH**

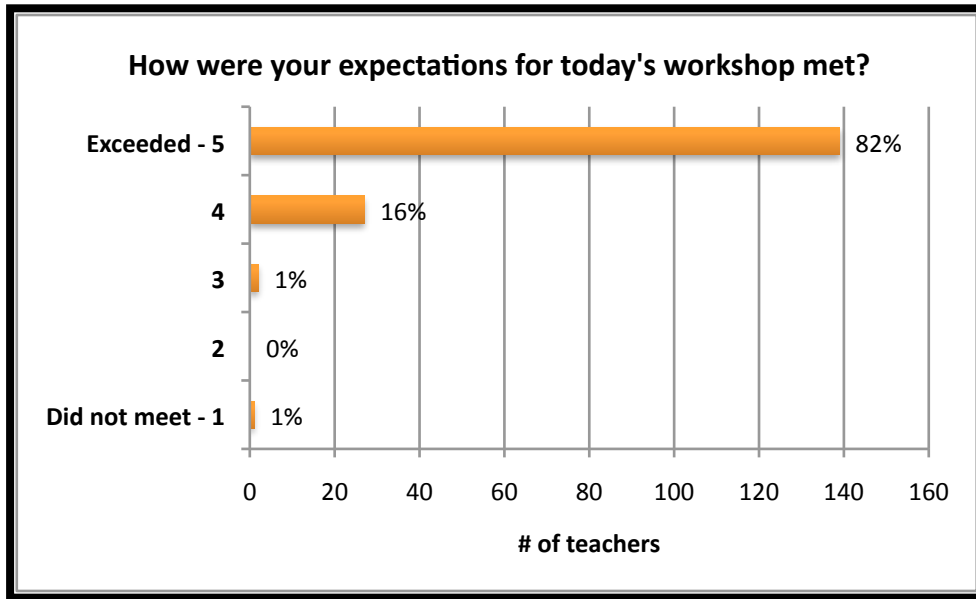


Teachers are overwhelmingly pleased with their Key to the Sea field trip experience. Attachment 2 summarizes some of the quotes we receive from them about the experience. The post-workshop teacher evaluations also demonstrate this satisfaction; however, we changed the method of doing the post-program/end of year evaluation and received very few responses (fewer than 15). We will need to look at how to improve our reply rate in the future for those evaluations. Due to the low reply rate, the responses are not statistically significant and will not be pictured here.

Chart 6 and 7 compile the results of the post-workshop surveys of both Workshop I and Workshop II (note the two were combined as the results were almost identical; neither workshop skewed the results of the other). Chart 6 looks at teachers' overall satisfaction with their workshop experience, while Chart 7 shows the teachers' assessment of the value of what they learned in the workshop on their students.



**CHART 6: EXPECTATIONS FOR THE WORKSHOP EXPERIENCE**



**CHART 7: TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON THE CURRICULUM'S EFFECTIVENESS FOR THEIR STUDENTS**

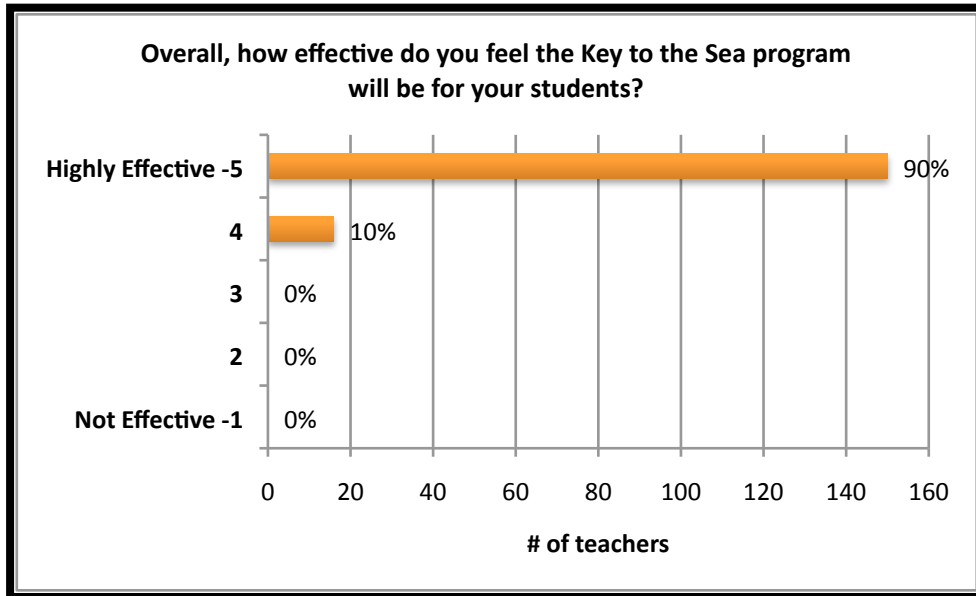
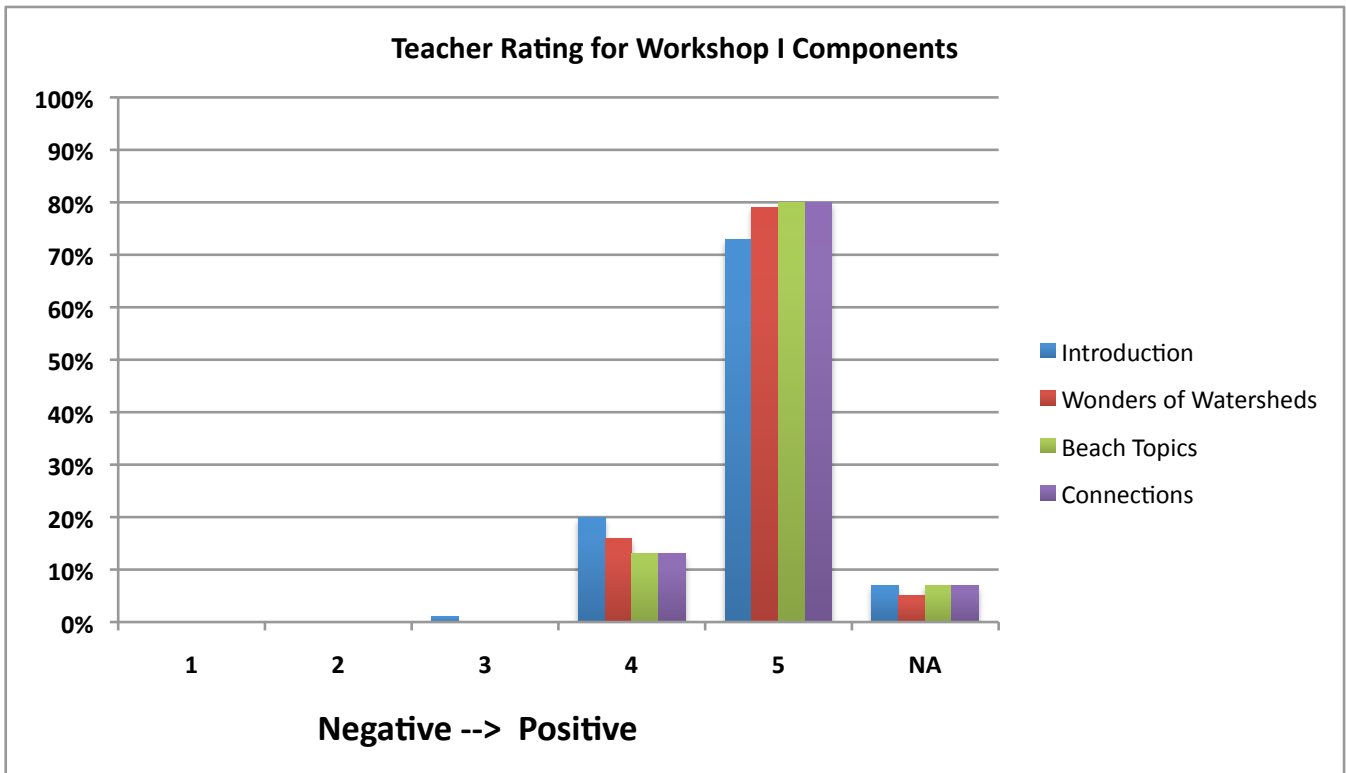


Chart 8 and 9 show teachers' feelings about each portion of the workshops. Chart 8 focuses on the content of Workshop I, while Chart 9 is focused on Workshop II.

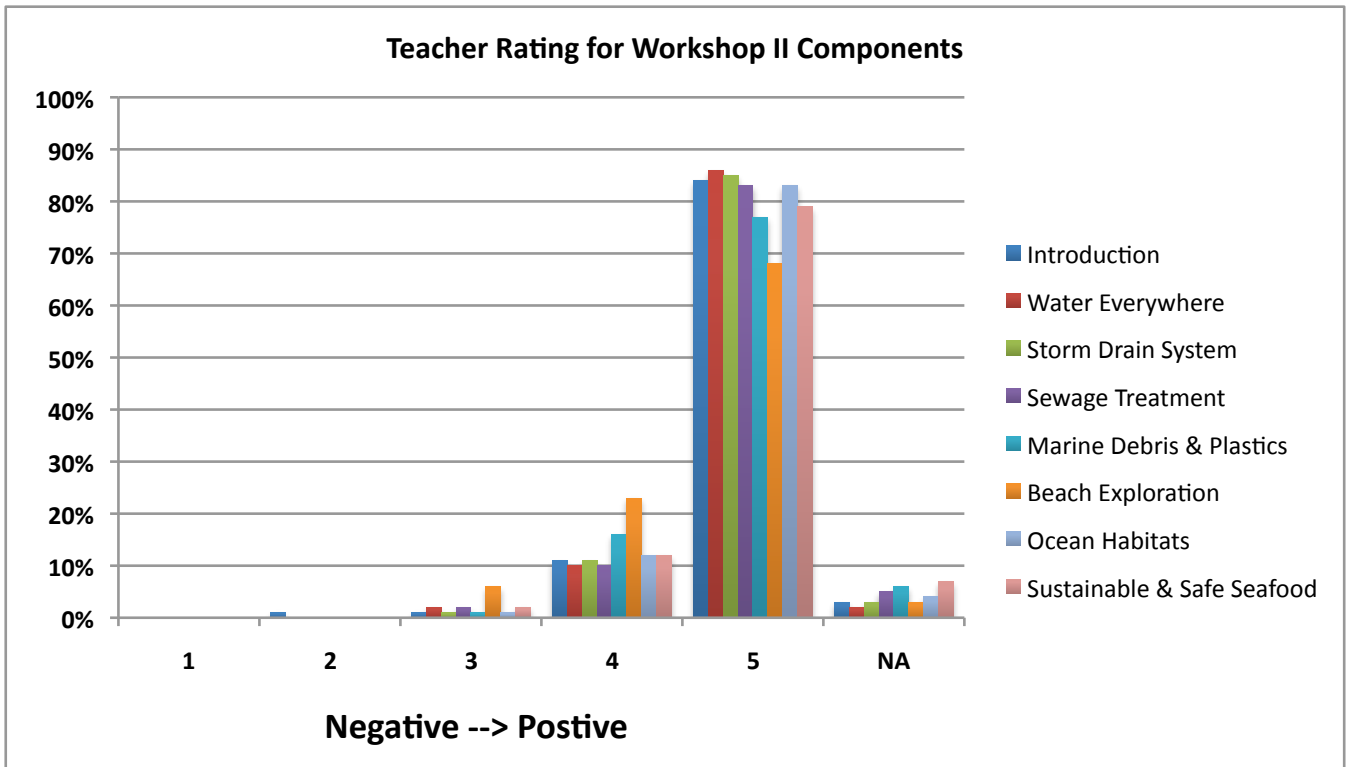


**CHART 8: TEACHER RATING FOR THE COMPONENTS OF WORKSHOP I**



Note: NA refers to those teachers who chose NA or did not respond; the scale was 1(negative) to 5 (positive).

**CHART 9: TEACHER RATING FOR THE COMPONENTS OF WORKSHOP II**



Note: NA refers to those teachers who chose NA or did not respond; the scale was 1(negative) to 5 (positive).



### **Other highlights**

The 2011-2012 was a year of staffing transition for the Key to the Sea Program. The program became a part of the newly formed Heal the Bay Education Department in the summer of 2011. At the end of the summer, Emily Pratt, who was Key to the Sea coordinator for several years, moved on and Environmental Education Associate Amber Maron took on the coordinator role. Amber masterfully transitioned into the position; she was able to analysis and streamline the registration system for teachers, helping to develop a new online registration system that went live for the 2012-2013 school year. Amber was also able to bring the program to a new audience by presenting at the spring 2012 AEOE (Associate for Environmental and Outdoor Education) conference in Malibu. At the end of the school year, Amber chose to leave Heal the Bay to pursue her travel dreams. After an extensive search, Virginia Greb was hired as the new Key to the Sea Coordinator. Virginia, a former Heal the Bay volunteer and Aquarium intern, jumped into her new role and is excited to manage the program for the 2012-2013 school year and beyond.

### **Program Support:**

The following funders generously sponsored the Key to the Sea Program during the 2011-2012 School Year:

- City of Long Beach Department of Public Works – Storm Water & Environmental Compliance Division
- Employees Community Fund of Boeing California
- The Gesso Foundation
- The Hauptman Family Foundation
- Macy's Corporate Giving
- Santa Monica Seafood RSVP Program and FishWise
- Wells Fargo Foundation

Additionally, teacher workshop supplies were donated by several local dry cleaners (hangers) and the local photography gallery Lomography (film canisters).

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 (the foundation of environmental stewardship).

### **Conclusion**

With the 2012-2013 school year upon us, the Key to the Sea Program and all its partners and managers are excited to be able to offer the program for a thirteenth year. The development of the new Common Core Standards provide the program with an opportunity for change and growth and, as they are finalized, it will be imperative that we look to incorporating connections to them. The continued refinement of the program is one of the reasons it has lasted so long, and its relevancy is no less poignant today than when it was created so many years ago. Key to the Sea looks forward to serving Los Angeles area teachers and students for many years to come.

