



Trail map for leading change toward nature-based pedagogy

Start Here

Preparing ourselves for the journey: Are we individually prepared to lead?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- The “Inside, Outside, & Beyond” work of being a leader from a social-emotional perspective. (Openness, receptive to criticism, vulnerability, trust, etc.)

1

Trail marker 1: Do we understand why nature-based pedagogy is our destination?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- The leadership team develops a shared understanding of nature-based pedagogy.
- Explore together the various ways nature-based pedagogy can be implemented.
- All leadership team members explore their personal WHY for this work.
- Support the leaders who continue to have questions about nature-based pedagogy.

2

Trail marker 2: Do we have a clear picture of our current practices through a nature-based lens?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- Collect data on the current use of nature-based pedagogy.
- Share and analyze the data with the entire leadership team.

3

Trail marker 3: Have we made our vision for nature-based education public both internally and externally?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- Craft or revise the program’s current vision statement.
- Develop a clear rationale for the new vision using key findings from Trail Marker 2 (TM:2).
- Get feedback on the vision from a diversity of program stakeholders.
- Once finalized, share the vision and rationale both internally and externally.
- Review the vision and rationale yearly and revised as needed.

4

Trail marker 4: Have we identified adjustments we can make to current administrative and teaching practices to be more nature-based?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- Identify where current practices (TM:2) and the vision (TM:3) do and don’t align.
- Explore and name the current strengths.
- Explore and name the current opportunities for growth.





5

Trail marker 5: Have we reimagined our administrative and teaching practices to embrace nature-based pedagogy?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- Identify program schedules to prioritize time outdoors and nature-based pedagogy.
- Identify ways to strategically adjust the physical learning environment (Inside, Outside, & Beyond) to support nature-based pedagogy.
- Identify adjustments to the curriculum, planning, and ongoing assessment approaches to emphasize emergent curriculum rooted in the seasons.
- Explore alternative program schedules to provide time for collaborative team planning.
- Explore opportunities for more ongoing nature-based family education and engagement.
- Explore opportunities for partnerships with local nature-based education organizations.

6

Trail marker 6: Do our educators use nature-based practices throughout the class day Inside, Outside, & Beyond?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- Explore nature-based teaching practices and identify growth opportunities.
- Develop a systematic professional development plan for all team members (at both a group and individual level) around nature-based teaching.
- Implement professional learning opportunities for team members to learn from each other and outside nature-based education experts.
- Establish and communicate on expectations around nature-based teaching.

7

Trail marker 7: Do we provide ongoing support for nature-based pedagogy?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- The leadership team continues to explore how to support team members through change.
- Design a systematic way to analyze educators' successes and needs.
- Create genuine ways to celebrate successes and progress.

8

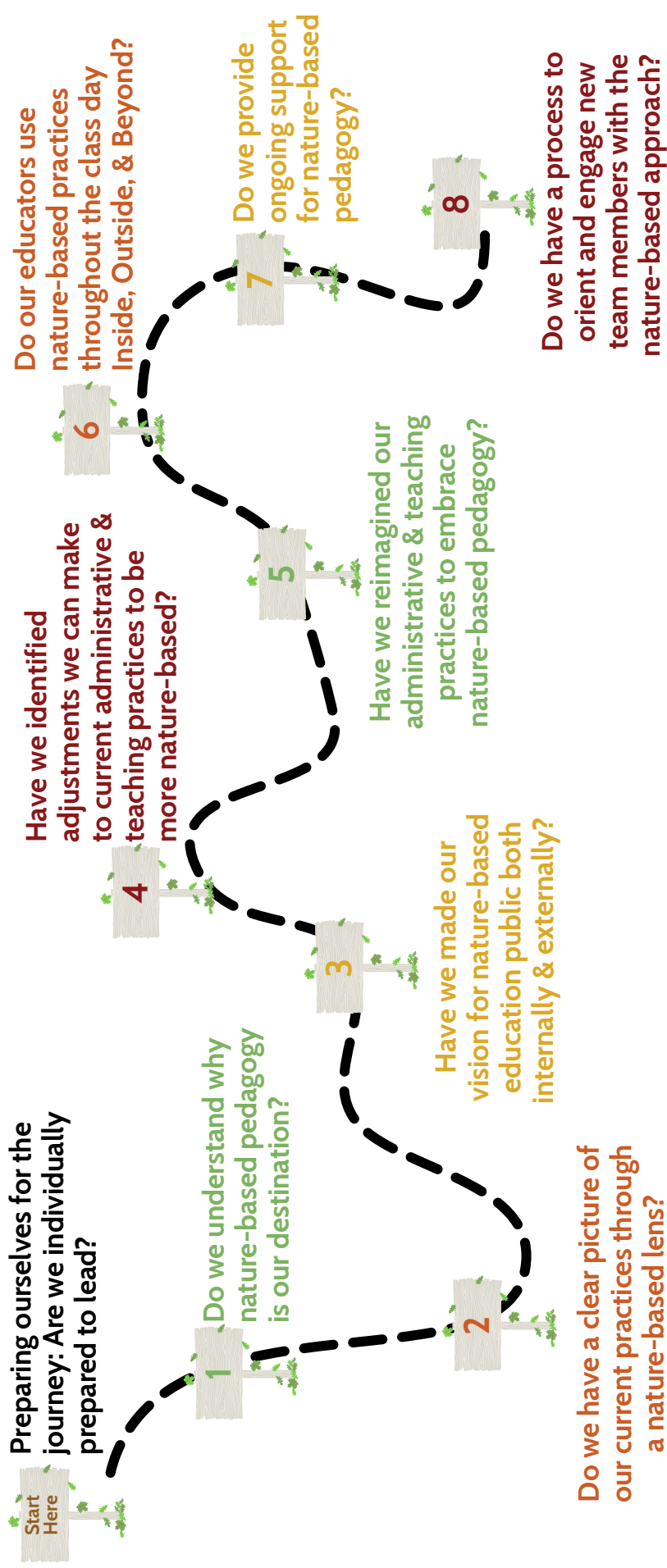
Trail marker 8: Do we have a process to orient and engage new team members with the nature-based approach?

Leadership steps to reach this marker:

- Establish a process for orienting and onboarding new educators on the nature-based approach.
- Establish a process for orienting and onboarding new leadership team members on the nature-based approach.

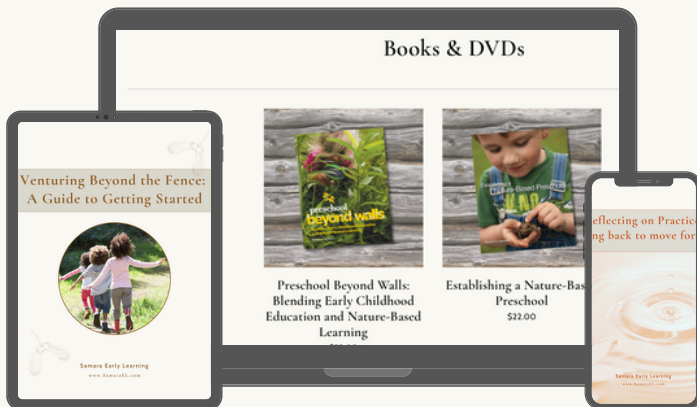
Thank you to Drs. Julie Causton and Kristie Prett-Frontczak of Inclusive Schooling for their "The Inclusive System Change Path" which was the inspiration for this trail map.

Trail map for leading change toward nature-based pedagogy





Take the Nature
Journey quiz & get
your custom Toolkit!



Visit the Samara Shop
for more resources



About Samara Early Learning

Samara Early Learning helps early childhood professionals implement high-quality nature-based education. Through a variety of professional learning opportunities, we help educators overcome barriers in order to provide young children with rich nature-based learning experiences. These opportunities include written publications, workshops, speaking engagements, e-courses, and more. We offer these services because we believe all young children have a right to high-quality nature-based early childhood education for their whole development. Visit our [website](http://www.samarael.com) to learn more about both Samara Early Learning and the services we offer.

 [fb.com/SamaraEarlyLearning](https://www.facebook.com/SamaraEarlyLearning)

 [SamaraEL.com](http://www.SamaraEL.com)