

Dear Legislators,

I am an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student from Grants Pass and I want you to support #B2648 to send all 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in Oregon to Outdoor School.

Outdoor is important because kids should have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors by learning with it too. When you are at outdoor you were learning while outdoors. Being at outdoor school for a week would be a great learning experience.

I loved outdoor school when I was a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. I remember having a blast and it was only for two days! Imagine how many kids would love to go for a week!

I want everyone to have the experience of outdoor school because it was a fun learning experience when we were young.

Please support HB2648 and send  
all kids in Oregon to Outdoor school!

Sincerely,

Ashlynn ♡

Dear Lawmakers,


My name is Aaron Hernandez and I'm 13 years old in 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Lent in Portland, OR. I went to Howard for outdoor school. I had fun and it was enjoyable. I met new kids which were really funny and cool. I really wish that it can be 6 days / 5 nights because it was really rushed and hard to understand because it went really fast. I have a younger Brother and I want to see him with a smile on his face because he now has 6 days and 5 nights. Please save outdoor school because 6<sup>th</sup> grade will never be the same.

Sincerely, Aaron  
7<sup>th</sup>, Lent K-8, Portland

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Andililia Calderon,  
and I think outdoor school should be  
longer. Why? I believe this because, we  
had an unforgettable experience.

Sincerely,

 Calderon, 7<sup>th</sup>, Lents, Portland



April 17, 2015

Dear, Lawmakers

My name is Deontean Johnson.

I never went to out door school  
but i fear it's for  
and i can't wait to go but i'm too  
old.

I know you think out door school  
isn't needed but we do and  
all i ask of you is to fund  
out door school so we can  
have 6 days and 5000

Sincerely

Deontean Johnson, Annapolis, MD,  
Portland, Oregon

Alexis

Dear Lawmaker My Name is  
Alexis outdoor school is important to  
me because I got to do things  
that are fun and The food is so  
good and if there are six days of  
out door school some other kid can  
have fun and enjoy the activities  
that the people give the I also  
got to hold a snake and I  
hope other kids get to hold a ~~snake~~  
to so some out door school.

Dear Lawmakers,

I am Raina Serene Porter.  
I would like outdoor school to  
be 6 days and 5 nights because its  
really fun and enjoyable. Also  
it teaches you to be intouch  
with nature and learn about what  
berries to eat and how to track  
animals plus, you have fun. Oh...  
also there is... Sleeping bags!!!  
so, please, please, please, I wish  
Outdoor school to 6 days and  
5 nights long?!?

Sincerely,  
Raina Serene Porter  
7<sup>th</sup> grade, Lents School

Edgar

Dear Mr. Camp what i like  
to do on the weekend is enjoy  
the sun and play soccer. Also i  
like to go see new places around  
here and i like to go eat with  
my family. What i like about 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
is gym, math and language arts  
because in gym i like to exercise  
and in math i learn new things and  
in language arts i like to read  
and do works after i am really  
enjoying 7<sup>th</sup> grade it's the best  
year.

Dear [unclear] my name is [unclear]  
mended in a 4<sup>th</sup> grade at [unclear] school.  
[unclear] My teacher Mr. [unclear]  
is making me do this at outdoor school  
[unclear] outdoor school  
is important to me because it is time  
to be in the woods and learn about  
nature. I like how you guys teach us about  
water but not all about water because  
you guys let us play games too and  
I think it cool how you guys wake  
up in the morning and put the  
united states flag up. I think you guys  
should keep on doing outdoor school  
so other kids can learn about nature.

Sincerely, Edgar, 4<sup>th</sup> grade, Bent School  
Portland, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

Ashley Garrison

my name is Ashley Garrison and i'm a student at Lent. I live in Portland, Oregon. To me outdoor school is very important because we get to learn new things. Please save outdoor school and we need to have more days to learn at outdoor school. I enjoyed it so much, I wish I could have stayed longer.

Sincerely,

Ashley Garrison, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, lent K-8, Portland, Oregon

Lorena Delgado

Dear lawmakers,

My Name is Lorena Delgado  
I Really don't know of outdoor  
school because I came from miami  
And over there we don't do that  
But I am a seven grade my  
school is <sup>our</sup> Oliver Elementary School / <sup>Portland</sup> <sup>Oregon</sup> /  
And for what I hear outdoor  
school is good And I think it's  
good too. I think outdoor school  
it's good because you learn a lot  
of things but at the same time  
you have a lot of fun And it would  
be good if you guys make it  
for 6 days. the teacher would  
change us about how we feel about  
the environment. I want you guys  
to save outdoor school / outdoor  
school would make a Really  
different in our environment.

Sincerely

Lorena Delgado      Portland Oregon.  
7<sup>th</sup> grade  
Went. Oliver elementary school

April 17, 2015

Dear lawmakers,

My name is Esmeralda but I go by Esme, outdoor school is fun and you get to learn more things like how to measure the water level or how to find things like an animals foot prints, also you get to learn about animals such as snakes, raccoons, etc but we need outdoor school to learn more and new things we would like to have more days or weeks for outdoor school Please save our outdoor school.


Sincerely,  
Esmeralda Guillen Garcia, 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
Lent School, Portland

4/17/15

Dear Lawmakers,

My name Roserina Chipen and I'm a 7<sup>th</sup> grader. Outdoor school is important to me because it helped me learn about nature. I learned about water, trees, animals, and soil. I would never have learned all this information if I didn't attend ODS (Outdoor School). Also, ODS was a funner way to learn about nature than to sit in a chair and write or read big textbooks (School). At ODS you could actually use all your senses to learn. All I ask for is you save ODS and make it five nights and six days. Thank You.

Sincerely,

Roserina Chipen 

7<sup>th</sup> grade

Lent School

Portland OR.

dasia  
4/7/15

Dear lawmakers,

My name is dasia diamond and  
as a student I believe that outdoor  
school is an important trip all 6<sup>th</sup>  
graders should get to experience.

I think this because I had a good  
time and learned a lot from  
it. I REALLY want you guys  
should save outdoorschool  
for the sake of future 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

Sincerely,

dasia, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, lents, portland





Dennishea  
4/7/15

Dear Lawmaker,

I'm Dennishea Lambert and I had an amazing time at outdoor school. Outdoor school is important because it gives kids the chance to learn about the outdoors. So ~~please~~ please save outdoor school.

Sincerely Dennishea, 7<sup>th</sup> gr. Kent's, port

Dear lawmakers,

My Name is Mary Nguyen. Outdoor school is important to me because you get to learn new things about the outside world (Nature) and it is very fun to be away from home for awhile. And because I care about Outdoor school I would love to ask the lawmakers to save outdoor school and make it longer like 6 days long for outdoor school please.

Sincerely,

Mary Nguyen, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Ient school,  
Portland Oregon

P.S. 6 dollars For 6 days.

Dear Lawmakers

My name is Demonie Yedins Outdoor School is important to me because when I went to outdoor school it was fun but we only got 3 days I wish it was for longer I go to Lent elementary/middle school in Portland, OR I think we should save our school for future gen so they can enjoy the pleasure of it.

Sincerely

Demonie, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Lent elementary, Portland/OR.

Dear lawmakers,

4/17/15

I am Gaby, a 7th grader at Lent school. Last year our school went to outdoor school for 3 days and 2 nights. We had lots of fun there and it was a good experience for us. We learned a lot and had lots of fun, however, it went by too quickly.

I think we would have had a better time if it had been longer. We were too rushed and didn't have much time.

As fun as outdoor school was, we would have enjoyed it much more if it were longer. Outdoor school is a very important experience for kids and we should have had more time. Will you help to make outdoor school longer for us?

Sincerely,

Gaby Garcia 7th grade

Lent school, Portland Oregon

Dear Lawmakers,

April 17 2015

My name is Monica im a 7<sup>th</sup> grader in Lent School. As far as I know our school and probably other school went to outdoor school for like a week, but over the time things changed and now outdoor school is 3 days. Outdoor school is important for me and other students. Why? Well when I went to outdoor school we weren't allow to use our phones which was great because I got to see nature and look, see and learn about nature. We also got other students from schools to be cabin partners which was a great way to meet new people and make friends. So im asking you. that if its possible to make outdoor school much longer so the kids in the future get to enjoy and love outdoor school because for me was the best trip.

Sincerely,

Monica N. 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Lent School,  
Portland Oregon



Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Gwen Nguyen. Outdoor school is important to me because it will help student be more in touch with nature and appreciate the world without electronics taking over their brains. When we went to outdoor school it was very short, we only went for 3 days. Please make outdoor school longer.

Sincerely,

Gwen Nguyen, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Lent Elementary, Portland,  
Oregon

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Tran Ngo. Outdoor school is important to me because it helped me learn and have fun at the same time. When I went to outdoor school, we only got 3 days to stay there and have fun. But if you save outdoor school, students will be able to have more days of outdoor school to have fun and learn and get to know other students better. So please help save outdoor school.

Sincerely,  
Tran Ngo, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Leim Elementary,  
Portland, OR.

Dear Lawmakers,

You guys should make Outdoor School longer because it is fun and we middle schoolers had fun Learning because it was cool and we are always in the city and never really get to go out much. It also connects us with nature instead of being on our electronics texting all day.

Sincerely,

Jose

Dear law makers

My name is Brian Torres, I'm a 7th grader at lent school and im a 13 year old. Out door school is important to me because learning science in class is boring its better to be outside and I really want everyone to have a good time. Also its really fun so I think you guys should save out door school its a full experience but yeah I hope out door school keeps going.

Brian Torres, 7th grade, lent school  
portland

April 17, 2015

Dear Lawmakers

I am Brian Uribe in 12 years old in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Outdoor school is important to me because it really affected my life I used to be on my phone most of the time but since I went to outdoor school I barely use my phone. So please save outdoor school for kids like me Outdoor is a fun and educated place for kids so please save it.

Sincerely,

Brian Uribe, 7<sup>th</sup>, Lent school, Palmdale

April 17 2015

Dear Lawmakers

I have taken time out of my day (only 7 min) to write you this very important letter of the importance about Out door school. My name is Alejandro I'm 12 and from Lent school. I need to explain to you why Out door School is important to us. First of all ~~if~~ if we spend more time there we can learn more things about nature. Also the more time we get to meet more people and get to know them better. The least important reason BUT it is a REASON is that they have delishous food. Can YOU GUYS PLEASE SAVE Outdoor School and Make us stay the LONGER at ~~least~~ least 5 days.

Sincerely,

Alejandro 7<sup>th</sup> grade Lent School Portland.

Dear Lawmakers,

I'm, and the outdoor school  
is important so kids will  
have a higher level of  
education for the outdoors.  
They make great food  
for the kids, better than school.  
Outdoor school is very  
fun with their activities.  
So children never get  
bored. I to let them  
longer so all the  
activities are done. Everytime  
this is, most kids do  
first they don't want to  
leave but when they  
go to outdoor school they  
enjoy it and when they  
leave they miss it.

Sincerely, Luke, Mr. Lott, Mr. Hard

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Marquet Turner and I want to tell you why you should extend the days of outdoor school. Outdoor school was really fun, exciting and had good food but it was kind of a bummer that we only could stay for three days. If you extend the days I think that it would be funner and better for sixth graders that have been waiting and been looking forward to sixth grade only for outdoor school. I also hope for the days to get extended because I want to go to outdoor school again but as a cabin leader in high school. That is why I think you should extend the days of outdoor school.

Sincerely, M. Turner, 7<sup>th</sup>, Lent School, Portland



To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Kyle Grandall and I believe Outdoor School to be essential for our students. While attending Outdoor School I not only got to learn about nature, but I was exposed to new people and places. Outdoor School gave me an opportunity to grow as a person, and learn how to be comfortable in my own skin. The transition from 5<sup>th</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade can be rough, I know it was for me. But the activities and companionship that I gained from Outdoor School gave me the confidence and motivation to not be scared and push forward. In order to ensure that more students get this opportunity, I urge you to pass bills HB2648, and SB439 in order to fund Outdoor School.

Sincerely, Kyle Grandall - Madison HS

April 21, 2015

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Leslie Carrasco. I am currently a senior at Madison High School. When I was in sixth grade I had the wonderful opportunity of attending Outdoor School. It was something so different. I am Mexican-American, and because of that I had yet to experience anything with nature. I was about 11 years old when I finally had a chance to visit the outdoors like I did at Outdoor School. It was so breathtaking. I was immersed into the American culture in a whole new way. Outdoor School was the highlight of my middle school life. I was given the chance to connect with my classmates on a whole new level, as well as help me connect with students from other schools. Outdoor School gave me the opportunity to learn about nature, friendships (because I met my best friend of 7 years at Outdoor School), and it gave me life lasting memories. I will never forget the trips to the river, and the amazing food. Please save Outdoor School with HB2648 and SB439.

Thank you.

Leslie Carrasco

To the Oregon Legislature -

→ My name is Tram Nguyen

Upon my experience in outdoor school, I've come to truly appreciate the sentimental values in the whole purpose of the activities provided. Through singing, playing and even learning, I was able to create a memorable bond. What I've learned is that children should be exposed to outdoor school for a much longer period of time because it creates such a positive effect on the minds of younger adolescence. I will never forget the tears that ran down on many of the students' faces. Outdoor school has truly taught me to see the joy in participation. I would really appreciate if you were to fully fund outdoor school by passing HB2648 and SB439.

Sincerely Tram Nguyen

TO THE OREGON LEGISLATURE -

MY NAME IS RICHARD FLORES AND I NEVER HAD THE PLEASURE OF ATTENDING OUTDOOR SCHOOL AS A SIXTH GRADER DUE TO OVERPROTECTIVE PARENTS, BUT I WAS RECRUITED TO BE A STUDENT LEADER DURING MY SENIOR YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL. MY EXPERIENCE AT OUTDOOR SCHOOL WAS LIFE-CHANGING AS MY PERSONAL MENTOR AND FIELD INSTRUCTOR NOTICED A HUGE TRANSFORMATION AS I WENT FROM AN UNENTHUSIASTIC AND SHY PERSON TO A LEADER WHO GUILT CONFIDENCE AND GAVE THE BEST HE COULD IN A COMPLETELY NEW ENVIRONMENT.

I WILL NOT FORGET THE NAMES OF THE EIGHT GUYS IN MY CABIN WHO GAVE ME MORE THAN 17 ROLLIN' TIME. I WON'T FORGET GIVING THEM PERSONAL GOODNIGHTS AND COMING TO TEARS AS I TOLD THEM THAT THEY GAVE ME SOME OF THE BEST DAYS OF MY LIFE. IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FORGET THE SIXTH GRADERS I HAD WHILE TEACHING THE WATER FIELD STUDY WHO TOLD ME THAT WAS THEIR FAVORITE STUDENT LEADER AND THAT I WAS THE REASON THEY WANTED TO BE STUDENT LEADERS.

OUTDOOR SCHOOL GAVE ME THE CONFIDENCE AND HOPE I NEEDED TO GET THROUGH A CRITICAL PART OF MY YEAR. HAD I NOT ATTENDED OUTDOOR SCHOOL, MY CHALLENGES MIGHT HAVE OVERCOME ME, BUT AS "FIRESTORM", I REALIZED THAT I WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO DO ANYTHING, THAT IS WHY OUTDOOR SCHOOL SHOULD BE FULLY FUNDED BY PASSING HB 2648 AND SB 439. THANK YOU

SINCERELY,

RICHARD FLORES

To The Oregon Legislature

My name is Mustaf Mohamed. Outdoor school should be fully funded. I am hoping that HB 2648, SB439 get passed. Although I have never went to outdoor school I have done something similar. I learned many things in my experience in the outdoors, learning with a group of campers in the great outdoors. There many benefits to sending children to outdoor school and allowing them to stay for a week. Nature is good with coping with stress, depression, and many issues children get like ADHD. A little time spent outside and enjoying the natural environment can have many benefits later in life. We are at the time where children fear nature, and less children are spending time outside, which can be detrimental to their hope. Once again I hope HB 2648 and SB439 passes because outdoor school is a great program and every child who wants to do it should be given that experience.

Sincerely

Mustaf Mohamed  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Tammi Pham, a senior at Madison High School. I am writing to you to save Outdoor School. Outdoor School has helped me learn my learning ability and has allowed me to learn outside of my school building. It's so important for these kids to be able to have an experience of a lifetime - one they will not forget & will be able to share with their children or their children's children. It's not only a good experience for the sixth graders but a very inspiring & fun experience for the student leaders. Having been a student leader myself, I can honestly say that in only about a week, I have learned more about being selfless & giving than I could've ever learned in a full year of school. I was able to connect with kids who have no families back at home or kids who aren't fortunate enough to eat three meals a day, like they do at Outdoor School. Every time, I meet with people who aren't from Oregon, they always ask me what Outdoor School is. I feel lucky and proud that our state is unique & wonderful enough to take advantage of our beautiful trees & ~~forests~~<sup>forests</sup> and allow sixth graders to have an experience of a life time. Please don't take that away.

Sincerely,  
Tammi Pham  
Madison High School.

To the Oregon Legislature—

My name is Allegra Riscoe and I'm a student at Madison High School. I went to outdoor school as a sixth grader for a whole week. I was one of the last years to get a full week and I really enjoyed my time. I remember being fascinated by Macro Water bugs, running through the river learning about water quality. This experience set me up to be very interested and engaged even ~~once~~ we got back to the classroom. My younger brother went to outdoor school last year however he only got 2.5 days. When he got back and told me about it, I really felt he'd missed out on many of the great experiences I'd had. That's why I think it's very important for you to pass HB2648 and SB439 to fully fund outdoor school so the next generations can continue to enjoy this experience.

Sincerely, Allegra Riscoe  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Sidney Ramirez and I am a senior at Madison High School. I remember having a really amazing time at Sandy River Out Door School. I love looking back through the pictures and counting the beads on my wood cookie. One big memory that I have was when my group and I went on a walk the camp leader found a caught a little gopher snake and everybody came close together to get a look at it. At out Door School I learned many things that you couldn't learn through a text book. There is a difference between experiencing nature in real life and seeing it in a book.

In a classroom setting it can be very easy to simply let the lesson just pass through your mind, but having it right in front of you surrounded by it day and night allows you to really take it in. One thing I won't forget is walking back to our cabins every night with our flash lights and just listening to the sounds of the trees and frogs.

The Oregon Legislature should fully fund Out Door School by passing HB 2648 and SB 439 because what one learns at Out Door School and the memories one makes stays with them.

Sincerely,  
Sidney Ramirez



To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Vy Tran and I am a senior at Madison High School. I believe HB 2648 and SB439 should be passed because Outdoor School is truly important to the education of 6<sup>th</sup> graders. My experience was nothing less than outstanding. Though it lasted only a week, it taught me essential skills that will last a life time. The feeling of being surrounded by the unknown combined with hands on learning is what makes outdoor school unique. I will never forget my experiences at Outdoor School. Please fully fund this program as it teaches students to enjoy all that nature has to offer.

Thank you,

Vy Tran

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Amber Shackelford and I'm a senior at Madison High School. I was lucky enough to be one of the last classes to go to Outdoor School for the full length of time, and it was an experience I will never regret. Going to Outdoor School was a wonderful yet still very educational departure from regular schooling. We had so much fun singing around the campfire and going on hikes that we forgot we were still in school. We learned a lot - years later I still remember information about crawdads and the pH scale.

Outdoor School is an invaluable experience, but two or three days is simply not long enough. For this reason, Outdoor School needs to be fully funded by passing HB 2648 and SB 439. Please save Outdoor School for the kids who haven't yet had the joy of experiencing it.

Thank you,

Amber Shackelford  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Mary Holland, a senior at Madison High School, and I believe that Outdoor School is a vital part of pre-secondary education. When I was a sixth grader I did not have a very strong science education, as is common in most PPS elementary & middle schools. Outdoor School was a wonderful experience for me & many of my friends. I remember how amazing it was to go camping in cabins with fellow classmates, to have adventures & learn all about biology, ecology, & environmental sciences. I am sure that this experience was one of the largest contributors to my love of biology, & the hands-on learning was so invaluable to me and many others. I truly think that Oregon sixth graders really need the opportunity to experience this type of learning. Please save Oregon Outdoor School by passing HB2648 & SB439.

-Mary Holland

To the Oregon Legislature

Cindy in order to keep Outdoor School fully funded. The experiences children learn at Outdoor School are ones that can't be repeated anywhere else. Interactive experiences like the ones I had really changed me as a person. I was able to learn more about the planet through interactions with it. I learned different plants through seeing it and analyzing them for myself. I was able to get in touch with nature in a world that is looking down at electronics. I never felt that 5 days of outdoor school was enough, I needed more. Camp Howard let me know myself as a person through interactions with other students in another school. The day I left I was filled with emotions that were all over the place. I didn't want to leave not learning more classes and other students. We need a full week of outdoor school to learn all the materials that are available. Instead of taking 3 days to brush over the superficial information, spending a week to dig deep and get the students to really retain the information would be better. Please Fully Fund HB 2698 and SB 439. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cindy Yu  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Kelenen Szimorisz and I am a senior at Madison High School. To me, Outdoor School was one of the first opportunities I had involving independence and immense social interaction. A full five days, away from parents and "civilization," was a total blast that I will never forget. By spending a week outdoors, you are forced to observe a whole new perspective on life, and appreciate the luxuries you have at home. I believe that experience and impact on my life would not have been as immense, had I only stayed for a couple days. Please save outdoor school and pass HB 2648 and SB 439.

Thank you,

Kelenen Szimorisz  
Madison H.S.

4/21/15

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Abby Vogel. This year I will be graduating high school and looking back on my years of schooling I have realized that my Outdoor School experience is one of my strongest memories. During my full week at Outdoor School I learned how to work with others, my age and older, from different schools and different backgrounds in an isolated location. All of these can be frightening things for a young person who is entering middle school. But by the end of my time there it wasn't. I don't believe that any less than a week is long enough to take kids out of their comfort zones to teach them new things and by the end of the experience have them feel within their comfort zones. Outdoor School should be fully funded, now more than ever because as technology becomes a bigger part of our lives I believe children today won't think to go out and experience nature with out its importance being highlighted in their education. I urge you to pass bills HB2648 and SB439, for the kids we want to mold into well rounded members of society.

— Abby Vogel  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature

My Name is Royce Hayson

I really loved outdoor school because  
of the joys of just being around  
students from other schools. Its a  
great experience to go through  
with all the ups and down it gives  
you a chance to just get away  
from school and any other  
responsibilities you might face.

I learned a lot about the outdoors  
and a lot about myself. Please  
send HB 2648 and SB 439 through  
and save outdoor school so that  
many other students can get this  
amazing adventure just like I did.

From ~~Layla Hayson~~  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

Hello, my name is Jacob Harrison. I am a member of Multnomah County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue and I am currently a sophomore at James Madison High School. Four years ago, I went to Outdoor School with the rest of my Sixth grade class for a whole week, and when I came back home I thought to myself "The 'Great Outdoors' really is great!" and I just fell in love with the outdoors. I learned a lot more about the outdoors and had more fun outdoors than I would in any class or from any teacher and I think that by taking away more and more of Outdoor School away from more and more generations is like taking away a portion of their joy and life from them. We learned about water, plants, animals, fire, and so much more that I think that should be taught in a good full week instead of three short days. So please, for the future generations, change Outdoor School back to seven days instead of three days.

Sincerely, Jacob Harrison  
Madison High School

P.S. Pass HB2648 & SB439



To the [unclear] [unclear]:

My name is [unclear] I really like  
[unclear] [unclear] you [unclear] the [unclear]  
[unclear] be [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] with  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] I  
remember I was [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
before [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] as well [unclear] [unclear]  
than [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] I learned that  
you [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
Just need to go [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
you [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] Please [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

P.S. Fully Fund Outdoor [unclear] - H 2648  
- SB 459

Sincerely yours - [unclear] [unclear]

To the Oregon Legislature

My name is Ramla Hassan. I really like Outdoor School because I learned a lot and had the opportunity to explore new things. My experience at Outdoor School changed my life, because throughout my childhood I never had the chance to explore the outdoors, so Outdoor School gave me a great opportunity. I've always wished to have. Please pass the HB2648 and SB439 because Outdoor School would be a great experience for many kids to get out of their grill and bike.

Thank you,  
Ramla Hassan

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Kyle Hunt, I'm a senior and will be graduating in June. Something that truly impacted me through my journey, was Outdoor School. Not only is Outdoor School an educational and a very well run experience, it is an unforgettable bonding experience and it helps students realize what education is all about.

I remember arriving on the grounds of Camp Arrow Wenas, and I was in love. I met so many people, learned hands on in the wild, and had a tremendous time at campfires and bonding sessions with my classmates. I left that week in tears because I was so happy there, and didn't want to go. I'll never forget the memories, the fun and the learning I did in ~~on~~ the field and about myself.

Outdoor School is something that needs to be funded. It is an experience that kids deserve and will never forget. Please save Outdoor School, and approve HB2648 and SB439.

Sincerely, Kyle Hunt

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kyle Hunt". The signature is fluid and extends to the right with a long horizontal stroke.

Madison High School

3-0235 — 50 SHEETS — 5 SQUARES  
3-0236 — 100 SHEETS — 5 SQUARES  
3-0237 — 200 SHEETS — 5 SQUARES  
3-0137 — 200 SHEETS — FILLER

COMET

To the Oregon Legislature:

As a sixth grader, I was lucky to participate in a full week of outdoor school. My two younger brothers, however, did not, my older younger brother being the first to have a truncated outdoor school.

Academically, it helped me to apply that which I learned in school (and allows a greater respect and connection to the material). Socially, it was the first time I had been away from home and thus profoundly affected me (positively).

If I had to choose one moment that summed up Outdoor School for me, it would be when I got a "honor" band for honor, whatever that means to a sixth grader.

As I look back, I have nothing but fond memories of the experience. It would be a travesty to not reinstate full funding by passing HB 2648 and SB 439.

— Andres J. Garcia  
Madison High

To the Oregon Legislature,

As a sixth grader, just arriving at my new school, Outdoor School didn't sound too fun. I was already in a new environment surround by kids I didn't know. Though I'm so glad my science teacher convinced me to go. I came home from outdoor school a new person. It helped me, my cabin leaders helped me to open up and not be so shy. I cried on the way home, because I already missed taking cool pictures of creatures under water with my waterproof camera, eating the delicious breakfast, lunch, and dinners they served us, and learning new songs with my peers and cabin leaders by the campfire. What I won't forget is receiving a letter in the mail from my cabin leader on my birthday. It was the best gift I ever received. Outdoor school should be fully funded because I have younger siblings and what them to be able to experience and make the same meaningful, life long memories as me. ↗

To the Oregon State Legislature  
My Name is Max Tuttle and I am writing to you about that outdoor  
experience for young children.  
To go camp with a group of peers, as  
a sixth grader there is nothing more fun. Top 4 of  
by being supervised by local high schoolers not  
adults, the experience is a lifetime. Almost  
finished with my senior year, I have seen that  
independence is one of the most common traits that  
see successful student leaders. Outdoor education is a  
fantastic aid for a child to become more independent  
by leaving home without your parents and learning how  
to conduct yourself, as well as making some small  
decisions for yourself. Funding HB2648 and SB439  
would help prepare generations of children to be successful  
and self-sustaining.

Sincerely,  
Max Tuttle  
Salem Madison High School

4-21-15

To the Oregon legislature-

My experience at Outdoor School was amazing, I felt that experience was the sole reason that my class was so close in sixth grade. I loved participating in the various activities and getting to be completely immersed in this place where individuality was encouraged. I was selected from my school to take part in the tree planting ceremony and I felt so honored and so much a part of something. I will never forget how I felt as if I blossomed and was able to come out of my shell in a community of people who made me feel comfortable. Outdoor School should be fully funded and both HB2648 and SB439 should be passed because every sixth grade student deserves the experience of bonding with their peers and fully coming out of their shells during a week.

-Amelia Carroll  
Senior at Gladson High School

To the Oregon Legislature

My Name is Jeffrey Morris I'm A Senior At Madison High School in Portland OR. It's Been Brought to my attention that the Oregon Outdoor School Program has been cut to 3 days. Now when I went to Outdoor school 7 years ago we went from Sunday to Sunday, a full week. And it was only one of the best experiences I had in middle school.

I was never a really sociable kid back in those days, and didn't have many friends but when I went to Outdoor school is one time when I opened up and began to connect with the kids in my class, which I hold onto today.

For some kids outdoor school is to see what's outside of cities & urban areas, to learn about the environment & the world we live in. For others, like myself, it's a way for kids to begin their journey on growing up. To restrict this experience to three days is crazy. If the Bills HB2648 & SB439 are passed these kids will be able to experience what Outdoor school is like, for 5-6 days.



To the Oregon Legislature,

My experience with Outdoor School was amazing. There are endless stories of my 6<sup>th</sup> grade year at Sandy River. For example going to ponds studying living organisms that lives in nature's. I learned about animals, water, earth, and many activities.

My everlasting memory is very important I had tons of fun doing archery, and just involved in the community. Please fully fund the HB2648 and SB439. I want others to experience and understand the importance of outdoor school that cannot take just two or three days to learn. So please fund the bills.

Sincerely, Jonny Grant  
From Madison High School  
April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

To the Oregon Legislature

My name is Giovanni Santiago  
I'm from Madison High School.  
Going to Outdoor School for 6th  
grade was super fun because  
you get your own room where  
you meet new friends and the  
food there was good. I learned  
where dirt comes from. I would  
never forget outdoor school because  
you had fun there, the food is great  
and meeting new friends from  
different schools. This is why outdoor  
school should be finally funded by  
HB2648 and SB439.

Thank you  
Giovanni Santiago  
Madison High School

## To the Oregon Legislature

My name is Leslie Jimenez I really like outdoor school because I met amazing people both students and volunteers, I was very shy and I thought it wasn't going to be very fun because I didn't have many friends but when I went there I had the biggest smile on my face and made a lot of friends, I didn't just make friends there but I got to know my classmates and since then were still friends. You get to do a lot of hands on activities and you get to learn more and pay attention. I will never forget my counselors "Cricket" and "Bonena" they were so nice and caring and they weren't strict. I think outdoor school should be fully funded because I know it's a memory they will never forget, I know I didn't.

- Sincerely Leslie Jimenez

Madison High School

ps. please pass HB2648

SB 439

Dear Oregon Legislature,  
if you know any kid, you've probably heard complaints about school. In Oregon however, you also get to hear stories about outdoor school. Most kids, including myself remember an unforgettable experience. When I went to outdoor school, I remember the freeing feeling of getting to leave my desk with the wilderness as my replacement. Unlike like normal camps, my sixth grade class had the chance to put our science knowledge to the test. With hands on activities at the creek or in the forest, it also felt like we had learned more than we would at home. It also acts as a bonding experience with peers and nature. Not funding the outdoor school program would take away a kid's chance of a unique education experience.

Godspeed,

India Tufar

from

Madison Highschool

P.S,  
please consider passing House bills HB2648  
and SB439.

- To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Jimmy Tran, I really like outdoor school because it gives me a special childhood memory that I would never forget. During my time at outdoor school, I learned how to make friends and ~~enjoy the time~~ actually enjoyed it without be all weird and awkward. I remember ~~when~~ it took me like 2 days to adjust with everything. I couldn't sleep and it was so cold, I just ~~could~~ couldn't stay there until the 3rd day. The 3rd day was when I finally feel like I belong, I enjoyed everything. My favorite part of outdoor was ~~the 5 days of good food~~ 5 days of good food. So in my opinion all 4th graders should experience 5 days at outdoor school. It's like taking candy away from a baby before the candy even reaches the mouth. Therefore the Oregon legislature should fund H.B. 2648 and S.B. 439. PLEASE GIVE KIDS THE BEST CHILDHOOD MEMORY.

Sincerely, Jimmy Tran  
Madison High School.

-To the Oregon Legislature-

My name is Noema Antunez Morales. I am a Sophomore and have carried a childhood memory I will never forget. It was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade when I went to my 1<sup>st</sup> camp. I loved the people and what we learned. We would go to the creeks and look for little insects in the water, with nets. We would inspect them and write observations in our notebook. I still remember the games we played. It was really easy meeting new people, and especially with our cabin people. We didn't want to go to sleep, it was like having sleepovers every day. This camp was outdoor school and no child should be taken away this opportunity to enjoy adventure and meet new people. This was a fun, learning, and exciting experience for me and I hope you fully fund HB2648, and SB439 so they can have the same childhood memories I have.

- Sincerely, Noemy Antunez Morales  
Madison High School

Matthew Simpson  
Musard  
English 4 p. 4  
4/20/15

Dear lawmaker,

My name is Matthew Simpson. I really like outdoor school because it gave us city kids a chance to experience the outdoors and what makes Oregon so unique and beautiful. I learned about the land and River and had an overall good time while we learned about nature. Not finding outdoor school would rob the youth of an experience that I still hold dearly today.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Simpson from Madison HS

P.S. please support HB2648 &  
SB439

To the Oregon Legislature

Dear Legislature,

My name is Bonnie Huynh. I really like outdoor school because I was the last group to be fully funded for five days at outdoor school. I learned about the pH at outdoor school and had a fun time whenever it was recreational time there. Going to outdoor school made my sixth grade class grow a bond together and get close to kids in my class. What I won't forget about outdoor school is dreading to get to the camp and not wanting to leave at the end of the trip. Outdoor school should be fully funded by HB2648 and SB439 because it will be a new experience that kids will enjoy.

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Huynh  
Madison High School



To the oregon legislature.

My name is griffin and I'm from  
madison high school. I think outdoor  
school is a worthy funding project  
because kids need to have experience  
in the outdoors and some of the more  
poor kids there only opportunity to  
be in the outdoors and I think  
every kid should be able to go  
there that. The time that I spent  
at outdoor school was amazing  
and I learned a lot and also had  
a great time. If you phase out  
outdoor school you will phase  
out nature in our kids future  
therefore leaving the future  
generation less aware. Please  
save outdoor school.

-HB 2648  
-SB 439

Sincerely griffin Steele  
from madison  
~~High~~ High school

Dear Oregon Legislature

My outdoor school experience was something that I know I will never forget. It helped me ~~to~~ come out of my shell and go from shy bullied kid to a strong leader. I feel without it, I may not have taken opportunities to build strong relationships, career experience, and of course scientific knowledge. Please Pass HB2649 & SB439

Yours Truly,  
Mia VanKerssawitz  
Madison H.S.

To The Oregon Legislature,

My name is Gloria and I can proudly say that the best part of 6th grade was being able to go to outdoor school for a whole week. All my great 6th grade memories happened while in outdoor school. All the new friends I made after falling in the mud multiple times was one of the many great experiences I had on my trip including the time I got to see a deer up close in person, a memory I wouldn't trade for the world. At outdoor I learned many valuable things like how to bring a lot of extra socks because you never know when you might step in the biggest puddle in the world, or to never pick the top bunk because you'll regret it at night when you need to go to the bathroom, but the most important thing I learned at outdoor school is to learn how to meet new people. believe it or not but 2-3 days isn't enough time for people to meet so why not keep it a week? that's why I hope you change your mind with this letter and consider extending outdoor school to a week.

Sincerely,

Eilma

(Madison H.S.)

P.S please pass

HB2648, SB439

To the Oregon Legislature —

My name is Redsea Truong, I am a Sophomore at Madison High School in Portland. My year was the last class to have experienced a full week of Outdoor School. My time at outdoor school has passed, but the incoming sixth graders have not, and now Outdoor School has been grievously shortened to two days. I remember when I did archery at Camp Namanu, it was Wednesday and raining, yet we all still went outside, got soaked and had a joyous time. I learned in archery that I am a left-handed archer. I also remember learning about pH, something that I have only been skimming over briefly in my current Chemistry class. I won't forget celebrating my birthday at Outdoor School, my friend even bought a present with her to give me. Cutting off Outdoor School to two days has been a massive mistake, as there was so much to do, and so little time, even with the full week, there are some things

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Amalia Price. Have any of you spent time in Nature's camp? Felt the wrath and the love? I did.

It was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. One time, at the nightly campfire, the staff members all got together and did a parody of Lady Gaga's song, Bad Romance! Instead of "Ra Ra Ra" it was "ara, ara wanna, you should where long pants!" I learned at Outdoor School how to respect Nature and its beauty. And that is something I'll never forget. Outdoor School should be fully funded because it educates youth on the importance of the environment and they start to become aware of things besides themselves. Please fund HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,  
Amalia Price  
Madison Highschool

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Shayla Villegas. I really enjoyed the week I had at outdoor school. I believe that future sixth graders deserve to have a week of outdoor school just as we did. They need time to bond with the cabin leaders as well as the new friends they make. Please pass HB2648, and SB439. Outdoor school should be a thing every sixth grader experiences. You don't get to be that hands on in an actual school.

Thank you,  
Shayla Villegas  
Madison high school

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Madely Cahill. Some of my favorite memories at Outdoor School are the Campfires and the nature walks. We learned about the pH levels in the water and we learned about dirt. I won't forget the first time I shot a bow. Outdoor School was a really fun experience and therefore you should fully fund HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,  
Madely  
James Madison  
High School  
Student

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Naïma Gargzadi. How many of you have ever seen a fawn out in the wild? Outdoor school is the only time I've seen one so up close and I'll never forget that experience. On my first day of outdoor school, I was greeted by the sight of a family of deer. Two fawns, a doe, and the only buck I've ever seen in my life. I learned so much about nature and Oregon's environment, that I think all children should be allowed to have a whole week of education in Oregon's wilderness. Three days is not enough to learn and experience everything. It really saddened me when my brother only received three days. Outdoor school should be fully funded so children can fully experience the uniqueness of outdoor school. Please fund HB 2648, and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Naïma Gargzadi  
Madison High School



To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Jenna Peelen-Higgins.  
Have you ever gone on a nature hike only  
to look at leaves and exotic mushrooms?  
Or wake up with a deer at your window?  
I have, at Out Door School. I learned about  
the importance of a good pH level of  
river and how it affects the fish. We  
haven't even learned this in either our  
chemistry or biology class. I won't ever  
forget singing songs at Camp Fire  
and just being happy. Who doesn't  
like being happy, therefore you should  
look at a couple bills, HB2648 and SB439  
to be specific. Think about everyone who  
loves learning hands on, then look  
at these bills.

Thank you,  
Jenna Peelen-Higgins  
Madison Highschool

To Oregon Legislature,

4/20/15 ✓

Hi, my name is James Wark. I really enjoyed my week at outdoor school. It was a ~~opp~~ opportunity for people to meet a bunch of new people form friendships and bond that last forever. I believe the future 6<sup>th</sup> graders need that experience it makes people so much closer and kids don't even complain when it's raining people look forward to go do the activities.

From,  
James Wark Madison high school

P.S. Please Pass HB 2648 and SB 139

To the Oregon Legislature-

In middle school, I participated in the last full week that was offered for outdoor school. The full week of outdoor school was amazing. The unforgettable experiences will overcome certain needs for objectives we needed to complete. With all the complex songs I learned, the full week skills we got to work on a present before we left. Limiting outdoor school to only a couple days or taking it away all together limits what the students will learn, and give them the chance to have fun and learn as well, with hard to hard work while learning. Over all outdoor school will help student with learning, and a memorable experience that they will always remember so please fully fund HB2648, and SB439.

Sincerely -  Tina

From - Madison High  
School.

TO the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Grayson George I went to outdoor school and I really liked it, I thought they taught very cool because they made it fun and they showed that science, reading, and math could be a fun thing to do but in a different way of teaching. I loved the activities, the food and the learning my favorite part of outdoor school was two things. It was the food and the skits they taught to show a lesson. I will never forget the time me and my friend had a hot sauce challenge. I feel like the six graders should have a full week of outdoor school. I would totally do it again if I had the chance. So please fund the HB 2648, and the SB 439 bills.

Thank You, Grayson George

Grayson George, Madison  
High School

MAX WILL DOWNING

Dear OREGON Legislators - I THINK that outdoor  
SCHOOL was a GREAT EXPERIENCE FOR ME FOR THE MOST PART.  
THE REASON WHY I SAY THAT BECAUSE I HAD  
TO MISS MY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY. I WAS UPSET  
ABOUT MISSING IT BUT IT WAS FINE. I THINK  
THAT THE BILL SHOULD BE PASSED ONLY IF  
THIS HAPPENS. USE YOUR TIME MORE WISELY  
IN THESE CAMPS AND KEEP BETTER TRACK OF THE GAMES  
SO THAT SOMEONE MAY HAVE A CHANCE TO PLAY  
TEAM. WHEN I WAS THREE I WAS NEVER  
CHOSEN FOR THE STUFF I WANTED TO DO  
SO I WAS STUCK WITH FIELD GAMES BUT  
EVERYTHING ELSE WAS QUITE FUN TO  
PARTICIPATE IN AND WANT TO BE A  
COUNCILOR INSIDE OUTDOOR SCHOOL NEXT YEAR.  
PLEASE PASS HB 2648 AND SB 439 FOR  
THE SAKE OF 6 GRADERS

SINCERELY MAX WILL DOWNING  
MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Erickson Gacutan. I really like Outdoor School, because I had an amazing experience meeting new people and learning more about outdoors. What I won't forget is all the things they taught us about outdoors. Please pass the HB2648 and SB439 bills so that a lot of kids like me can have more days to have fun and learn in outdoor school.

Thank you,

Erickson Gacutan

Madison High School Student.

To the Oregon Legislature—

My name is Simona Nemmen. My outdoor school experience was awesome, and I can't imagine my full week fit into only two days. I remember all the science I learned from the trails and instructors. I also will never forget my counselors, girls I shared my cabin with and even the food! When my brother went to outdoor school the year after me (hearing about all the activities I did beforehand) said it was boring and didn't do any of the things I told him about even though he went to the same site. It was important for me, and it's too bad for kids that they won't be able to experience it for a whole week.

Sincerely,  
Simona,  
Madison High School

P.S. please pass HB2648 and SB439!

To the Oregon Legislature,-

My name is Carlee Slorarp. My outdoor experience was great. I remember how everyone throughout the week there switched doing jobs. For example, raising the flag in the morning, taking it down at the day or serving people dinner. So it gave us some responsibility during the week we were there. I learned how to shoot a bow and arrow, about how to tell plants a part and fungus. I learned many more things as well. I won't forget about how every day it was something different and each day something new was learned. Just a couple days don't even compare to a week's experience at outdoor school. A couple days won't cover really anything, a week is perfect. Outdoor school should be fully funded because it's an amazing trip every 6th grader should be able to enjoy. I know I won't forget my outdoor trip in 6th grade, it was the highlight of my 6th grade year. Please pass HB 2648 and SB 439, every 6th grader deserves to experience outdoor school.

Thank you,  
Carlee Slorarp  
Madison High School



To the Oregon Legislature,

Outdoor School is a place of social freedom and accelerated and enhanced learning. Mine and the experiences of my classmates at Outdoor School brought them to a new social understanding of themselves, the people around them, and their communities. I felt I knew my friends better, and knew how to make others feel better after I departed during my sixth grade year. Along with the social aspect, Outdoor School educated me in an extreme way. I learned more about biology in five days than I did in three years of middle school science.

The happiness and intelligence which Outdoor School presents to each of its students should be encouraged and supported. Please save and fund Outdoor School approving HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Zane Provenzano

Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

I am Shaun Hannan and I was a part of the final Outdoor School Group to stay 5 days. In these 5 days I got to meet new people from High School, some who would have had me for a job (if I wasn't in 6th grade). I got the hang of things on the 3rd day and once I did that things were great I knew were everything was and what to do. The first two days I didn't like too much I couldn't adjust that quickly. The final day was the best of all because everyone was a part of everything and I got to plant my own tree next to the Digger Tree. So I ask that the Oregon Legislature, please, fully fund Outdoor School and the HB 2648 and SB 439 Laws to give the 6th graders a real taste of Outdoor School.

Sincerely,  
Shaun Hannan  
Madison High School Student

To the Oregon Legislature,

As a highschooler who has experienced all five days of outdoor school, I believe the amount of days now should change. Outdoor school teaches people many skills and provides experiences that schools can't offer. I remember the weather being rainy, but they manage to have fun. I learned skills like public speaking. We had to talk in front of people and that made me stepped out of my comfort zone because I'm not much of a talker. Outdoor School should be fully funded because young students will be able to learn about the outdoors in a fun and better perspective and this is also a fun experience that all students should receive. So can you please support the bills. - HB 264B and SB 439

From: Madison High School  
Sincerely, Lheiana May

To the Oregon Legislature

My name is Saul Meneses Zurita, ~~I'm~~ I'm writing to you from Madison High School about Outdoor School. I went to Outdoor School as a 6th grader my year was the last to get a week at Outdoor School. I still remember a lot from my trip to Sandy river. I remember getting off the bus and finding my cabin and only knowing two people from my school but I never talked to them by the end of the week everyone in our cabin <sup>became</sup> ~~was~~ friends. To this day some of us stay in contact. I learned a lot on my trip to Outdoor School like to not be so shy and talk to others. I won't forget all the experiences ~~from~~ <sup>I</sup> learned from Outdoor School and I still remember some of the songs. I think that Outdoor School should be fully funded because other kids should be able to have the same experience that I had when I was their age. Please support and fully fund my passing, 1132648, and 813439.

From Saul Meneses Zurita  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature

My name is Matt Kelly, I really love outdoor school because I got to meet new people and make new friends. In outdoor school I made a goat friend, his name is Mick. We became friends on the first night, we both had the top bunk, and our heads were on top of each other. We stayed up all night doing stupid things like make fart noises and stuff like that. The counselor made us shut up, we tried, but it was super hard. From that point on, we are still friends today. He goes to grant, and I go to madison. Please save outdoor school by funding HB 2648 and SB 439.

Thank you,



Madison High School

4/20/15

Dear Oregon Legislature,

My name is Alicia Tran. I really like outdoor school because it was a time I got to bond with my friends and new students for a whole week! During outdoor school I learned all types of things about water, soil, plants, and animals. My favorite myth<sup>invented</sup> about plants is the story of how each tree got its leaves! As a sixth grader I was very forgetful, but I will never forget my bonfire experience at outdoor school, it would be one of the greatest things I have ever participated yet. I just loved how all of us bonded over campfire songs and stories so instantaneously. I loved my experience and the memories made at outdoor school so please fully fund it by passing HB2648 and SB439.

Sincerely, Alicia Tran  
Madison High School

To the Oregon legislature - my name is Jack V.  
and I'm a student in Madison High School. My experience  
with outdoor school is that I learn many things that  
I never know outside of the woods and how it feels to  
be around outdoor school, exploring the environment.  
I learned many things in outdoor school such as  
types of flowers, type of bugs, logs and trunks, and  
the wild animals out there that I learn that I would  
be surprised to know what I don't know. I don't want  
to forget the moment when I was with the group leaders  
when we went out, exploring the woods, doing outdoor  
activities, hanging out in cafeterias, and when we sing  
and clap that I never let that moment go. I receive  
the parts that the group leaders give us to put on my  
cookie necklace on the time when we leave back from  
outdoor school to show the memories of how much  
we had fun, going out to do activities and learn  
lots of things about it's nature. To the Oregon  
legislation, please fully fund outdoor school for 6th graders.  
in the future by passing HB2646 and SB439.

Sincerely, Jack V.  
Madison High School

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Lena Grover and I am a junior at Grant High School. I have been a student leader with the Outdoor School program for three sessions and plan on being a part of the Outdoor School community long after I graduate. I am urging your support for HR 2648 to secure funding for every 5th or 6th grader in Oregon to go through the Outdoor School program. This program is imperative for kids to experience because they receive hands on experiences and they are in an environment that allows the opportunity for success.

I personally went through the Outdoor School program as a sixth grader, and it was one of the best experiences of my middle school career. Because of my student leaders and the supportive environment that was created by Outdoor School, I was finally able to understand how the environment directly affected me and my community. The learning environment that Outdoor School provides encouraged me to come back as a student leader. In doing so, I have taught many sixth graders about environmental sciences. By learning out of a classroom, kids benefit from hands on experiences by being able to see and touch what they are leaning about. By giving 5th and 6th graders an experience, they are able to absorb and comprehend science more effectively because the information is being presented to them in a way that appeals to multiple learning styles. During my time at Outdoor School, I have gained leadership skills and furthered my knowledge on the Pacific Northwest ecosystem. This encouraged me to take college level courses in environmental sciences and has also inspired my future career. Before Outdoor School I was soft spoken and unable to talk in front of large groups, but this community has given me an indescribable confidence that I can now apply in my everyday life. I will forever be grateful for the program that has taught me so much, and hope for every 5th and 6th grader in Oregon to get the same opportunity.

At the end of every week, our site supervisor tells us to never forget the "real world". Many think that Outdoor School is a vacation from the "real world", but I can assure it is not. The world we are surrounded by in our day-to-day lives, filled with cell phones, cement buildings, and city lights, is not the real world. Being out in nature, surrounded by a plethora of species and microorganisms, that is the real world. If we do not educate the future generations about the environment, it will crumble. Students should be given the opportunity to inform themselves about the environment that surrounds them everyday. If we do not give them this opportunity now, there will be no world left.

Thank you for your time,

Lena Grover



March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Minh Nguyen. I went to Outdoor School (ODS) as a 6th grader, and my life was changed for the better. I'm writing to ask you to support HR 2648 to guarantee that every sixth grader will get a chance to experience the same nurture, growth, and love from ODS.

Unlike summer camp, which are quite expensive, ODS is free for all students. Many of them have never spent a week away from home; all are adjusting to the transition from elementary to middle school and the changes to their bodies. Puberty wasn't kind to me. I had recently moved to the US from Vietnam. I was the awkward sixth grader with thick glasses, oily skin, and endless questions. ODS was where I could be myself. There, I became a loam warrior with stripes of mud on my face, told ridiculous stories about my pet rock "Pebble," and fell in love with the forest. I struggled to read books and learned better through hands-on activities. ODS showed me there are more than one way to learn.

Since I was a sophomore, I have returned to ODS every year to ensure that no matter how thick one's glasses are, how ungraceful puberty is, or how curious one is, everyone is accepted. True to the motto of ODS, "everyone's got their thing." When I returned, I expected to teach, and I did, but more importantly, my campers taught me. They showed me kindness, innocence, and imagination. I was the grateful recipient of trinkets such as four-leaf clovers, friendship bracelets, and endearing cards. I was taught to be a friend who listened to problems ranging from leaky boots to homesickness and a leader who convinced campers to break one cookie into ten pieces.

Despite my lack of sleep and piles of unfinished homework, nothing is more rewarding than spending a week as a teacher, role model, and friend to young campers, just as others had done for me. It saddens me greatly that not all 6th graders are able to thrive in the ODS community.

Outdoor school is a unique and unifying experience for Oregonians. A letter really does the program no justice. Please contact me at (503) 516 - 3972 or email me at [9nguyen.minh@gmail.com](mailto:9nguyen.minh@gmail.com) if you have further questions.

Thank you for consideration and support,

Minh Nguyen  
11909 SE Grant St  
Portland OR, 97216

April 17 2015

900 Court St.  
NE Salem OR 97301

Dear State Representative Barbara Smith Warner,

I believe that outdoor school should be extended from 3 days to its original 5 night program.

When I sat down on the bus to outdoor school 1 year ago, I was ecstatic. It was going to be the first time going away from my parents for more than a day. Currently as a seventh grader I'd say that going to outdoor school has to be in my top 20 school memories.

By going to outdoor school I got to meet other girls and got to learn in an outdoor setting. Although I personally didn't my outdoor school experience was the best, and I don't think I brought many new values or knowlage back, I do think that the program benifits many other children. Especially the kids who come from households where they don't get the chance to go camping, do summercamps or learn about nature, in nature. By going to outdoor school kids are able to take a break from their daily lives, learn about the enviroment (which is especially important to a city kid) and bond with their class.

By cutting outdoorschool to a three day program, you also cut many of the benifits that go along with it. You're not able to learn as much and it is much harder to bond with your peers because it seems as soon as you arrive it's time to leave.

I would urge lawmakers to pass the Oregon School Bill and extend outdoor school to its original 5 day program. Thank you for considering this suggestion.

Sincerely,

Susan McHarris

2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> AVE

Portland, OR

97212

900 Court St. NE

Salem, OR

97301

Dear Representative Barbara Smith-Warner:

My Name is Shaw Powell. I am a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at ACCESS Academy. A charter school in Portland public.

I am writing to you on the topic of outdoor school. My teacher tells me that the state is considering extending outdoor school to 6 days and 5 nights, instead of what I got; 3 days and 2 nights.

As I said, I am a 7<sup>th</sup> grader which means that I went to outdoor school last year. I have allergies, and that was a challenge the first days. As soon as I got used to it, I had to leave. They tried to teach you everything in less than 3 days. They did a great job, but you would have to be a robot to absorb that all in that amount of time. This was one of the reasons that I did not enjoy it: there was no down time.

I enjoy playing sports, and they said that I would get no run, and I did not. I also did not get to shower, and I had little time to eat. This will now solve all of this, but it will help.

Best Regards,

*Shaw*

Shaw Powell

2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Portland, OR 97212

April 17, 2015

900 Court Street

NE Salem OR 97301

To the State Representative Barbara Smith Warner,

Lately, there has been a problem with outdoor school because some of the sixth graders are only getting three days at outdoor school. When you go to the six day version you get more of a chance to get used to the outdoor environment. After you get used to always being outdoors the three day program is already over. With the six day program you still have a few days to enjoy yourself and learn. If all the sixth graders went to the six day version they would get a much better chance to learn, that should always be supported.

You learn much more about nature when you actually get to experience what you're learning about. It is much easier to understand anything if you have a personal experience to connect with. It is also a lot of fun to be outside. Outdoor school is a fun opportunity to learn in a different environment and about new things. I think everyone should at least have the option of the six day version. This way all of the sixth graders can have a longer and better learning experience. Thank you for reading my letter about outdoor school.

Thank you,

Zoe Greenwald

April 17, 2015

900 Court St.  
NE Salem OR 97301

To State Senator Michael Dembrow,

Outdoor School is not what it used to be. At under 3 days long, kids just don't get the same experience that they used to.

I am a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at ACCESS Academy. My brother is now a 10<sup>th</sup> grader in high school. He went to Outdoor School in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, just like me, only he got the 5-day program, whereas I got the 3-day program. When it was time for his class to leave Outdoor School, he said that most of his class was in tears. When it was time for my class to leave, most of us were talking about all the food we were going to ~~eat~~ eat when we got home.

The 3-day program simply does not allow time for kids to adjust and embrace the new environment. When you're being herded from one carefully organized activity to the next, it can be difficult to appreciate nature.

Outdoor School is a very important experience for many kids whose families cannot afford to go camping. There is also strong evidence that it improves attendance for many students, including kids whose first language is not English.

With this in mind, I hope you will consider returning Outdoor School to its former length.

So that kids may enjoy it more and not be  
rushed through a Stunted program. Thank you for  
considering my suggestion.

With respect,

Lila Fenner  
Lila Fenner

2334 NE 57th Ave  
Portland, OR 97212

April 20, 2015

900 Court St  
NE Salem, OR 97301

To Mr Dembrow:

My name is Tyler Mapes. I am in 7th grade, and we are more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way through the year. And currently, we are learning about how outdoor school changed.

Overall, I am an outdoorsy type of person. I swim and play soccer a lot, and I like hiking. However, there are very few times when I can be and learn in the outdoors. Every year, I go camping for about 6 days, and that's all.

So you can pretty accurately guess how much I like outdoor school. I was spending time outside, with my friends and learning more about the wilderness. It was one of my favorite school experiences ever. The food and counselors were nice, and the activities were great. It made me feel better about school and helped me relax.

But I felt 3 days wasn't enough. Only one day was I actually there; a bit of day one and three was missing. And everything felt slightly rushed. Outdoor schools only happens once, so make it longer!

A few days ago, a professor from PSU came with an elaborate study about outdoor school. It proved some interesting facts. It showed us that there was a difference in attendance rates in between years with more outdoor school days and years with less.

In 2008-09, when students attended for 5 days, we found a positive difference in attendance rates overall.



In 2009-10, when 21% of students attended a 2 day program, there wasn't a positive correlation. But in 2010-11, when the 2 day was boosted to 3 days, there was another positive difference. However, when in 2011-2012, when almost everyone had 3 days, there was no difference.

This means that when we had more time in outdoorschool, students liked school better and showed up more often. It is a fun way to learn with hands on experience, and I believe that we should lengthen it to 5 days again.

Sincerely,  
Tyler Mapes  
Tyler Mapes

ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97212

April 17, 2015

Representative Barbara Smith Warner  
900 NE Court St.  
Salem OR 97301

Dear Representative Smith Warner,

My name is Zachary Robinson. I am a student at ACCESS Academy in Portland, Oregon. I would like to share my opinions on the bill to extend Outdoor School to all students in Oregon. Outdoor School should certainly be extended to all students in the state of Oregon, both as a matter of equity and as a matter of results.

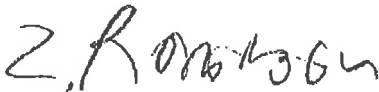
Outdoor school needs to be extended to all students. This is a simple equity issue. If kids in one part of the state are doing a significant curriculum extension and kids in another part of the state aren't, then that's obviously inequitable. Providing outdoor school to every kid in the state will fix this problem.

Outdoor School needs to be extended to every child, but I believe that the Legislature should hold off on extending it to five nights until there is more data on the respective benefits. There is a very large study going on using data from four Oregon school districts. The data shows a partial correlation between outdoor school length and attendance, but the study is not complete, and the jump can be attributed to other factors. We should make sure we know the benefits before we spend several million dollars.

I can't say I liked Outdoor School. Spending a few nights in the woods, sleeping in a sleeping bag, and constantly singing. Then, during Field "Study," running around trying to avoid a bunch of high schoolers making bird noises. Doesn't sound fun at all. That might just be because I've never needed any incentive for learning. I just want to learn for the sake of knowing things. However, I can understand that some kids don't like academics, and Outdoor School provides a way to reach those kids, as well as form lasting bonds.

In conclusion, Outdoor School should be extended to all students. However, more studies are needed before spending millions of dollars to extend it to five nights.

Sincerely,



Zachary Robinson  
ACCESS Academy

2334 NE 57th Avenue  
Portland, OR

April 20<sup>th</sup> 2015

900 Court St. NE Salem, OR

To the State Representative Barbara Smith Warner,

I've heard that the education policy makers are having to decide between 3 days - 2 nights of Outdoor School to 6 days - 5 nights. They have to consider all of the drop out rates and education purposes, but they aren't alone to decide it. There are also teachers, parents, and students to help decide the length of ODS.

This letter is to inform you on my opinion around the topic of ODS. I think that we should increase the length of ODS to 6 days and 5 nights instead of the current time of 3 days and 2 nights. 3 days is not enough to teach students about their surrounding nature. Extending the time will clearly benefit the education purposes.

I surveyed my family and friends, and they all had around the same outdoor school answer; I love ODS and I want it to be extended. We should lengthen it for many benefits.

Extending ODS will be very beneficial for education purposes, and it will decrease drop-out rates. Surveyed people have also submitted their own opinion. We should extend the length from 3 days - 2 nights to 6 days - 5 days.



Nancy Wu

2334 NE 57th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97212

April 17, 2015

900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

To State Senator Michael Dembrow:

Outdoor school should last 6 days instead of 4 because learning about nature while living in nature is definitely a once in a lifetime opportunity. And if the districts decide to provide this opportunity to its students, they should provide it to the fullest extent.

I am a 7th grader at ACCESS Academy and I attended Outdoor School at Arrawanna last year where I made some great memories and friends.

Last year was my first year in the PPS district and for the first part of the year, school was just mediocre. Sure I had friends but they were just people I sat next to in class, not someone who I would invite over to my house. I remember that a week before we left, the teacher asked us to write down the top three people we would like to be in a cabin with. I wrote down, who I thought, were the three nicest people in the class. But when we got back our cabin mates, not a single person I asked for was in my cabin and that was a disappointment. Little did I know, though, that one of those people would become one of the best friends I could ever ask for.

Outdoor School isn't just a place to learn about nature but a place to make friends that will last for a lifetime. There are kids out there that might have similar stories to mine, and providing a 6 day program will give them more opportunities to experience a story of their own.

Sincerely,  
Joy Yun

ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Portland OR 97213

April 17, 2015

Oregon Capital Building  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

To: State Senator Michael Dembrow,

My name is Caroline Lee, and I am a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at ACCESS Academy. Last year, a group of young, excited 6<sup>th</sup> graders shouted gleefully as a bright yellow school bus pulled up on the street. I piled my gear into the vehicle, and drove off to one of my most memorable, educational, and bonding experiences in my school career. A few days later, I returned on that same bus, belting out the chorus to one of the hilarious songs we had learned with my class, as a changed person.

Outdoor School brought me closer to my friends, and let me get to know the students in my grade I hadn't ever talked to. An experience like Outdoor School brings people together, and creates memories that last forever. A few days away from their family and home allows a child to grow up, become closer to their classmates, and learn about nature and science while surrounded by it. Can a class examine a 2-inch wide hole left in a tree by a giant woodpecker in a classroom? Can students run through a giant obstacle course while pretending to be a salmon, and overcome difficulties like "bears", and "hawks" in a classroom? Can children create their own forest scrub while overlooking a roaring river in a classroom? The answer is no, and that's why all students need Outdoor School.

Sincerely,  
Caroline Lee

ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Portland OR 97213

OREGON CAPITOL BUILDING  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

To State Representative Barbara Smith Warner and State Senator Michael Dembrow:

Every student, no matter what gender, religion, ethnicity should deserve the same chance. However, in Oregon, this is not true. Not all students can participate in Outdoor School (OS). Some students never have or never will go camping. They will never feel a river's sand between their toes, or a salamander squirm out of their grasp. They will never go hiking or singing around a campfire. Because the best part about OS is the experience. The feeling of being away from civilization, or sleeping in a cabin. Outdoor school is where kids find their voices and learn to forget their self image. It's where they learn that not all science is done in labs, and that school can be more fun than it seems. At least, that's what it was for me.

I loved learning about the natural world in an outdoor setting. Never had I ever spent so much time in nature and away from home. I'll admit, at first I was kind of intimidated. But by the time we had to leave I transitioned to wishing it was 6 days instead of 3. Every kid should be able to experience no electronics and all nature, because some kids can't and/or never will. Please take my opinion into account.

Sincerely,

Fiona Dubay

Helen M

Access Academy  
2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Portland OR 97213  
April 17, 2015

900 Court St.  
NE Salem OR 97301

Dear lawmakers,

As Oregonians, we know that the natural scenery of our state is... incredibly beautiful. May it be our lush forests or plains, being outdoors in Oregon is always a great experience. This was true for me; I have always loved spending time outside. Of course I was delighted to take part in Outdoor School, which in all means let me enjoy what I loved most: being active and exploring the natural world. But not every child is like me. Some have always had little or no access to the outdoors, due to barriers such as economic status, or, which state they live in. I find this sad. But at ODS, I watched kids who had never had much exposure to our world develop and discover a passion for nature. I, for one, believe that this outdoor infatuation found at ODS stays with kids for the rest of their lives, leading to a more active society. Every child should have the opportunity to explore nature at Outdoor School. Sincerely, Helen.

ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57th Ave  
Portland OR 97213

April 16 2015

900 Court St. NE  
Salem OR 9730

To State Representative Barbara Smith Warner and State Senator Michael Dembrow:

There is a pending issue throughout the state; there are students who don't go to Outdoor School, many young students don't even have the opportunity to go to outdoor school. I do not however, think that we need to have 6 days at Outdoor School. 3 days is plenty of time to learn about 4 subjects. We have half a day for each subject.

I went to Outdoor School around this time last year, we spent nearly 3 days there. I thought the education was great, we had half a day to learn about the soil, water, animals or plants of Sandy River Oregon. The social community was also exceptional, all of the counsellors encouraged meeting new friends and talking to people as much as possible. This is a very important experience for many kids, especially the fact that they talk to people and are exposed to many different lifestyles.

There are some interesting facts about Outdoor School that correlate with students' attendance. When students attended Outdoor School, their attendance noticeably raised. There are many reasons for this; students who attend Outdoor School feel much more comfortable around their peers, because they were forced to live with them for three days and form relationships. Since there is so much positive energy coming from the camp staff and counsellors, those relationships are almost always positive. Another reason they attended school more is that they are put in tough situations at Outdoor School, they have to find a solution to a possible problem that faced them. Some students rarely even get outside in the wilderness, if ever, and hence the name, Outdoor School is outdoors, in the forest.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and your consideration of my thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Xander Hansen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Xander" being more prominent than the last name "Hansen".

Xander Hansen, ACCESS Academy



ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Portland, OR 97213

April 14, 2015

900 NE Court St  
Salem, OR 97301

To Barbara Smith Warner:

My name is Anya and I'm a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at a school called ACCESS Academy and I'm writing to you because I believe that all 6<sup>th</sup> graders should have the opportunity to go to Outdoor School because its a very eye-opening experience that in my opinion teaches you a lot of things that I will go through.

First off, Outdoor School gave me an opportunity to have a sense of independence away from my parents and I think that 6<sup>th</sup> grade is an ideal grade to have that sense of unity because its a new start from when you start Pre-K so its bringing most people out of their comfort zone and having them do a little bit of exploring by themselves which I think is important.

I also think that Outdoor School gives kids a break from the "classroom norm" which I would describe as just sitting in a desk and reading something, completing a worksheet, or just listening to the teacher lecture you. You actually have an interactive class that's outdoors, walking around, and being social with your classmates which brings me to my next point which is that for some kids, you develop a better understanding of your classmates and you get to know them better which in turn could help you in group projects at school.

Bringing me back to my main point, all 6<sup>th</sup> graders should get an opportunity to go to Outdoor School because it has many positive effects on things like your work habits. Please consider my suggestion!

Respectfully,

Anya A  
*Anya*



ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57th Ave  
Portland, OR 97213

April 17th, 2015

900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR, 97301

To Representative Barbara Smith Warner,

I had an amazing time at Outdoor School (ODS). I was really, really nervous going into it, but once I was there, it was one of the best experiences of my life. I made lots of new friends, learnt some new stuff, and had a ton of fun singing around the campfire.

I think that 6th graders statewide should all have equal opportunity to have an experience like that, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or socio-economic situation. Please fund ODS for all of Oregon's 6th graders.

Sincerely,

Maura

Maura Kelley, An ACCESS 7th grader.

ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 57th Ave  
Portland, OR 97213

900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

To State Representative Barbara Smith Warner:

I think that Outdoor School should be an experience that every 6th grader can enjoy. In case you don't know, Outdoor School is a yearly event in which sixth-graders all over Oregon go to a nature site for a few days and nights. I went there last year, and it was an eye-opening experience for me...but I do think it should be longer.

To make matters worse, not every 6th-grader in Oregon gets the opportunity to go to Outdoor School. Those that do only get to go for 2, occasionally 3 nights. 6 years ago, every 6th-grader got to go for five nights. A bill is about to be passed next week that may allow this. I don't think that 3 nights is nearly enough time to build relationships and get to enjoy the beauty of Outdoor School like we should.

Don't take my word for it, though--Mrs. Kelley, a professor at Portland State University, has been doing a survey on this subject. Turns out, kids that go to Outdoor School improve their attendance records from 5th to 7th grade. And the longer they stay at Outdoor School, the higher their attendance rate is. Although the research isn't d's definitely some strong evidence to suggest that Outdoor School benefits students rather than hinder them. Education policy makers are supposed to help better education, correct?

So I ask you: please help pass the bill.

Respectfully,  
Evan Reynolds

2334 NE 57th ave

April 16, 2015

900 court st. NE Salem OR 97031

To the state representative:

My name is Abdullah Rahman, I'm a 7th grader that attends access Academy. I went to outdoor school last year and had a great experience. Outdoor school was a great experience to bond with people from my school as well as other people that go to different schools. The camp is a really good way to learn about nature in a peaceful outdoor setting. I think that all 6th graders should have equal opportunity to go to outdoor school. I think this because outdoor school teaches people important skills that you usually won't learn in a classroom. I went for three days to outdoor school but a six day program could be much more beneficial for students because they could really improve in performance at school. All in all outdoor school is a really memorable experience that everybody should have access to. I think that the three day program is really rushed and if was extended could be much better. all in all outdoor school is a really memorable experience that everybody should have access to. I hope the bill gets passed because it could really benefit students so they can improve in many areas.

-kind regards Abdullah Rahman

ACCESS Academy

2334 NE 57th Street

Portland, OR

April 16, 2015

900 Court St. NE Salem OR 972301

Dear Representative Barbara Smith Walker,

Hi, my name is Lux Sanchez, and I attend ACCESS Academy. I think that Outdoor School should be available to all 6th graders in the grand state of Oregon. I believe this because it is a fun-filled time that everyone should get to experience. Outdoor School provides many vital life skills that you cannot learn in the classroom, such as making new friends, being comfortable outside, and most of all, learning about nature in nature.

Also for many 6th graders who are not as privileged, this is the first time that they have ever got to experience something like Outdoor School, where they go on a trip camping, and they come back thrilled. Sure, some people may say that they did not like Outdoor School when they come back, they will soon look back on Outdoor School as a fond memory of being outdoors with their friends, and with very welcoming counsellors and teachers.

One of the most positive benefits of Outdoor School is that many 6th graders figure out that learning science can be fun, especially in the presence of science. These kids go back to school refreshed, and with a positive attitude for learning. This can lead to better attendance records, and better report cards.

Ultimately, it is your decision to vote, but please vote YES for a Outdoor School being a privilege for all Oregon students.

Sincerely,

Lux Sanchez

2334 NE 57th ave

Portland OR 97213

April 16th, 2015

900 Court St. NE

Salem OR 97301

Dear representative,

My name is Diego Gutierrez, a student at ACCESS Academy, and someone who got to experience outdoor school firsthand. Overall, I think that outdoor school is a special and critical experience that more children in the state of Oregon should have. Outdoor school places children in an environment that, for some, can be very unfamiliar, and can be one of the first times that they are exposed to nature. This can be a crucial moment that could inspire children to learn more about the world around them, or it can help them adjust to being away from home. It not only gives children a chance to learn about nature, but also to experience nature. Overall, I hope that this letter and others like it, help emphasize that outdoor school is an important experience that should become a part Oregon's schools.

Sincerely, Diego Gutierrez

ACCESS Academy  
2334 NE 56<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Portland, OR 97213

April 16 2015

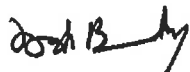
State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

To State Representative Barbara Smith Warner and State Senator Michael Dembrow,

I, Joshua Bromley, a student of ACCESS Academy thinks that Outdoor School should be available to all students of the state of Oregon. Last year, I went to Outdoor School as a sixth grader. I really enjoyed it and I wish it was available to all students. I learned a lot about nature in those three days and I think that a classroom would not be a good substitute for this learning experience. For me, this was one of the best experiences of my life. I had a great time here because I was away from my parents and I had all my friends around me. I could do a lot of activities without my parents telling me to go do homework or go do chores. Another thing that led me to such a great time is being away from electronics. I really hate it when I want to do something with my friends and they are all on their phones. At Outdoor School, no one is on their phones so you can go play in the field with your friends when you want. I also think that Outdoor School was a little rushed. I think that if Outdoor School was a week, it would have been more enjoyable because there would have been more time to enjoy nature.

I think Outdoor School should be available to all students in Oregon. It provides valuable learning experience for all students there. One of the learning we did was hands on with doing the actual thing or a scale model. An example of this was at water studies. At water studies, we learned about pH and dissolved oxygen. Then we got to measure the pH and dissolved oxygen of the water. We got to do this for all studies be it plant, animal, water or rock. An example of a scale model was at water studies again. We made a model of different areas including city and clearcut. Then we showed what would happen when those areas got polluted. I really enjoyed the time and I feel that it is a shame that every student in Oregon can't experience what I experienced.

Sincerely,



Joshua Bromley

2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Portland, OR 97212

April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 9731

To Barbara Smith Warner,

My first Outdoor School experience was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. It may sound hard to make a raining 3 hour walk fun, but the people at Opal Creek managed to do it. Through out the entire walk, I took two full pages of notes, which is rather astonishing for a 5<sup>th</sup> grader. That was just in the walk to the lodge. I changed schools, so I got the rare opportunity to go to ODS a second time in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It was just as fun as the first, and I learned even more.

This didn't just benefit me. It taught every kid in both my classes something new. Still, everyone in my classes agreed that our time there felt much too short.

Back in 2008-2009, all students participated in the 5 night ODS program. There was a ~~significant~~ significant increase in student attendance for those who attended in the fall. A year



later, 21% of students ~~we~~ went instead to the 2 night program, and the increase in attendance did not occur. Just that 21% of students dragged down that overall increase in attendance.

Increasing the outdoor school time back to 5 nights might yet again increase the attendance rates. And if kids are at school, they're a lot more likely to learn.

Please consider my proposal.

-Clara L. Eddleman-Hunley

2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue Portland, OR 97212  
April 17, 2015  
900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301

Dear State Senator Michael Dembrow,

My name is Ruben Clemans, I am a student at Access Academy in Portland. We have been talking about Outdoor School. Last year when we went to Outdoor School we were only able to go for 3 days. Which made the traditions that they have very weird. Also, since we have all of our technology normally it takes one or two days to get used to not having our phones in our pockets and by the time we get used to it, we have to go home. On top of that some people did not enjoy ODS, I feel that some people may enjoy it more if they are able to get used to the way ODS works. After we are used to it, it may be more enjoyable. Also we are told to make friends but we have no downtime and during classes, like in school, we are told to be quiet. We have no time to talk to each other or to just lay down and think, like we probably could do when we get home.

According to the research collected by Ms. Kelley, a teacher at PSU studying affects ODS has on kids, according to the data students who attended ODS in the fall had a significant increase of attendance between 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade when compared to people who attended

in the spring. Also males had a higher increase than females. Students whose first language is Spanish had a significant increase compared to people whose first language is English. And last but not least, Asians had a significant increase when compared to White students. I hope you decide to increase the amount of time people go to ODS.

Sincerely,  
Ruben Clemans  
7th grade

2334 NE 57<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Portland Oregon 97212

April 20, 2015

900 Court St. NE  
Salem Oregon 97301

To Representative Barbara Smith Warner and Senator  
Michael Dembrow:

Outdoor School needs to be a longer period of time. I visited Outdoor School in 6<sup>th</sup> grade with my school, Access Academy. In the quick 2 nights and 3 days that we were there, I learned a lot, including education of plants, marine life, and other Outdoor School topics.

One of my personal favorite experiences took place during the marine life unit. Our group put on boots and waded out into a river and looked for life.

With no doubt, future 6<sup>th</sup> graders should be able to enjoy the Outdoor School experience, and more. They would benefit much more, and be able to learn to their fullest potential.

That is why I believe that Outdoor school should extend Outdoor School to 6 days and 5 nights. Parents of elementary schoolers would be more than willing to pay for a better and a more enhanced education at Outdoor School.

I would urge you to consider the idea of a longer Outdoor school.

Respectfully,

Nathaniel Lee  
Nathaniel Lee



2334 NE 57th Ave  
Portland, OR, 97212

April 20, 2015

900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR, 97301

To State Senator Michael Dembrow,

There are some things currently done in three days that need to happen in six days. Five years ago, there were six days, and things were much less compressed. But now, we have squished the entirety of a One-hundred-and-twenty hour experience into a matter of forty-eight hours. This must be changed.

Outdoor school. School is in the name. We go not only for a fun and exciting experience, but also for an education on the world around us. The four categories of nature study (plant, water, soil, and animals) were given only one two hour session each. I, personally, feel this is not enough. With that ratio of one to six hours, we could have a full twenty hours of learning instruction. That is five hours each topic.

There are many social aspects of outdoor school that cannot happen in the forty-eight hours given currently. I had just learned the names of my cabin-mates and was whisked away before I memorized them. I never

even had the opportunity to trade phone numbers!

In conclusion, three days is not enough. It is not enough for the social or educational aspects. Thank you for taking time enough to read my opinions.

from

David Hamberg

Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing in support of Outdoor School for all 5th graders because environmental literacy is critical for the well-being and health of our citizens. I am a college educator, and I am certain that students with exposure to natural ecosystems and how they function, are better able to make connections among natural and physical sciences.

College students often refer all the way back to their experiences in outdoor school, when learning about nutrient cycling, photosynthesis, water use, etc.

Environmental literacy is indeed critical. Without it, policymakers and presidential candidates make unsound decisions about our use of natural resources, and seem to fail to understand important issues such as climate change. Outdoor school helps people understand the process of science.

Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids, and move the legislation for HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee with funding so that they can be voted on, and passed into law.

Sincerely,

Alexie McNerthney  
4140 NE Davis St  
Portland, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

As someone who attended outdoor school in 6th grade, I feel it should be available to all kids. Kids learn how to explore nature and get excited about being outside. They learn valuable skills that can carry them on to adulthood.

Thank you for supporting this bill and I hope that I can see it in the near future!

Warm regards,

Amanda Willett  
5502 SE Cooper St  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor schools provide kids with an incredible resource--the chance to explore the natural world. There is so much to be learned from direct experience of the out of doors, that helps not only engage kids in school work, but gives them inner resources. Getting to get out of the city when I was a kid was so important--I had a tough childhood and camp provided a much needed break. And since my parents were urbanites, it was the only way I could ever get access. And those kids whose parents don't have access or time or money to spend in the wilderness need this even more--they're the ones we'll be counting on to preserve our natural world.

Thank you for supporting Outdoor School for all Oregon kids. I hope you will move to pass the bills we need to make this a possibility!

Warm regards,

Annie Rose Shapero  
1732 Ne Sumner St  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I have had the privilege of attending Outdoor School with students for 25 years. During this time, I have watched students grow, not only from the curriculum, but from the diversity in their cabin groupings. Outdoor School is a way for children to experience learning in an open, environmental setting. This experiential learning and inquiry is the way some children learn best. It also can only really occur in a week long period, where children have time to get into the routine, learn about others, and embrace learning about water, soils, plants, and animals.

Many children have not had the opportunity to be outdoors in a sleep away camp. For them it can be their first exposure to the woodsy outdoors. They blossom with this opportunity.

One of my favorite times is when we found a beached salmon and were able to dissect it. We found eggs inside and the children were in awe. The study of water may be my favorite.

Please save this program and extend it to all students. Everyone should have a chance to learn about the environment outdoors. Sustainability is the key to our future.

Thank you,

Becky Tooley  
Teacher, Oregon Episcopal School  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I grew up in Boy Scouts with frequent outings, from which I learned about nature and myself. Our older son was a typical California suburban kid until he experienced Outward Bound and discovered a whole new world — out there and within himself.

Please support Outdoor School so ALL OREGON KIDS have similar learning opportunities.

Support HB2648 and SB439.

Thanks,

Bill Langenes  
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Lawmakers

When I was in sixth grade I never got the opportunity to go to outdoor school and I know I missed out. People are always talking about how much fun they had. As I high schooler I have gone and been a counselor at outdoor school and it has given me some of my best memory. The kids live it and that should not be taken away from them.

Please support outdoor school for all Oregon kids.

Sincerely,

Brooke Grover  
2700 W Powell Blvd Apt K380  
Gresham, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I grew up in Texas and wasn't afforded the opportunity to attend Outdoor School. We rarely got outside, and when we did, the instruction was rarely impactful. I didn't know environmental education was even a career until two years AFTER I graduated from undergraduate school. Once I started working at an Outdoor Science School in California, my career path was set. I am now a graduate student at SOU obtaining my double Master's in Environmental Education and Teaching, and hope to inspire other students to follow their environmental passions as well. Without my experience in outdoor school, I would have probably gone into research, and would not have been nearly as happy as I am now. Outdoor School MATTERS. To our students. To our teachers. To our community. To me.

Thank you for taking the time to read our letters! Please support Oregon School for ALL and move the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) forward out of committee with FUNDING!! You would be helping our future citizens, increasing environmental literacy, and positively affecting communities throughout Oregon.

Sincerely,

Caroline Burdick  
220 W Rapp Rd Unit 70  
Talent, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School is hugely important to learning. The experiences students have at Outdoor School cannot be replicated in a classroom. Please bring Outdoor School back to all schools in Oregon!

Thank you for your time.

Carolyn Williams  
3322 NE 127th Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I was a Student Leader at Camp Howard from 2005-2009 during high school. I'm not sure what led me to be a Student Leader in the first place, but once I stepped foot onto the camp, I fell in love.

Through my 5 weeks of experience, I was able to meet peers I would have never otherwise interacted with and formed lifelong bonds. I was able to become the mentor and leader I had always wanted to be. I directly changed the lives of students and saw the difference a week of Outdoor School could make in the class's most trouble-making kids. They would have never have had the opportunity to explore, learn and feel nature. The students who struggled in the classroom, thrived in this environment and difference of hands on, experiential learning.

Seeing the impact Outdoor School had on my life, the students I taught, and my friends, I knew that I would pursue a career in public service focusing on youth development. The values I learned from Camp Howard Outdoor School of cultural diversity, leader first and friend second, love and logic, and to always be learning translates directly into my work with youth organizations today.

While I am grateful for the opportunity Outdoor School has afforded me, my peers, and many students thus far, there are still too many students in Oregon that need the opportunity of Outdoor School. I implore you to move the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee with funding, into law, and into the lives of our students.

Thank you,

Catherine Wehage



Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School is one of the best educational opportunities for young students. Not only does it instill in them an understanding of nature's processes and beauty, but it provides an experience unlike any other in the educational system.

Please support the Outdoor School legislation to make it part of every child's experience.

Warm regards,

Charlie Hyman  
12365 SW Malloy Way  
Sherwood, OR

Dear Lawmakers:

I am writing to urge you to pass HB2648 and SB 439. Outdoor School is a proven way to get kids to engage in learning about the environment. With several million more people expected to move to Oregon in coming years, and water shortages, timber resources, etc... we really need a populace that is educated on how to manage the stewardship of resources.

Outdoor School has a 60 year tradition in the state and every Oregon school child should benefit from the program, not just the kids in schools that can afford it. Outdoor School is VERY popular: focus groups around the state poll around 65-70% in approval of funding ODS for all Oregon kids. Higher in rural areas than urban, actually!

Please support these bills.

Thank you,

Christine Jennings  
11553 NW Damascus St.  
Portland, OR 97229

Dear lawmakers,

I attended Outdoor School at Trestle Glen in 1989. It was a defining moment in my life as it was when I decided that I wanted to be a science teacher and teach 6th graders about the environment, just like at Outdoor School. When I graduated from Oregon State University with degrees in Zoology and Fisheries, I went back to Outdoor School as an educator. I was able to plan lessons, lead high school students, and teach students about the things I loved to learn about. It was an exceptional experience that solidified my decision to get my Masters in Teaching and become that teacher that I dreamt about being as a 6th grade.

I am now a math teacher in Umatilla and our 6th graders have never gotten the amazing opportunity that I had to go to Outdoor School. Again, this experience changed the trajectory of my life and as an educator, I know how much it could positively impact my students.

I urge you to vote to make it possible for all Oregon students to experience Outdoor School; an experience that would have a positive effect on students lives and the communities of Oregon.

Thank you,

Cindy Townsend  
Clara Brownell Middle School  
Umatilla, Oregon

1080 W. Ridgeway Ave.  
Hermiston, OR

Dear Legislators,

I have been involved in outdoor education my entire life. I have seen students respond in educational, social and emotional ways that have helped them succeed in life. Past students continue to visit me and tell me how important Outdoor School was to them. Outdoor experiences in high school convinced me to enter the natural resource field and eventually to become a science teacher.

Please continue to support Outdoor Schools and especially legislation that makes it available to all students such as HB 2648 and SB 439. Please help move it out of committee and onto the floor so it can be voted on and passed into law.

Sincerely,

Clair Thomas  
5840 Brickyard Road  
Tillamook, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

As an employee of Outdoor School I have the opportunity to serve all students, no matter what their background is. Each week I see students eat three hot meals, something they might not get at home. I watch students learn in a way they do not get to in the classroom, getting their hands dirty, and drawing conclusions on their own. I see students work together in teams, and work to create a community that values all people and is intentional in all that it is.

Every week at Outdoor School I work with high school students who give of themselves and wholeheartedly serve sixth graders. I see high school students teach others, and learn how to be comfortable in their own skin.

This program opens doors for personal growth, friendship, love, and a passion for science. As a high school student leader I learned how to be confident and humble, how to create a welcoming learning environment, and how to take feedback for personal development. As a staff member, I see sixth graders learn new things, and in a way that is not possible in the classroom. I hear students say over and over again, "science is cool", and that learning at Outdoor School is different because they get to "get their hands dirty", and "see how nature works".

I'm urging you to put in the time and energy needed to push HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee so that it can be voted on. Funding Outdoor School for all Oregon sixth graders will push Oregon into the forefront for education. We live in an incredible natural place, and teaching those who live here about the place they live is vital to creating citizens that care for and advocate for their home. Thank you for all that you do for people, and for serving us in this way. Most of all, thank you for believing in a program that teaches kids about their world, and about themselves.

Warm regards,

Claire Bruncke  
3316 E. Burnside St.  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing you today to consider giving the youth in our school district and educational experience that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. I remember going to camp Yamhill, The smells the sights the sounds. Everything that we were taught is still with me and I so want our youth to experience this. We learned so much in that one week that we could not have understood in such a way if taught in the classroom. The dilation of pupils and understanding how light enters the eyes, was my most memorable lesson.

The bonding that happened with other students I had never thought to hang out with prior to outdoor school was priceless. We as 6th grade students gained a better understanding of each other and nature. I was in the last 6th grade class to attend Tom McCall Middle school. The next year it was turned into an Upper Elementary School. The week of outdoor school holds a Dear place in my heart. When I became a Mother and my children started school I was so thrilled for them knowing they were on a journey to learn and experience great things. I feel that not offering outdoor school is robbing our children of a Jam packed week that will give them a greater appreciation of our beautiful Forests. The day I came home from my outdoor school experience, I no longer littered. I cared about our Forest, Plants, rivers and furry friends so much more than ever before. Please I beg of you give this gift to the children of our school district. They deserve the best!

Please show your support for our children's education. Please consider moving the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee so that it can be voted on and passed into law.

Thank you for your support!

Crystal Eleckel  
2432 Main st  
Forest Grove

Dear Lawmakers,

First off they did not have outdoor school when I was young, but I can see the immeasurable importance of it for our youth of today.

Children are so "tech connected", that they miss so much even in their own backyards. They need to get next to nature, learn about the importance of how each thing is connected to another in the life cycle. Learn how to respect and protect our great natural resources, and most importantly learn how to do their small part to restore damage habitats, and enhance what we have.

Outdoor school should be for all, not just the few that can either get a scholarship or have the funds to pay for the opportunity. Please help every child get the chance to be "outdoors".

State Senator Whitsett and State Representative Whitsett, please support Outdoor School for Oregon Kids. I would also like to thank you for all your great work for our community and for Oregon.

Thank you,

Cynthia Deas  
PO Box 172,  
Bonanza, Oregon 97623

Dear Lawmakers,

Research clearly shows that a very important factor in the difference between kids as they progress through school is the time between enrichment periods. Poor kids are longer than well off kids are less time between enrichment. This is Outdoor School. Vote yes. Help level a tilted field, please.

Our lack of support for our schools is showing. Help end this starvation diet we have placed our schools on. It is short sighted and wrong. Support Outdoor school.

Warm regards,

Daniel Betty  
3910 Donald Street  
Eugene, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

Beyond reading & writing, outdoor school was the most educational part of grade school I remember. Far more important than most of the garbage I was forced to learn. It teaches kids how to be social and interact well together, as well as giving them an opportunity to learn different things, and in a different way. Not all kids' are good "book learners." Outdoor school gives kids' a hands on approach to learning.

Please vote for outdoor education funding.

Sincerely,

David Corey  
23162 S Bluhm Rd  
Beavercreek, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

I write asking you to support HB 2648 and SB 439, a call for Outdoor Education in Oregon. Of course the educational content is critical, but amazing things happen in the woods that have nothing to do with the woods themselves. From my perspective as a former teacher (and lifelong Oregonian) the long term value is in bringing together students from different schools, different communities, different backgrounds and giving them a common classroom, a shared topic, and days to experience it.

These benefits may be hard to measure in our data driven world, but talk to any one of tens of thousands of adult Oregonians who experienced Outdoor Education and you'll hear of its personal value to them, of the life choices many of them made because of having a sense of place, and in turn the benefits which have accrued to communities around Oregon because of those people. Outdoor Education is an affordable, vital piece of the fabric for Oregon - educationally, economically, culturally. It helps make good people and a better state.

Thank you,

David Levine  
4045 N. Commercial Ave.  
Portland, OR 97227

Dear Lawmakers,

As a young person, Oregon Outdoor School provided me with an incredible opportunity to learn, explore, and connect with my peers. In addition to hands-on learning about science and our environment, I also got to learn about team building and had the opportunity to create more resilient social networks of support that I had not established in class or at home.

While attending Corvallis High School, I was able to return to ODS as a student leader, being of service to younger generations while developing my leadership skills, learning about social responsibility, what it means to be of service, teamwork, and balancing playfulness with boundary setting and strong guidance.

Please support Oregon Outdoor School for all Oregon kids, and move the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee so that they can be voted on and passed into law.

Thank you,

Diné Redhawk  
8107 N Van Houten Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

I lived in Amity out door school. It was amazing. We went to Cascade Locks, High Dessert Museum. Gone a week. In the 5 grade. I moved around alot. But that always was a fond memory. I learned a lot about the Salmon. Oregon being so big and beautiful. I met my pen pal from Bend. It was incredible. SAD my 7 year old doesn't even have school functions.

Please support for Oregon kids.

Thanks,

Donnell Brake  
3316 22nd pl  
Forest Grove, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

My oldest brother was able to attend outdoor school, and had a wonderful time. I was so excited for my turn, but was disappointed to find out I wouldn't be going my sixth grade year. When I had the opportunity to go as a high school counselor, I was so excited! I returned many times throughout my high school career, and loved every second of it. I felt free to be my best self there. I was inspired because I was doing something truly good. I was helping give these sixth grade students an experience they would never forget. I, myself, will never forget my time at outdoor school! The amazing experience I had while at ODS has driven my career path. I will begin student teaching next year through Southern Oregon University, and plan on making a career out of outdoor education. I believe that outdoor school can change lives, because it changed mine.

Thank you for taking the time to read through my letter. I hope that it has helped illuminate how important outdoor school is. PLEASE, support Outdoor School for All Oregon Kids, and move HB 2648 and SB 439 forward.

Emily "Roo" Rappleyea  
9555 SW Taylor St.  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I believe that outdoor school is important for everyone to go through. During your time at outdoor school you are truly able to be your self and fit in with out having to impress or worries about other kids making fun of you. Its a time where you can come out of your box with out any judgment. You also learn so much more about things, that actually stick with you and stay with you. You get to have your own counselor who becomes a role model for your life. Its an amazing experience for both the staff and students. With out this I feel the children are truly lacking something. I know you may not understand unless you have gone yourself. I think you should try it out. Even for a couple days go out and enjoy the beauty of Oregon and learn more about things in a fun way.

I wanna thank you for allowing us to experience this. I also hope that you stand behind outdoor school at well. I hope that everyone is able to experience the magic or Outdoor school.

Warm regards,

Emma McConville  
4453 sw Appletree Pl  
Beaverton, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I wish I could have attended Outdoor Education, but we didn't have that where I grew up. But here in Oregon, it's been around for 60 years! I've been teaching in Portland Public Schools for 12 years, and have heard time and time again how much kids LOVE "Outdoor School". It's very popular, and that's a good thing, as more and more people, like myself, are moving to Oregon every year, so we need to ensure that the communities of tomorrow are educated in how to manage the stewardship of resources. Currently Outdoor School is available to some, but we would like it to be available to all kids, not just the ones who attend schools who can afford it. That's why we are creating these bills. Outdoor School, back by popular demand!

Thank You,

Eric Miller  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I never had the chance to go to outdoor school. I dreamed of it - spending time outside in the natural world away from the built environment is critical for preservation. Helping people connect should be an integral part of learning. Creating a generation of critical thinkers who can think upstream and downstream will help the natural world, built environment, and our economy. Learning via outdoor school is the best way to do this and should be available to all kids, not just the ones that already have advantages.

Thanks for your time and consideration in helping close yet another gap in education in our beautiful state.

Sincerely,

Erin Hinton

6504 N Commercial Ave #2  
Portland, or 97217



Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school is an amazing program that needs to continue to be funded, not only is it a wonderful experience for sixth graders and their teachers, but also for the high school student leaders. I have had the opportunity to be a student leader at O.D.S. twice now. I believe that the experience I have had at O.D.S. has made me a better person. The community that is built in such a short amount of time is something that everyone should experience. The environment is like no other, it is positive and accepting and is perfect to learn in. There is no such thing as a stupid question at outdoor school, as a student leader you learn so much not only from the staff, but also the six graders and other student leaders.

I personally believe that above all the community that is created out Outdoor School is what makes it so special. One of the girls in my cabin when asked what her favorite thing about outdoor school was said, " When I came here I thought it would be me and my best friend and six other strangers in a cabin, but now at the end of the week it is me, my best friend, and six other amazing friends." This was after spending only two and a half days together. Imagine how she would feel after five or six days at camp. With all of the staff and students leaders staying in a positive attitude, the support of everyone, and the bonding that takes place, no other place can do that, but O.D.S.

As a student leader you are responsible for the safety and education of students in their time at outdoor school. One of my favorite things about outdoor school is getting to see the six graders learn. Field study is a time that the students are able to learn about plants, animals, water, and soil in nature. They are learning about the environment they are in. Watching them interact with animals, test the water, and dig in the dirt is a different way for them to learn. Many strive in that environment and learn so much from it. You can tell a student in a classroom about caddisflies, but until they are able to see or hold a caddisfly they are most likely not going to remember that they take things such as rocks and sticks to make a shell around them. When one of the six-graders in my field study group get that ah-ha moment I feel like I have succeeded at my job.

Another thing that is so special about outdoor school is that everyone is not afraid to have a little fun! Whether it's "field day", campfire, a meal, or we are just walking from place to place everyone is having fun. On "field day" cabin groups work together while playing team building games. This is a time when it is hard to find a kid not smiling. Campfire is a time that the kids love by the end of the week, on the first day they are often nervous to sing and do skits by in front of their peers, but by final campfire the kids are screaming the lyrics to songs and cheering as loud as they can for the skits. Often kids tell me that campfire is their favorite part of O.D.S. By the end of their time at O.D.S. it is rare to see a group of kids not singing or playing a game while walking from place to place. The positivity makes everyone smile and is a nice change from the high pressure outside world.

That is what makes outdoor school so special! The combination of all of the above things is what makes the experience different than any other experience. Every 6th grader in the state of Oregon should have this opportunity. The welcoming and positive environment is a wonderful way for the six graders to not only grow closer to their classmates, but also to grow individually. So please remember the 6th graders, the high schoolers, and the teachers. Please think of the learning that is able to take place and give all sixth graders the opportunity to experience it.

So please take all of this into consideration and move the Outdoor School legislation out of committee with funding!

Sincerely,

Grace Bruncke  
P.O. Box 431  
Long Beach, Washington

Dear Lawmakers,

I just wanted to add my voice to those who believe Outdoor School as an invaluable rite of passage for kids. I grew up in Oregon & Outdoor School in 5th & 6th grade are so indelibly etched in my mind, I will never forget it!

I remember the excitement of going off to spend a few days without my parents. For the first time ever!

I remember waking up bright & early with all my friends in the cozy cabin in the woods & saying the pledge of allegiance as some of our classmates belted out "auld lang syne" on their trombone & trumpet. Greeting the day with bright eyes & bushy tails.

I remember my best friends' dad we dubbed from that day forward as "Mr. Beaver Marsh" for his efforts helping & assisting us with our treasure hunt through the marshes of the surrounding campgrounds. I'm not sure he remembers that part quite so fondly, but I sure do!

I remember exploring the woods & nearby marshes looking for data & evidence of various species for our science projects, growing within me an appreciation for the outdoors, our environment the world around me.

I remember the deepening of friendships forged, as only one can when you camp together in the woods for a few nights, singing songs, sharing meals & bonding through the sharing of new experiences - some life changing.

Most of all - I remember the feeling of fresh adventure & learning through hands on experiences which has carried me so far in my life on this planet.

Please do what you can to save Outdoor School for our Kids!

Thank you so very much for your efforts on their & our behalf. The future is in their precious little hands.

Yours,

Heather McGarry  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I attended elementary school on Oregon and I attended Outdoor School. My exposure to nature during Outdoor School inspired me to study biology and the natural world. It is extremely important for children to expand their understanding of the world that they live in beyond the classroom and playground, (which at a lot of schools is paved). Our world is so large and we must foster an understanding of connection with nature because we are a part of it! Our need for education at Outdoor School has not only continued, it has increased.

I am thankful that I had the opportunity to attend Outdoor School in the 70's and I hope for the opportunity to be extended to all future Oregon kids. Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids by moving Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee so they can be voted on and passed into law.

-Heidi Post  
7805 SE 70th Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Hope, but I am better known at Outdoor School as Epsilon. I am a student leader, and I work directly with the sixth graders who attend. I have seen firsthand how much of a difference Outdoor School can make in their lives. I have worked with kids who were truly inspired by the hands-on form of learning. Outdoor School is a valuable opportunity that is not available to every sixth grader. It introduces a new way of looking at the world and an opportunity for kids to see, feel, and generally interact with what they're learning about. And it gives them memories that last a lifetime.

Thank you for your time and I hope that this short message has in some way helped you to decide to support Outdoor School for All.

Warm regards,

Hope Magee  
2241 Barrington Ct SE  
Salem, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Gubser in keiser or, is. Where I went to outdoor school overnight trip, however the following year my family moved to stayton oregon. I was told at the end of camp that if we became good highschool students we could come back as highschool staff:-) I couldn't wait.... till my heart was broke when moved, see at age 12 I had no idea the new school district I was moving too had the same program.. until I turned 17 and my highschool was holding interviews for ods highschool staff spots. I got chosen along with about 20 others. I loved it... soooo much work, little to no sleep, 100% volunteered time. To be a part of adult staff, and further working with ods program, you get asked to come back based on your performance as a student staff. I continued going back for about a decade as adult staff. Our director, and adult staff are the living proof of what outdoorschool is... all of us are different, have our circles of friends outside of camp, however because of our shared love of this program we have broken down "clicks, & groups" and created lasting friendships. Year after year we would see these kids come to camp all negative, closed off, some scared, some scarred... some with no worries to be seen, all of them needed to experiance ods.. together. We break down borders, we teach respect, and kindness through actions not judgment and punishment. The only reason I'm not still involved as an actual adult staff member, is due to medical issues.

I'm not the best with words, and explaining why things are so very important... the entire time I was writing I was balling my eyes out bc of all of the beautiful memories of all the children I know this program made a difference to. In fact, I attended multiple ods programs, and I can honestly say the program director and staff for stayton oregon is an amazing model to replicate around the rest of oregon. Together we were given barebones of a program and continued using personal time and resources to build it to where it is today. Rustin Baumgartner has been the director of stayton ods for quite a whil, and is most definitely still the driving force that built our program to what it is today. Please consider really taking a look. Don't take my word for it... get to camp! Go experience it for yourself! I would also suggest meeting with children who have recently gone to camp, ask them about it.

Thanks,

Jamie  
Portland

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor was an integral part of growing up in Oregon for thousands and thousands of Oregonians. It helped young minds learn how natural science works and understand the importance of preserving the environment. Please help make ODS available for all Oregon students again.

Please move the ODS legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee so it can be voted on and passed into law.

Thank you,

James Sitzer  
2944 SE Tibbetts St.  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I ask you to please vote for Outdoor School for all 5th/6th graders. I believe that Outdoor school creates a greater, more focused, more connected classroom.

Thanks so much, please move Outdoor School Legislation out of committee so they can be voted on and passed into law!!

Thanks again,

Jans Ingber  
5915 N Kerby ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor education is valuable for everyone to make connections between what they learn and the natural world! I wish I had it as a kid, and think it should be for all kids.

Thanks,

Jeff Sprague  
1645 N Humboldt St  
Portland, Oregon



Dear Lawmakers,

I think all students should have the experience of outdoor school. Students who go have the opportunity to start figuring out who they are in the world and how they can help the animals and plants to survive. These are things that you cannot learn by reading any textbook. Students need to experience the world through their own eyes.

I would like to ask that you support outdoor school for all Oregon students by moving the Outdoor School Legislation out of committee with funding.

Thank you!

Jenny Newman  
1284 SW maplecrest dr  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

I am an Oregon native living on the east coast. Going to Outdoor School as a 6th grader sent me on a trajectory of environmentalism that stays with me today. Not only did I gain appreciation for the out of doors, I also developed leadership and group skills. I went on to be a student leader in high school and worked on staff as a program leader for 4 sessions. I have seen the impact Outdoor School has on 6th graders, high schoolers, and all adults. Confidence is gained, leadership and communication refined and everyone leaves a fuller expression of themselves.

Outdoor School is a Oregon icon, and I truly don't believe Oregon would be as progressive as it is without so many generations having had this experience.

Thank you,

Jessa Harger

66 Frost place  
Brattleboro, VT

Dear Lawmakers,

Through many years, I witnessed many students excel at outdoor activities where academics was hard. I saw friendships forged and "real" life experienced. I saw students be away from home for the first time and become independent. I think the nature experience is hard to duplicate without an organized outdoor school. I do hope it continues as permanent curriculum.

Thank you for supporting outdoor school for Oregon kids.

Sincerely,

Joee Dauer  
75356 Fern Hill Rd  
Rainier, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I want to share a story with you--a story about Outdoor School has shaped my life and changed me for the better.

I attended the Outdoor School program for the first time in 6th grade while I was at Sellwood Middle School. At first, I was terribly afraid to go. I was a shy kid and had a hard time being away from my parents. I was also afraid of the "outdoor" part of the program especially; I was sure that I would have to spend the week wet, cold and dirty. Worst of all, my birthday fell in the middle of that week. I begged my mom to let me stay home, but she wouldn't hear of it. "Try it out," she said. "I think you'll really like it."

My mom was right. From the moment I arrived at Camp Howard, I was welcomed into a community of positive and supportive leaders who made sure I was comfortable. I was sometimes wet and cold, but those sensations were overshadowed by the wonder of discovering the natural world. I fell in love with the forest and the natural beauty of Oregon. On my birthday, the whole site sang to me and my counselors gave me a special earth bead to wear on the string of my Wood Cookie nametag (still one of my favorite gifts I have ever received). When I got home, I begged my mom to let me go back to Camp Howard. As a sixth grader, Outdoor School introduced me to the natural world and showed me that I was a part of it.

I went back to ODS as a high school student to be a student leader, teaching on the Plants Field Study. If anything, I loved Outdoor School even more as a high school student than I did as a sixth grader. I began to think of myself in new ways--as a teacher, as a leader and as a role model. Serving as a student leader at Outdoor School gave me confidence to fulfill these roles in my regular life as well, and the passion for teaching that I discovered at ODS has led me to pursue a career as an educator.

I cannot stress enough how influential outdoor school has been in shaping my conception of myself and the world around me. I am tremendously grateful to have had the opportunity to experience the Outdoor School program, and I hope you will join me in supporting Outdoor School for all Oregon kids. Please help move the HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee with funding so that they can be voted on and passed into law. Thank you for all you are doing to support this great program for the next generation of Oregon students.

Warm regards,

Joellen Sweeney  
3620 SE Flavel  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I directed Resident Outdoor Schools in Eugene and Medford School Districts between 1968 and 1986 and was a consultant for schools in Central Point And Medford after I retired.

Resident Outdoor Schools are needed for all elementary school districts in providing opportunities for students who do poorly in classrooms with 4 walls made of bricks. Students were motivated in using Math skills to measure trees in height, circumference, radius, including age of the tree with a tree borer as a few examples. I saw boys writing Journals of their observations in insects found in both aquatic and forested areas for the first time, etc.

Outdoor schools provide for positive attitudes in social activities including outdoor games and music during the breaks during the day's programs.

College and high school seniors who are skilled in areas like biology, recreation, math, and instrumental music, etc are counsellors and they assist in the small groups and other activities. They are the positive "role models" with these students during the 24 hours they are with them.

In Eugene, District 4J, successful Outdoor Schools experiences led to a 5-6th Grade Outdoor Alternative School for several years, but school budgets are the first to cut them out, but they are successful in many districts in Oregon. Please support Outdoor School legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee with funding and pass into law. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John F. Heilbronner  
34 years in Elementary Education  
Retired  
770 Harlaow Road,  
Springfield, Oregon, 97477

Dear Lawmakers,

I didn't get a chance to go to outdoor school as a kid, but has an amazing experience as a college student serving as a counselor supporting children with special needs. You could really feel how the experience awakened all their senses, and gave them a new perspective and sense of purpose.

Please support Outdoor School for all kids! This is great public policy that will make a difference across all our communities.

Warm regards,

Joseph Santos-Lyons  
2788 SE 82nd Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

As a 6th grade teacher, I have gone to Outdoor School over a dozen times. Each time it has been a very valuable learning experience for every student, but it is often most valuable for those students who struggle in the regular classroom setting. Those students often have an experience where learning is fun instead of frustrating, where they feel like a true learner. Outdoor School was also very important to my own daughter, who is now 30 years old. Not only did she attend Outdoor School as a 6th grader, she also returned multiple times as a high school and college student to serve as a counselor. She is an Oregonian who enjoys our outdoor spaces and is a good steward of the environment, and I attribute a great deal of her love of nature to the Outdoor School experience.

Sadly, many students have difficulty attending due to the cost of the program. As more and more of the burden for paying for this program has come to rest on families, fewer students from low income families are able to easily attend.

Please support HB 2648 and SB 439 and make Outdoor School for all a reality in Oregon.

Warm regards,

Kathleen Jeskey  
1055 NW 13th Avenue  
Canby, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I was a counselor at our local Outdoor School in Gold Beach when I was a senior in high school. The kids were enthusiastic and eager to learn new things about the outdoors. Outdoor School gives children a glimpse into what goes on in our forests.

Please support our kids by moving HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee with generous funding.

Thank you,

Kathy Walker  
7680 Upper Applegate Road  
Jacksonville, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing to you to encourage you to support HB 2648 and SB 439. I am a classroom teacher at Ponderosa Elementary School, and have sixteen years of teaching experience. I have experienced Outdoor School as a sixth grade student, a high school camp counselor, and a college student instructor. Currently I strive to integrate hands-on outdoor learning experiences in my third grade classroom because I KNOW the positive impacts it has on students.

As a middle school student, I already had a strong connection to the natural world. Having the experience as a shy sixth grader gave me more confidence and helped me interact more my peers. I immediately connected with the activities we did that weren't available in the regular classroom at school. I felt I was "in my element" at Outdoor School, a feeling not common in my regular middle school classrooms. Confidence, community, and connection are vital to successful learning environments.

Now, as a classroom teacher, I see how disconnected our students can be. Parents are busy and stressed. Involved parents are often shuttling kids from one organized sport or activity to another. Other parents may not have the financial means to get their children involved with these activities at all. Many students spend an incredible amount of time on-line or playing video games. Outdoor School is one way as Oregonians that we can communicate the incredible value of exploring and learning outdoors. For many students, this week can be a respite for all the stress that they may feel in their home lives, and give them an experience that opens their eyes to the value of connecting and appreciating our natural environment.

In the future, we will be challenged to meet the ever increasing environmental challenges of our world. There are many who have said it in different ways. But I like Jacques Yves Cousteau's simple words, "People protect what they love." And we love what we know. We know by experiencing directly. We will need the children of today to protect our open spaces and resources. Many students will not get to know their environment unless we support opportunities like Outdoor School. Let's be leaders in our nation, and create a legacy for all of Oregon. Please support HB 2648 and SB 439.

Thank you for your time! Let's get these bills out of the Ways and Means committee with financial support, so that they can be voted on and passed into law. Perhaps my third grade students will be able to benefit from your actions today!

Sincerely,

Kim Young  
1716 NE Taurus Ct.  
Bend, OR

Dear Lawmakers;

As a native Oregonian I'd always taken Outdoor School for granted. It's simply part of living here. I vividly remember my 6th grade camp experience. Being completely out of my element but feeling safe with my class and cabin mates. Making new friends from another school, learning about the web of life realizing for the first time how we are a part of a large and complex ecosystem. That our daily activity and choices have impact on the world around us. That week of outdoor school was my only experience at any sort of camp. Things like the Campfire program or Girlscouts were for girls who had two parents and money to spare, for me Outdoor School was all I ever got. Yet, that one week at Outdoor School changed me. I KNEW that I'd be back.

As a high school student the opportunity to be a Outdoor School counselor was major motivation for maintaining my GPA. I was never a good student, yet in the outdoor school environment I thrived. Touching young minds. Seeing the kids eyes widen with excitement as they found their own 'secret spot' where they could sit alone for 30 min and listen to bird song. Learning the camp traditions and learning how to have a voice that others could respect.

As a college student at PCC I took the opportunity to be an Outdoor School Staff Member. Living at camp and teaching the high schoolers what they would need to know to be counselors for a week. It was the first time in my life where I had to truly be responsible. Helping to set the tone of the camp, running my own after lunch programs, and helping with the major projects that would take months to complete. Mostly I remember the kids, hundreds and hundreds of 6th graders from all over Oregon. Each camper left with their own outdoor school story to share. Each one left with a greater understanding of the world we live in. They left feeling empowered to make a difference in our world.

Today I'm a small business owner and the mother of a 4th grader. When she was enrolled into the Beaverton School District (in the same elementary school I attended) I simply assumed that Outdoor School would be part of her experience. When I learned that it was in question I was simply shocked. The lessons about that I learned 1987 have not changed, if anything it's more important than ever that we empower our youth to ask questions to learn about our environment. Outdoor School is a vital part of Oregon's educational heritage, it must be protected as such.

Best Regards,

Kirstin Davis  
45 SW 150th Avenue  
Beaverton, OR 97006  
kirday@gmail.com

Dear Lawmakers

As a native Oregonian I'd always taken Outdoor School for granted. It's simply part of living here. I vividly remember my 6th grade camp experience. Being completely out of my element but feeling safe with my class and cabin mates. Making new friends from another school, learning and about the web of life realizing for the first time how we are a part of a large and complex ecosystem. That our daily activity and choices have impact on the world around us. That week of outdoor school was my only experience at any sort of camp. Things like the Campfire program or Girlscouts were for girls who had two parents and money to spare, for me Outdoor School was all I ever got. Yet, that one week at Outdoor School changed me. I KNEW that I'd be back.

As a high school student the opportunity to be a Outdoor School counselor was major motivation for maintaining my GPA. I was never a good student, yet in the outdoor school environment I thrived. Touching young minds. Seeing the kids eyes widen with excitement as they found their own 'secret spot' where they could sit alone for 30 min and listen to bird song. Learning the camp traditions and learning how to have a voice that others could respect.

As a college student at PCC I took the opportunity to be an Outdoor School Staff Member. Living at camp and teaching the high schoolers what they would need to know to be counselors for a week. It was the first time in my life where I had to truly be responsible. Helping to set the tone of the camp, running my own after lunch programs, and helping with the major projects that would take months to complete. Mostly I remember the kids, hundreds and hundreds of 6th graders from all over Oregon. Each camper left with their own outdoor school story to share. Each one left with a greater understanding of the world we live in. The left feeling empowered to make a difference in our world.

Today I'm a small business owner and the mother of a 4th grader. When she was enrolled into the Beaverton School District (in the same elementary school I attended) I simply assumed that Outdoor School would be part of her experience. When I learned that it was in question I was simply shocked. The lessons about that I learned 1987 have not changed, if anything it's more important than ever that we empower our youth to ask questions to learn about our environment. Outdoor School is a vital part of Oregon's educational heritage, it must be protected as such.

It is time to move HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee and into a vote.

Best regards.

Kirstin Davis  
45 SW 150th Ave  
Beaverton, OR

Dear lawmakers,

Outdoor school is not just a place to learn but a home. Many children attend each year expecting only to learn but they find friendship and find themselves. Many go and it's their first time away from home. When I went as a 6th grader it was my first time away from home, but within a day it became a second home. Between amazing cabin leaders and amazing teachers I learned about animals, soil, water, plants and the weather. I learned songs that we sang on the way home. When my class left I cried because I wished school was the way outdoor school was. Outside, wet, and interactive every step of the way.

Years later when I returned as a student leader I learned just how much everyone prepped for those kids. When they step off the bus and look around a student leader is waiting. I learned about leadership, I learned about teaching, I learned how to handle myself in a stressful situation. Now a few years after high school I still use the things it taught both as a 6th grader and as a student leader. I sing the songs to my newborn daughter to calm her down and I know ways to help my environment and lessen my footprint based on what I learned in outdoor school. It's a program all children should experience, and have the chance to go back to. When I went back I was struggling with depression and anxiety, my peers showed me love, my adult leaders showed me compassion and understanding while pushing me to be my best and because of outdoor school I learned even more about myself. In a way outdoor school saved me. I've made friends there that I have even now, we even still call each other by our nicknames. It truly is a program all children should have access too because it truly is an amazing way to learn.

Thank you, I hope you support outdoor school, I hope you help move outdoor legislation out of committee.

Krystal Shillingford  
621 ne 162nd ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School is a vital part of the education of our children and sadly one of the few places where kids learn directly about the environment in a hands on fashion. In addition, the opportunities for peer leadership, connection with kids from different communities, and working together to create an intentional community based on respect for others and for the natural world is life changing. Multiple generations of my family have benefitted from ODS as students, student leaders and staff. I believe the learning, leadership and love everyone involved in ODS shares pays dividends for a lifetime.

Please move this legislation out of committee with full funding so every Oregon child has this valuable experience.

Sincerely,

Laura Dellinger  
3316 E. Burnside Street  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I think Outdoor School is an important opportunity and experience for all children in Oregon Schools. In a state with such a diverse climate and so many natural features that are found few other places, the ability to get to explore parts of it in a safe and structured setting is a valuable experience that helps create a rounded education and more knowledgeable citizens in the future. I attended Corridor Elementary in Eugene, Oregon for all of grade school and was able to attend my school's Outdoor School program both years (4th and 5th grade). Learning about fish and frogs in a book is one thing, but actually seeing them swim around or finding their slimy eggs is something you can't read. The experiences I had at Outdoor School will stay with me and have helped shape me into the person I am today. I went back in High School and volunteered as a counselor. Having the opportunity to play a role in these kids' experiences and reconnect with old friends from grade school was almost as valuable as attending in the first place.

Outdoor School offers many valuable experiences for children and the communities in which they attend school; I urge you to support its role in a complete education.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the opinions of those you represent. Thank you for your service.

Laurel Goerger  
1345 Ferry St.  
Eugene, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

My son and daughter each attended a full week of Outdoor School and it was one of the most important parts of their early education. My daughter is now a junior in college, majoring in geology and headed to a career of scientific research on climate and landscape. My son is still in high school, deciding on his career path, but involvement in the outdoors seems a given. But my interest in supporting Outdoor School does not involve my children. I'm passionate about Outdoor School for All for three reasons: it's practical, it's healthy, and, most importantly, it's equitable.

For a time, I worked on behalf of ranchers, fishermen, foresters, who were stewarding the natural resources to sustain rural livelihoods and healthy food for all of us. These people depend on urban and rural decision-makers who understand how to steward them, too. It's a practical matter to educate young people now who will steward these resources into the future.

Teaching children about nature engenders a feeling that leads them to explore it further. And being in nature is one of the best things you can do for your health. Research is emerging showing that exposure to nature reduces stress and relieves anxiety. Exposure to nature for children engenders a lifelong appreciation and can spark an interest in later study of natural systems and science.

Unfortunately, outdoor education is becoming something only kids from wealthy school districts can afford. Without universal Outdoor School, we widen the gap ever more between children who are provided opportunities to thrive and those who are not.

When I moved to Oregon with my family in 2001, I was delighted at this rite of passage that was part of every kid's experience in Oregon. With roots in the 1950's it defined something really special about this state. In the past few years I have been dismayed at how diminished Outdoor School has become. Most schools are able to participate without a sizable contribution from parents.

Thank you for all the work you are doing on behalf of all of the people in our districts and in our state. Please help move SB 439 and HB 2648 out of committee with funding and get us heading us back in the right direction for our young people, our environment, and the healthy future of our state.

Sincerely,

Lauren S. Johnson  
4726 NE 14th Place  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School is very important to me. As a teacher of sixth grade, I get to attend ODS every year as a chaperone, and am amazed at how much the kids get out of it each and every year. I didn't grow up in Oregon, and feel like the kids here have such a remarkable program and opportunities that I did not have as a child. I've seen kids grow more in the 5 days at ODS than I see in a year's time in the classroom. Some are pushed out of their comfort zone by making friends, missing home, or even trying new things, while others emerge as leaders they didn't know they were. The science curriculum is so valuable, but it's more than that. It's a unifying experience that all Oregon sixth graders can share, which is something rare. I'm fortunate enough to work at a school that funds the week-long trip for all our students. I believe all kids should have this same opportunity.

I humbly ask that you support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids. I ask that you move the ODS Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee so that they can be voted on and passed into law.

Thank you for your time.

Malia Wilkins  
14620 SW 92nd Ave.  
Tigard, OR



Dear Lawmakers:

I am writing to urge you to help support and move the Outdoor Education bills, HB 2648 and SB 439, through the committees they are in and out onto the legislature floors.

Outdoor School for 5th/or 6th graders is a very very popular program both in cities and rural areas. Outdoor School is a magnificent and important program, one that all Oregon school children should have the opportunity to attend, not just those who can afford it. A week-long experiential, overnight has proven to be extremely popular with the children who have had the opportunity to go. They get to learn about the natural world hand-on. They become educated about our resources of water, timber, animals, plants which will help their understanding what stewardship is needed for these resources. They also learn important social skills and team-building while having the great deal of fun camps should be.

Two of my children and two grandchildren who had the opportunity to attend the week-long Outdoor School programs when they were in 6th grade in the Portland Public Schools came home so happy with their experiences they didn't want it to end. It changed the life of my son who went on to become a high school counselor and then a professional children outdoor educator for years.

Again, I urge you to do all you can to support these bills --HB 2648 and SB 439 -- for the sake of our children.

Thank you.  
Marian Grebanier  
5738 SW Brugger St.  
Portland, OR 97219

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School provides young people with a real-world classroom in which to learn about soil, water, zoology, botany and environmental science. What better place to study these things than in a forest?

It's also clear now that urban youth benefit greatly from the opportunity to connect to the natural world with their peers and teachers.

Please fund Outdoor School and get our kids outside! Please move Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee with funding so they can be voted on and passed into law.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Marianne Itkin  
909 SE 72nd Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Having two sons who experienced Outdoor School in the 1970s, knowing the breath and depth of their love and care for the outdoors, and myself gaining so much enjoyment from being "in tune" with the moon, trees and plants in Portland gardens, and walks on the beach, I know the psychological benefit of the Outdoors.

Kids need intimate experiences with Nature in order to grow up and care for Nature. One reason for obesity: kids not getting outside and playing. Possibly ADHD numbers would diminish with kids having more time Outdoors and in Nature.

Please move Outdoor School legislation out of committee so that it can be voted on.  
Please.

Warm regards,

Marie Langenes  
1620 NE Broadway #436  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I hope you will seriously consider funding outdoor school for all of Oregon's children. We live in a beautiful state and I am deeply saddened when I meet children who have not had the opportunity to get out and explore it. If everyone had grandparents like mine, who would take them camping for a month every summer in the national forest, Outdoor School would be even more magical and more likely to influence kids' understanding of the importance of our environment and natural resources.

Please support HB 2648 and SB 439. It's an investment in the future as well as the present.

Warm regards,

Marilyn Harrison  
14703 NW Killin Road  
Banks, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I am asking you to fully support Outdoor School for All Students.

First is the huge earth science education the kids get. Unlike a regular classroom Outdoor School is hands on. Touch, smell, vision, hearing and sometimes even taste are used to teach our kids about the earth.

Outdoor School is often a child's first time away from family for more than a weekend. They make new bonds and I know from one of my daughters that sometimes those bonds last well beyond school years.

Outdoor School can spark an interest in earth conservation. When our kids get to spend time in nature the hope is that they will develop a relationship with it and work at least minimally to help take care of it. These are just a few of the invaluable lessons learned and experienced at outdoor school that last a lifetime.

My daughter's were students at Mt. Tabor Middle School in Portland, Oregon, and my granddaughter was a student at Roosevelt Elementary School in Klamath Falls, Oregon when they had the pleasure of going to Outdoor School.

Please move the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee with funding so that they can be voted on and passed into law. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary McCain  
PO Box 722  
Lincoln City, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

All children in Oregon deserve the experience, education, and joy of Outdoor School.

As a four-time former Outdoor School counselor, I loved watching young students from all walks of life blossom through the days and nights of hands on education, team building, and class bonding. Through the phenomenal Outdoor School programming and staffing, students who often fall through the cracks and fail to "join in" are quickly swept up in the excitement of learning in a vibrant, experience-rich setting. Bringing the classroom out of doors, 24/7, breathes life into their school experience in a way that no other program can.

Please join me in recognizing the benefit and importance of funding Outdoor School for all Oregon students in the years to come. Their future depends on your support!

Warm regards,

Maryn Goolsby Favors  
2829 SE Belmont St  
Apt 208  
Portland, Oregon

Dear Lawmakers,

I am the Co-Founder and Director of Whole Earth Nature School, a Eugene-based nonprofit focused on nature education. I am also the father of a three month old boy. I know from my experience working with hundreds of kids and their parents that outdoor education can transform kids lives in amazing ways. Last year a parent came to me at a volunteer recruiting event and told me a story about her 9 year old son. Several months after attending one of our outdoor programs she and her son were on a hike together. Along the way she was stung by a wasp and became upset. In the middle of her crisis her son disappeared down the trail. He reappeared a few minutes later with a medicinal plant (*Plantago major*) in his hand and instructed her on how to make a poultice to help the pain and swelling. She was stunned by the fact that her son had not only noticed the plant earlier on in the day but he had remembered it's location and was able to respond with it in a crisis. And the best part, she told me, was that the plant actually worked and reduced the pain. That's why she was coming out to volunteer she wanted to help change other kids lives in the same way that her son's was changed.

I can only provide a small amount of this kind of education to my son. As a parent, I am dependent on others to teach my son the things that I can't. I want my son to have the opportunity to attend outdoor school when he is the right age. And, as it is right now, the odds that he will have that opportunity are dwindling.

Please support HB 2648 and SB 439. Help the bills move out of committee and be fully funded. We need outdoor school for all Oregon kids.

Thank you!

Matthew Bradley  
1605 Hemlock St  
Eugene, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

My sister, two years older than myself missed Halloween being at out door school- she didn't even care! Crazy for a 6th grader. I still rember going as a 6th grader at Mt. Tabor Middle School in Portland; meeting new people, learning about plants and soil, being careful with waste so toxins wouldn't get into the soil. This was my first ever camping experience and it changed things for me. I returned to ODS Sandy River as a high school student four times. I realized how much I loved kids and teaching. I also went in College as a special needs 1 on 1. I've now been a teaching ten years!! On occasion I meet others who had the same experience and we can ALWAYS remember the details, my counselors Yoshi and Stripes, Grizzly and Snake all over the place. I still have letters from these amazing people. I hope Outdoor School stays around for years longer. It really did shape my life and impacted my past.

Thank you lawmakers for my chance years ago to attend ODS. Please fund this amazing program.

Megan Halligan  
5990 NW Primrose St.  
Albany, OR 97321



Dear Lawmakers,

I was one of the lucky ones. Outdoor school as a sixth grader and teaching at outdoor school my junior and senior years. The experience was transformative.

Not only did it cement my love of the outdoors, it gave me leadership experiences outside of the normal variety at high school.

Please support outdoor school for all children. Please move hb2648 and sb439 out of committee so that our children can benefit from this educational experience.

Warm regards,

Melissa Wetherell-Moore  
307 SW 8th circle  
Troutdale, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

As a lifelong Oregonian and one who participated in the Outdoor School program (as both a 6th grader and later as a counselor), I urge you to support bills HB 2648 and SB 439. I believe much of my love and respect for the natural beauty of Oregon can be traced to the experience and essential education that I received in these programs. I believe that all children in Oregon should have this experience, not just those from wealthier schools. I also believe that as more people move to Oregon, the values of love and respect for nature will be even more important if we are to maintain the beauty and resources that we have.

Thank you,

Michael Danner  
6235 NE Sumner St  
Portland , Oregon 97218

Dear Lawmakers,

I did not get to go to outdoor school as I grew up in Ca and they did not have it there when I was young. My kids got to go and have wonderful memories as well as I work in an elementary school and watched many kids go and come home. In my experience they are sad at first to go at the thought of being away from home, but when they return they are sad to leave all thier wonderful friends and relationships that they made. They come home renewed, happy full of stories, songs and happy memories! I love the things they make, I love hearing the stories they tell, and I love them singing thier songs. My kids always came home singing and the kids at school usually sing thier songs at lunch and on the playgrounds.

They learn a lot and make great relationships that last, as well as learn great skills in understanding other people, and the teens that get to be councilors learn responsibility and compassion and thinking skills. I always love it when I hear them call each other by thier spunky nicknames, and I still have all of my kids wonderful artwork they made and the badges that they earned. Please bring it back!

Thank you for your support and consideration!

Michelle Morgan  
20156 Canterwood ct  
Oregon City, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Think of these things as you consider moving HB2648 & SB439 out committee:

1. The type of learning that happens at outdoor school is unique to outdoor school. It doesn't happen in the classroom and the week spent at outdoor school will be rife with learning that will stick. We all know this. Those of us that were lucky enough to attend an outdoor school in 6th grade know it and those that taught outdoor school know it. I remember recording my observations in my journal. I remember the concepts (when I was there it was EDCICA) I know what all those letters stand for and I understand how they relate to the world that I live in. Science!!

2. Before 6th grade there is not a lot of hard evidentiary science in schools. This is a strong foundation.

3. For many low income families (and not low income families too) this is the first (only) overnight camp that there kids will experience. There is a huge benefit to that kind of independence.

4. Outdoor school is magic!

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I am passionate about the importance of this experience for all Oregon kids! This is who we are in Oregon. Please move Outdoor School Legislation (HB2648 & SB439) out of committee so that they can be voted on and passed into law.

Gratefully,

Molly Porter

Parent & voter  
2559 NW Overton, A  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

I grew up in a state that didn't have Outdoor School, but I can unreservedly say that people who've been Outdoor School educators have changed my life for the better, and have helped me learn to be of service to not only people in need, but our environment in need. Meeting Outdoor School educators helped me become a better educator, a kinder person, and a better all around helper. And as an educator, I've always supported my students who needed flexibility in their schedules to attend outdoor school because I believed the experience was of value, and indeed, those who attend, come back to class with broader minds and more eager to learn than ever.

Thank you for the wonderful tradition and legacy of Outdoor School, the opportunity is an invaluable experience. Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids.

Warm regards,

Nancy Slavin  
PO Box 1196  
Tillamook, OR 97141

Dear Lawmakers,

After spending six weeks at Camp Howard as a Student Leader, I shifted to a Special Needs Volunteer position to continue working with sixth graders. I worked one-on-one with a student three days. Learning to step back and be a shadow for a student gave me a chance to see Outdoor School through a sixth grader's eyes.

During three days, the student felt loved and accepted by everyone and thrived during field study. He told me he is bullied and he was nervous about being away from his mom for the first time, but he felt like everyone is kind at Outdoor School. During the week, he learned how to tell left from right, make connections with nature and his everyday life, and thrived to be a better learner.

Getting on the bus, he blinked back tears and said, "I wish I could stay here all week". Three days made leaps in his life, but with a longer, more stable Outdoor School, I would have loved to have seen him continue to grow and love the outdoors.

For me, I can never thank Blue Fin and Alice Ott Middle School for providing me a safe, positive place to return to. Including my sixth grade experience, I spent eight weeks to date at Camp Howard, and plan on being a one-on-one volunteer in the future.

Thank you taking time to read and work towards a better education opportunity for Oregon students. The skills students learn are priceless and carry them throughout life. Passions begin at a young age, and I found mine here.

Sincerely,

Natalie M. Burke  
7040 SE 118th Drive  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing to you because of my sincere belief that Outdoor School is a powerful program worthy of funding at a state-wide level, and I urge you to take action now. Not only is it a fun program providing unique hands-on learning (so rare in these days of standardized tests), it is also a key part of raising generations of Oregonians with the tools necessary to protect our valuable natural resources.

Oregon owes much of its livability to the values and lessons taught in the last 50 years of Outdoor School. Now it's time to ensure that every Oregon student has those same opportunities for another 50 years and beyond.

I was a sixth-grader in Hillsboro, OR and cried all the way home from Outdoor School, since I had fallen in love with it. Four years later, I volunteered as a cabin counselor as much as was allowed throughout high school. Teaching soil science at Outdoor School was my first job right out of college. While my career path has since taken me in other directions, I consider the Outdoor School program a highlight of my young years, and an indispensable part of who I am today. I hope that you will consider putting your full support behind HB 2648/SB 439.

Sincerely,

Nayana Jennings  
5217 NE 14th PL  
Portland, OR 97211

Dear Lawmakers,

As an educator, I believe the benefits of Outdoor School are tremendous. The indoor classroom can never compare to the outdoor classroom! Actually, they complement each other, reinforcing "book" learning and making it come alive!

This is a time to thank all lawmakers for having Outdoor School in the past, plus encourage your support for Outdoor School for all Oregon children in the future. Please, also move the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee with funding so that they can be voted on and passed into law.

Warm regards,

Patty Chalupsky  
43418 KINGSTON LYONS DR SE  
STAYTON, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

As a 55 year old tax paying citizen I don't remember much about elementary school but I DO remember outdoor school! What a gift it was to spend a week with kids from our school and other schools in the great outdoors!

I remember the morning flag raising and how I got the privilege of raising it one morning, how we catalogued bugs and plants and birds in our journals and how we sang - oh we sang!

Back in the day Outdoor School was just something you did and every 5th grader watched as the buses left with the 6th graders leaving and said, "next year it will be US!" But by the time our kids got to that same place, outdoor school was no more something that just happened. And while we have been very blessed and able to send our kids to camp, everyone is not so fortunate. Please, please, please restore Outdoor School.....

Thank You for your consideration of this worthwhile bill!

Peggy Honyak  
295 Boice Street S  
Salem, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

As a high school student, 20 years ago, I enthusiastically participated in every session of Outdoor School that I was able (5 sessions!). I was a quiet, insecure, somewhat lost teenager who thrived in the supported leadership role provided by Outdoor School. The program gave me motivation to maintain my grades and helped me recognize an otherwise overlooked skill set. I have now been teaching and working as a mediator for 12 years and I have Outdoor School to thank for much of my success.

As a teacher I have seen the power that Outdoor School has to boost 6th grade minds. They connect with our Oregon forests, and some experience success in learning that is elusive for them in the traditional classroom. Educators know that those small moments of success can transform a young person.

Thank you for considering this letter. Please support Outdoor School for all kids in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Rachael Torchi  
3143 SE 25th Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I loved outdoor school!

Please support outdoor school for all kids!

Thanks,

Rebecca Priest  
6545 N Fenwick  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School is important to me because it represents opportunities that cannot be reproduced in a traditional classroom. This legislation would enable kids from all backgrounds to participate in the kind of experience I had the chance to go to when I was in fifth grade. It was the only time during my childhood I ever went camping, or spent the night outdoors. The Outdoor School I attended when I was a student at Clover Ridge Elementary in Albany, OR was a significant social milestone for me, as I know it is for others. As an outdoor enthusiast and avid camper/hiker, to this day I remember Outdoor School as my first camping trip, and hope that you will support Outdoor School for all Oregon Kids so that early quality outdoor experiences are not reserved for children of families with the means and resources to provide them. It is an invaluable component of the kind of education we need for our children.

As an outdoor enthusiast and avid camper/hiker, to this day I remember Outdoor School as my first camping trip, and hope that you will support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids to ensure early quality outdoor experiences are available to all Oregon youth.

Warm regards,

Renaë Myers  
4001 POTTER ST APT 6  
Eugene, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing in support of HB 2648 and SB 439. I feel very strongly that outdoor education is an essential part of one's upbringing--it fosters knowledge and connection with nature and its many resources, as well as the formation of proper stewardship towards them. It also inspires wonder and an appreciation for beauty that a classroom simply cannot. I would love to see Outdoor Education get the funding it needs so that all kids--not just the privileged ones-- can benefit from its rich offerings.

Thank you,

Richard Kreusser  
4006 NE 64th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97213

Dear Lawmakers,

How can we expect future generations to love, respect, and honor our wild places if they've never once set foot in them? It's wonderful that so many families feel it is important to expose their children to the wild outdoors, but there are many families as well that do not have the time or resources to get their children out into the wild. Our children's education should include such important things as loving and respecting the wild, basic financial literacy, and how to be a good citizen. This would cover two of those.

Please support the outdoor school.

Sincerely,

Robert Rothwell  
1402 Killarney Drive  
West Linn, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

When I was a 6th grader, I had never taken an interest in science before because only the boys in my class liked science. It wasn't until I went to Outdoor School that my mindset was changed. I learned the Water Cycle Boogie and played sproutball. The best part of camp though was when a couple of my friends and I even performed a song called Ratlin Bog. For the first time in my life, science was fun; and to this day, I still haven't forgotten the experience.

The only thing better than being a camper was when my friend Kiersten convinced me to be an Outdoor School counselor in the spring of my sophomore year. I loved it so much that I went back as a counselor again. And again. And again. And again.

My most memorable moment as a counselor was when I got to be a field study instructor for a young boy, let's call him "Johnny." Johnny started off the week hating Outdoor School. He refused to sing songs or participate in field studies. He didn't even want to play games. Then I pulled Johnny aside for a minute and asked him why he wasn't having fun. Johnny told me that he wanted to have fun, but felt guilty for taking up the counselors' time. Once I told Johnny how much I loved Outdoor School and wanted him to have a fun experience there, he instantly changed. Johnny became the most enthusiastic camper after that. He even led a song at campfire one night. Knowing that a child was able to learn and have fun because of my help was life changing.

Now as a senior in high school, I have been a counselor 5 times, and it has been my favorite experience in high school by far. Outdoor School made me realize that I love teaching, because the look on a kid's face when they actually love learning (believe me, you don't see that much in high school) is one of the most joyous, beautiful things I've ever witnessed. Also, I especially realized how much I love environmental science. Outdoor School exposed me to real environmental issues and taught me about what I could do to help save the planet. It's empowering to know that my actions have an impact on future generations. I know that I want my impact to be positive, and to leave a legacy behind me that will protect this world from environmental destruction. You could almost say it makes me feel like a superhero, saving the planet one tree at a time.

Outdoor School not only empowered me, but was the place of many "firsts" for me. It was my first time "camping," my first time enjoying science, my first time being a counselor, and the list could go on for a long time. It is a place of so many wonderful memories, and I am sad that I have to say goodbye. As I will be attending the University of Southern California in LA next fall, I can honestly say that it is more heartbreaking saying goodbye to this program than saying goodbye to some of my friends. I even wrote my application essay about my experience at Outdoor School and how it changed my life so immensely. In college, I will be studying business administration and environmental science, thanks to Outdoor School, in an effort to use my business skills to promote and implement techniques of environmental conservation. Outdoor School is so important. It changed not only my career plans, but my life as a whole.

I urge you to please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids. There are children who don't get to go, and the experience is so valuable and changes lives. In order to support this cause, I ask you to please move the Outdoor School legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of the committee with funding so the bills can be voted on and passed. All kids deserve a chance to go to Outdoor School, and right now only you can make that happen. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Ouellette  
869 NE Caden Ave.  
Hillsboro, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing not as an Outdoor School camper but as a mother of a daughter who had her life changed as an Outdoor School leader. My daughter, Katy, known as Turtle, was hired at ODS after graduating from OSU. She happily spent two sessions mentoring high school student leaders and teaching "soil made my lunch" to 6th graders. ODS educated Katy on student management, environmental education, how to have fun and be silly and prepared her for the real world of teaching. Thanks to Outdoor School Katy also formed lifelong friendships.

I am very proud to say that Katy is a wonderful teacher in Juneau, Alaska. Outdoor School not only benefits 6th grade students but high school & college students and graduates!  
I do believe that Outdoor School can change lives!

I urge you to support either HB 2648 or SB 439. Both of these bills have stalled in committee and need your support to be passed out of committee with funding.

Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon students.

Thank you

Sally Kissell  
6020 SE Cedar St  
Milwaukie, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I urge you to support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids. Please move HB 2648 and HB 439 out of committee with funding so that all Oregon students can experience the wonder of learning outdoors.

Thank you,

Sandie Dreyer  
75383 Fern Hill Loop  
Rainier, Oregon

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school is important to me as our kids need to learn about Oregon's vast heritage. Our natural resources are so important and the bond and friendships the kids make last a lifetime. I think should be available to not just public but private and homeschooled kids registered with the state. I went to Mill park elementary when I was in the 6th grade and got to go to camp arrawanna.....I Remember making our stoves and candles in tuna can .....best time of my life and my only outdoor experience. ...it made me appreciate natural habitats, fish, our streams and trees....all that makes us Oregon!

Thank you for your time! Please make this available for all our children. Please move the Outdoor School Legislation HB2648 and SB 439 out of committee so that it can be voted on and passed into law.

Warm regards,

Sharon Loney  
concerned parent  
503-470-9923  
LONEYSHARON@GMAIL.COM  
1823 Cedar st  
Forest Grove, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Please consider making Outdoor School a reality for all of our students. Learning in nature is the best way to reach our children and to teach them the importance of their connection to the earth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sharon Richards  
NE 11th St.  
Bend, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

Please allow for Oregon kids to continue to have the opportunity to attend week long Outdoor School. This was my favorite experience in all of grade school. I went to Trestle Glen for a week with my 6th grade class. It was bonding beyond measure. It was also the first time I was introduced via hands on methods to the sciences of soil, watersheds, and natural cycles. Outdoor School is vital for Oregon kids' education. It shaped my relationship to the very place in which I've grown up.

Thank you for supporting Outdoor School for all Oregon kids. Please move the Outdoor School Legislation, specifically HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee so that they can be voted on and passed into law. Your time and effort in support of this endeavor is greatly appreciated.

Thank you and take care.

Shelly Devine  
5803 SE Lafayette  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers:

I first started working with Outdoor Schools when I was a senior in high school in 1969. As a high school counselor I learned valuable environmental, science, and leadership concepts that I could not have learned in my regular high school setting.

As an adult and teacher I have worked at Outdoor School for 21 years. During those years I have witnessed engagement and excitement of about 2,000 6th graders as they experience our amazing outdoor world. I have seen students learn to live and work together in their science field studies as well as coping with close-quarters cabin living.

I have seen them solve problems as individuals and as groups in challenge courses, in daily chores, and in learning what it's like to be away from home.

I've watched students try new things as they learn about various career options that include science, the environment and the possibility of working in the outdoors.

I have seen students hike and explore at physical levels they rarely encounter at home, and fall in love with beautiful forests, creeks, and rivers.

I've been amazed anew each year as young students and as well as high school counselors emerge from their shy cocoons to blossom on stage during campfire time, and become fascinated with guest speakers who share their scientific careers and passions during evening program.

Two of my favorite comments I hear every year from 6th graders attending Outdoor School are, "I love it here, it's SO COOL!" and "Please, PLEASE can we stay one more week?"

If we hope future generations will take care of our wonderful earth we must first help them learn to love it. And to do that, they must learn about it and experience the wonder, science, and beauty of it. Outdoor School is a wonderful way to get that circle of learning and appreciation started.

Thank you for reading my letter about the wonderful opportunity of Outdoor School for Oregon Students. I would really appreciate your support to make Outdoor School available for all Oregon kids. Please move HB 2648 and SB 439 out of committee with funding so that each school district will be able to provide Outdoor School for their students.

Sincerely,

Sherry Evans

Retired (1 year) Teacher and Continuing ODS Volunteer for  
Rainier School District #13

74691 Hale Lane  
Rainier, Oregon 97048

Dear Lawmakers,

In 6th grade I went to outdoor school and I had a wonderful time, more importantly I learned things that I remember to this day: things you can eat in the forest, tracks of animals, the names of trees, how to drill a core in a tree to gauge it's health and learn how old it is, crafts. I learned how to socialize with other people outside my normal sphere, teamwork, I learned a degree of independence and a lifelong love of nature.

Please support Outdoor School for All Oregon children, or a community exchange program if you find it odd to send rural children to outdoor school.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hosking  
2250 Second 185th Ave  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Our kids would be in better health, would be able to stay in touch with their natural environment and will be able to transmit it to the next generations. All these activities that they will share in their childhood will never be forgotten. These trips will help them to grow, create friendships and to learn a lot about the world and animals life.

Please, support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids.

Thanks!

Stephanie Nicollet  
9614 SW Whitford Ln  
Beaverton, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School is the great equalizer that allows strong students and those who need a helper to learn how to learn by working in the environment in which they live. As a teacher, I have seen many students who are disinterested in learning in an indoor environment become engaged and involved in an enriched outdoor experience. All receive individual attention with learning groups of 4 to 8 students.

Outdoor school also allows us to build stronger teachers by allowing high school students to lead younger students and experience teaching strategies in crowd management. Please make this experience a guarantee for all 6th grade students. It is a life-changer on several levels.

Thank you.

Steven Garner  
13690 SW Willow Top Ln  
Tigard, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

I was born and raised in Portland, and have lived here all my life. I went to Camp Adams for Outdoor School in 6th grade (probably about 1988) and it was a life-changing experience. Even though my parents were wonderful about supporting my interests surrounding all things outdoor-oriented, the experience of ODS without them (and with a bunch of other kids) was like no other. I remember specifically learning about the greenhouse effect by sitting in a dark tent with several other people breathing and making it hot. I've been deeply concerned about all things environmental ever since. That concern was part of what has inspired me to continue to live in Portland, ride a bicycle for transportation, and make other efforts to live as "green" a life as possible. I believe wholeheartedly that every child's education should include learning about ecology, native flora and fauna, and outdoor life skills. When I meet fellow native Oregonians (of my generation, who have attended ODS and/or spent a lot of time outdoors) I feel like I among a strong tribe of folks with shared values of ecological stewardship and knowledge. I don't ever want to see that fade. Kids need to get outside!

Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids; it's a critical part of our local culture. I want to see HB 2648 and SB 439 move out of committee towards a vote.

Thank you,

Susan Langenes  
10306 SE 41st Ct.  
Milwaukie, OR

Howdy, Lawpeople ~

Oregon is sure in an interesting spot right now. We're growing fast, people are attracted to our state. There's lots of opportunity in that, but we also have to keep Oregon \*Oregon\*. Part of what we are is a state of people who appreciate the outdoors. I grew up in the country, in rural Lane County, yet even I gained a great deal from going to Outdoor School in the Cascades. We should want that for all our kids, especially urban ones and the newcomers from other states who don't yet have a connection to our woods and high deserts, the Coast and the wetlands.

Especially if we're ever going to heal the divide between urban and rural, Eastern and Western Oregon, we need Outdoor School more than ever. We also need to support our education system at large.

Please commit yourselves to Outdoor School for All!

Thanks so much,

T. Brown  
86615 N MODESTO DR  
Eugene, Oregon

Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing to ask you to support Outdoor School for All Oregon schoolchildren. As a middle schooler, I did not have the opportunity to go to Outdoor School. However, between then and the time I was a senior in high school, our district (Stayton) added this program for all 5th graders. I was lucky enough to go with them as a counselor. Though that was over 20 years ago, I still remember the connections made with the kids in my group, my fellow counselors, and with the natural surroundings that we were learning about. I also remember thinking "this would have been so awesome when I was a kid!". These experiences, even as a 17-year old, influenced how I interact with my environment, and how I respect the outdoors and all our natural resources. I think that ALL children deserve the opportunity to learn about our environment, and as a taxpayer, I support Outdoor School for All.

Thank you for reading, and please support Outdoor School and move the Outdoor School Legislation out of committee with funding so it can move to a vote.

Sincerely,

Tamara Williams  
6128 NE 45th Ave Ste B  
Portland, OR

Dear lawmaker,

Outdoor school was amazing and a great learning experience and a way to have fun away from home life also older kids help as guide/counselors...Reynolds middle school @ Howard so fun!!!

Thank you :) and thank you to continue trying to continue outdoor schools for all kids.

Tannya Timm  
137 maple blvd  
Woodvillage, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

We are writing in support of house HB 2648 and SB 439.

My husband and I have been teachers in Oregon for a combined 62 years - most of that time we have worked directly with 6th graders, thus we have had the privilege of sending hundreds of children to Multnomah County Outdoor School.

We teach at an independent school that serves a mostly affluent population that, nonetheless, is in great need of education around natural resources, ecology and the environment and diversity.

In spite of the trend of shortening the ODS experience to just three days and two nights, our school has been committed to the full five day program. Why, you might ask when we have a rich science program to offer our students? When we stop and think about Outdoor School, it's mostly about nature and relationships. Over time society has come to understand that it's these two things that support us at the deepest, most basic levels. When 6th graders from four, or sometimes five different schools come together for a full 6 day week at Outdoor School they create a microcosm of what we hope will exist for them in the future of our state - a place where differences can be celebrated and everyone can get behind the common goal of living sustainably with an awareness the the natural world is not finite.

Until recently, a week Outdoor of School has been a given in Oregon. I believe it's one of the reasons why Oregonians have a love of the natural world and a sense of respect for our history of being reliant on natural resources. Times are changing - water will surely become a scare commodity and we'll need to manage timber and grazing lands with great care. With Outdoor School firmly in place for all Oregon 6th graders, we should be able to count on a citizenry that is informed and passionate about what makes Oregon a special place.

Let's grow the leaders of the future and give every 6th grader the experience they deserve.

Please vote in favor of these two bills. Oregon kids deserve this valuable program.

Sincerely,

Toni Holmberg and  
Brad Baugher  
5052 SW Nevada Ct.  
Portland, Oregon. 97219

Dear Oregon Legislators:

As the former owners of Camp Tamarack in Sisters, Oregon, we are appealing to you for help. There are currently two bills before the legislators in Oregon that would provide full funding for every fifth or sixth-grade student (approximately 50,000 students) to a full week (5 nights/6 days) of Outdoor School or a comparable outdoor education experience reflecting local needs. These bills are:

\* HB 2648: Outdoor School Bill – It Changes Lives. In the House Revenue Committee.

\* SB 439: Outdoor School Bill – It Changes Lives. In Ways and Means Committee

What an amazing opportunity this is for you to support the children of Oregon. Spearheaded by the Oregon Outdoor Education Coalition, you can read about their efforts at [www.oregonoutdoored.org](http://www.oregonoutdoored.org).

The benefits kids get from this type of an experience extend far beyond the fun of being outside. Research shows that grades go up, behavior improves and a child's ability to relate to their surroundings increases tremendously. Besides building an appreciation for what Oregon has to offer, students become good stewards of what has been entrusted to them. There is so much they gain which means Oregon benefits as those young people grow into adults.

However, currently, approximately 50% of Oregon's 5th and 6th graders are denied the opportunity to experience Outdoor School. Inequitable access to Outdoor School contributes to the Achievement Gap in Oregon schools. Only 5 of Oregon's 36 counties report 100% Outdoor School program participation. Four counties report no participation and eight counties report less than 20 % student participation. As you can see, this is an unacceptable situation and the reason we are asking for your support

The action needed is to amend in committee to attach mechanism for full funding at 22 Million, which would cover the costs of Outdoor School for 50,000 students as described above. That's a lot of money, however, those behind this effort have ideas for funding. They suggest coverage to come from one of two ways, thus accessing new money:

- Solid Waste Fee: \$22 million per year from a fee imposed on all disposal sites that receive domestic solid waste through a \$4.40 increase in the tipping fee. This equates to \$3.75 per household per year.

or

- Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Funds: In 2017, the sources of funds for the Outdoor Education Fund will be a portion of unclaimed returnable bottle deposits currently retained by beverage distributors in an amount not to exceed \$22 million per year.

We believe this is an effort worthy of legislation and have faith that you will also recognize it as such. We implore you to move the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) out of committee with funding so that they can be voted on and passed into law.

Sincerely,

Ted and Edie Jones,  
former owners of Camp Tamarack, Sisters, OR  
67040 Rock Island Ln  
Bend, OR

Dear Oregon Legislature,



I would love to have outdoor school so much. I heard it is awesome and fun. I love staying in cabins.

I would also like to play and learn in nature.

I would like outdoor school to be longer than 3 days & nights. When my brother went he got to stay for a week and so would I. outdoor school makes 6<sup>th</sup> grade way better!

- Haylie King

6<sup>th</sup> grader



4-11-19

Dear Oregon Legislature,  
I have never EVER been to  
Outdoor school, ~~ss~~ and  
neither have a lot of my  
friends. I've heard other  
people who have say that  
it was awesome. Please  
fund Outdoor school For  
all 6<sup>th</sup> graders (in OR),  
because we all know it as  
one of the main highlights  
of 6<sup>th</sup> grade. ~ Moggie C, 6<sup>th</sup> grader

Dear Oregon Legislature,

It's very important to fund outdoor school.  
I personally am a 4th grader who had the  
luck to be able to go to the (admittedly,  
shortened) outdoor school over Halloween sixth  
grade.

~~There~~ There was the initial fears & com-  
plaints but ~~now~~ it took a surprisingly  
short amount of time to get over  
our disappointment. I did go to an  
environmental school, so much of the  
wildlife teaching was redundant, but  
I'm in the minority. If you live in the  
city, there's very little chance to  
experience the wilderness. You really  
can't get a feel for it you'd  
like it or not out there.

Outdoor school is a learning  
experience unlike much else - it offers  
inspire. It's perfectly worthwhile, and  
I wish it could be larger.

Andra M.

Re: Senate Bill 439  
House Bill 2648

Dear Oregon Legislature -

The outdoors, nature, nature learning, outdoor learning. As a student from an environmental school, my life has never been lacking in any of these things, and the insight and value gained from these is immeasurable. I urge you to fund outdoor school for the sixth grade for the benefit of all children, to provide the opportunities for growth in mind, body, and community that knowledge of the outdoor world brings. Sincerely,

Anonymous

Re: Senate Bill 439  
House Bill 2648

Dear Oregon Legislature -

I urge you to fund outdoor school for all 6<sup>th</sup> graders. All my children have had the fortunate experience to attend outdoor school and the benefits/insights/outlooks they have acquired from this experience has been a gift that keeps giving and has broaden their views of what is important in life. I would love to see all oregonian children to have this opportunity.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "John M. ...", written in a cursive style.

11<sup>th</sup> April 2015

Dear OREGON LEGISLATURE,



As a parent of 2 school-aged children, a voter, and one dedicated tax-payer, I would like to encourage you to pass SB439 & House Bill 2648. These 2 bills will provide the amazing experience of Outdoor School to the state's 6<sup>th</sup> graders. This is a crucial age & sets the stage for future citizens to know the beauty of their state - from rivers to forests to beaches. Not only that but the students learn how to think in a new way by being in the outdoors with their peers & dedicated teachers & counselors - in fact my son blossomed in this setting & continues to know & appreciate trees & other plants he learned about there. ↴

This year my daughter is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader  
who will finally get to go - a bit late &  
for a shorter trip, but she is very excited.  
6<sup>th</sup> graders hear about it from the older  
kids & they hear all good things.  
For the kids who don't spend much time  
in the woods, this is an essential trip,  
& for those who are at home in the  
outdoors, it's their chance to shine as  
teachers to their fellow students.

Please keep this rite of  
passage, this joyful tradition,  
the great Oregon idea of  
School & Outdoors combined!

Pass SB 439 & HB 2648 to  
fund it for all 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

Thanks Anne Mullan  
Portland 97214



RE: Senate Bill 439 > YES!  
House Bill 2648

4.11.15

Dear Oregon Legislators,

Please fund outdoor school for all 6th graders in Oregon. These kids are future environment protectors, and need outdoor exposure woven into their curriculum. Oregon leads the green revolution! We are proud to be writing you from the Westwind Camp on the Salmon river. Our kids here are not only learning the value of the land and animals, they are forming critical bonds with nature that will impact future decisions.

Thank you for supporting all  
6th graders, <sup>including</sup> children who would  
not otherwise have the opportunity  
to connect to nature + their  
peers in this way. Our camping  
experience is incredibly community  
building, which forms the foundation  
for conscientious citizenship.

Please support Senate Bill 439  
and house bill 2648.

Best,

Jamyelese Ryer  
Portland, OR 97206



4-11-15  
Re = SB 439 and  
HB 2648

Dear Oregon State Legislature

Outdoor School is a transforming experience for many Clatsop School students as well as for the high school students who become the students counselors during their ODS experience.

My children went to the ODS in Multnomah County, and 2 of them were counselors. I was a ODS nurse for 2+ seasons/sessions and have witnessed first hand the transformation of these kids. Their cadre becomes a solid unit rather than the individuals, they grow together and really blossom.

Please fund these bills for all 6th grade school students to attend Outdoor School for 5 days - they should all have this beneficial and wonderful experience

Sincerely,

Marilyn Johnson

former ODS nurse

4.11.15

Dear Oregon Legislature,

Please fund Outdoor School  
for all 6<sup>th</sup> Graders in  
Oregon.

Many students never get to  
experience an overnight  
outdoor trip, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
is an essential time for  
young people to bond.

Thank you! - Matt Taylor

Dear Oregon Legislature,

Please fund Outdoor School  
for all 6<sup>th</sup> graders in Oregon.

Outdoor School is a great  
experience and wonderful  
for students to have a  
chance to have an Overnight  
trip. SB439/HB2648

Thank you,

Lisa Laser  
Lisa Laser

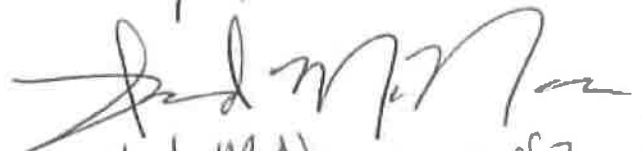
Re Outdoor School  
SB 439  
HB 2648

Dear Lawmakers,

Please approve funding for Outdoor School.

Outdoor school provides an incredible opportunity for kids to experience education "outside the walls of school." It builds independence, fosters a sense of ownership of their beautiful state, provides rare opportunities to meet students from other schools and other backgrounds and helps them meet themselves in nature. An education focused only on sitting at desks does not create young people who are curious about their world. Outdoor School is a rare and wonderful chance for kids to learn about the world by moving through it.

Thank you,

  
Heidi McNamée, mom of 2

and former outdoor school participant.

April 11, 2015

Dear Oregon Legislature,

Please fund the current bills that would enable every Oregon 6th grader to attend Outdoor School.

The opportunities for students to explore and learn about their local outdoor environments is so valuable.

Many students have never been camping or away from their parents and Outdoor School provides a safe and enriching place for students to develop their independence and self-confidence. It is so important that all kids attend, especially students whose families are not providing outdoor learning opportunities.

Thank you for your support!

Cindy Ewert

re SB 439  
HB 2648

Oregon representatives ~

Giving all children an outdoor educational experience is important to me and my children.

In my experience, outdoor school is a good experience, but it has been whittled away.

Please sustain and grow outdoor school!

d7/27 mojanee

Dear Oregon Legislature,

April 11, 2015

I am writing you from the beautiful site of Westwind where the Salmon River joins the Pacific. This is one of the many wonderful places where Oregon students, All Oregon students, should have the opportunity to attend a full week of outdoor school. A high number of Portland students who attend public school live below the poverty line. These students do not get the opportunity to go to camps or experience the wild places of Oregon without outdoor school.

I am a teacher and a parent who thinks outdoors school provides students the chance to connect to the outdoors and our beautiful state. Students who go to outdoor school regularly mention it as the best experience from their education.

Please support students getting a full week of outdoor school guaranteed!

Sincerely, Michelle Schardt, 314 NE 83rd Ave  
Portland 97220

4-11-15

Dear Legislature,

Outdoor education is an important and necessary element of middle-school education that fosters stewardship and security for our state and its resources.

There are many Oregonians that will never get the privilege or opportunity to know these resources, first-hand, without state support. On behalf of your constituents please support funding for outdoor school to all sixth-graders.

Thank you,  
Very truly yours,

S-J



# TWIN ROCKS

Encountering Christ on the Oregon Coast

April 20, 2015

Regarding HB 2648 and SB 439

Dear Lawmakers,

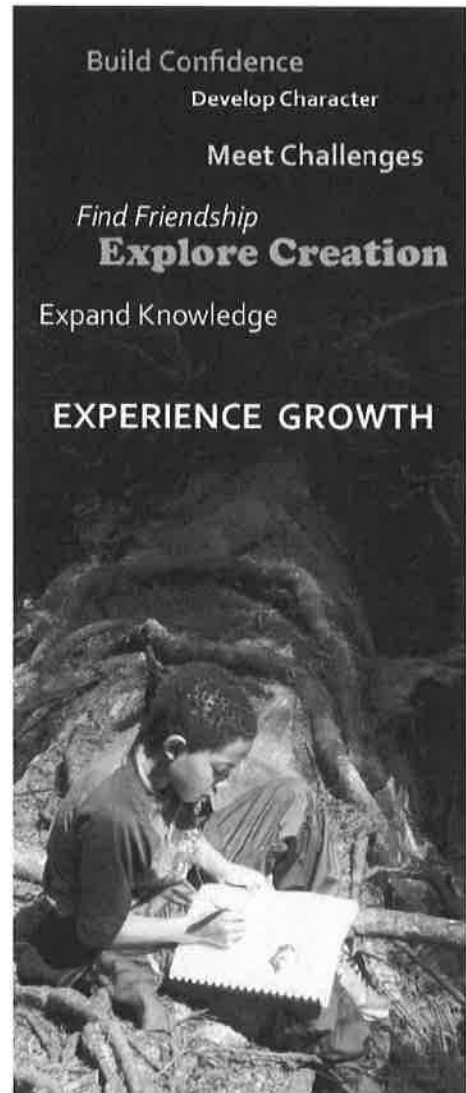
I am a trained teacher licensed in Oregon and have committed much of my life to outdoor schools because they address my personal goals and philosophies as a holistic educator. Ron Miller, founder of the journal *"Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice"* gives the following definition for holistic education.<sup>1</sup>

"That is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to their community, the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace. Holistic education aims to call forth from people an intrinsic reverence for life and a passionate [lifelong] love of learning."

At Twin Rocks Friends Camp this is my educational philosophy for Outdoor School. Holistic education differs from other forms of education because of its emphasis on experiential learning and the significance placed on relationships and primary human values. These are essential goals to consider when educating students who will succeed in life as healthy, prosperous and happy Oregonians contributing to the greater good of this State. In an educational system driven by tests and academic achievement teachers often feel there is little room for healthy personal and community development in schools. It is partially because of this disparity that I believe outdoor school should be a part of every student's experience.

Another aspect of outdoor school often overlooked is teacher experience and retention. For a teacher to stay connected in a school and desire to continue to pursue their passion for education and seek the best for their students they must

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.great-ideas.org/enc.htm>



TWIN ROCKS FRIENDS CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER  
P.O. Box 6 ♦ Rockaway Beach, Oregon 97136 ♦ 503-355-2284 ♦ [www.twinrocks.org](http://www.twinrocks.org)

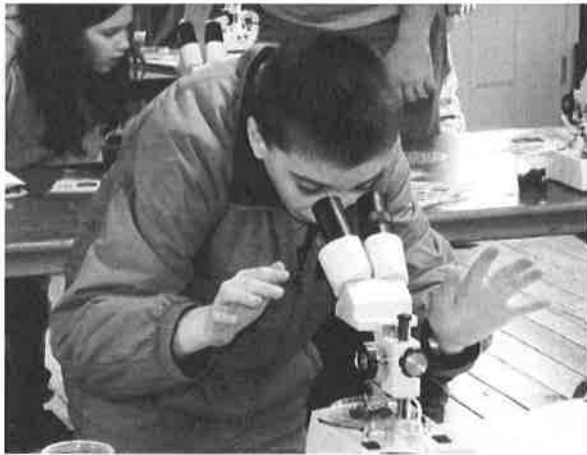
# TWIN ROCKS

## *Encountering Christ on the Oregon Coast*

feel as though they are successful. I taught as a teacher in Oregon and judge my own success based on the lifelong success of my students after they graduated from my classrooms. It does a teacher's heart good and encourages them like few other things can to see their students learning life skills at outdoor school alongside academic achievements and implementing them in the future. For many students outdoor school is something a teacher can refer back to throughout the year, or in following years to keep a struggling child on track.

Many students have their first experience away from home at outdoor school, for some of them it may also be their first experience in nature. At Outdoor School each person has the opportunity to recognize they are a part of something bigger and have a responsibility for their own actions. A great deal of time is spent creating a safe and positive space for students who may not have this safety at home. Outdoor Schools at Twin Rocks give everyone involved a glimpse of a better world. For many this becomes a goal to personally strive for back home as they reflect on their friendships and memories which last a lifetime.

Outdoor Schools are better equipped compared to traditional classrooms to provide an authentic learning experience and help paint a bigger picture so students can see how their school work is applicable in real life.



I have seen students eyes light up as they discover a world they didn't know existed outside their own door, and are inspired to make a difference in their homes, schools, and community. At outdoor school students learn about good stewardship of the environment and are challenged academically in cross-cutting ways touching on all major disciplines. This type of experiential, cross-cutting education is now a focus of Common Core<sup>2</sup> and the Next Generation Science Standards<sup>3</sup> adopted by Oregon. Outdoor schools have been operating with these teaching strategies for years and it is time to invest in and further develop these preexisting resources to serve all Oregonians.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.corestandards.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nextgenscience.org/>



TWIN ROCKS FRIENDS CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER  
P.O. Box 6 ♦ Rockaway Beach, Oregon 97136 ♦ 503-355-2284 ♦ [www.twinrocks.org](http://www.twinrocks.org)

# TWIN ROCKS

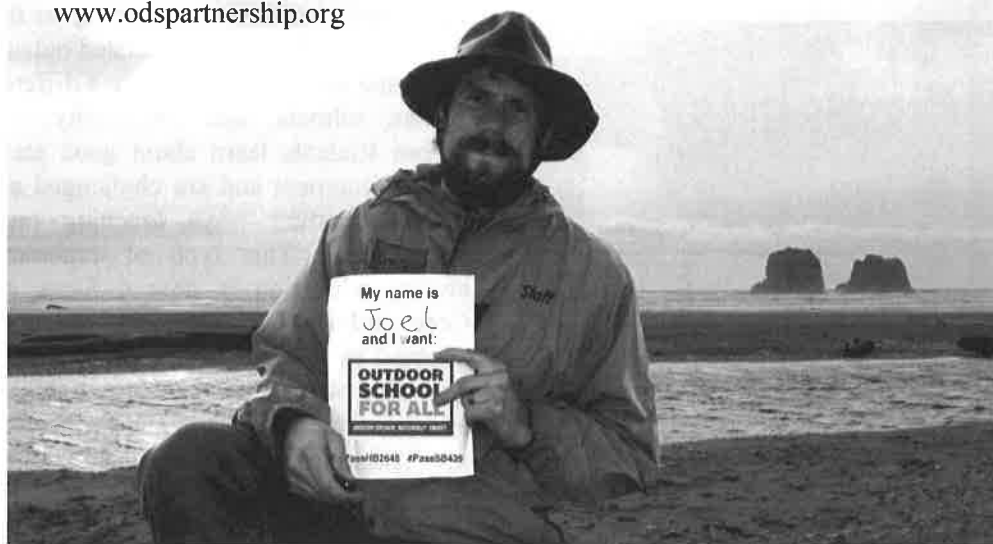
*Encountering Christ on the Oregon Coast*

I believe having an outdoor school experience should be a part of every Oregon student's education because at Twin Rocks I have repeatedly witnessed outdoor school communities changing lives for the better. Adult staff and volunteers experience a week of hard work and encouragement as they are blessed by watching students make healthy choices and grow. Volunteers emerge from each program tired, but with a renewed sense of purpose to contribute positively in their own community. High School counselors often start outdoor school feeling insecure, defensive, lonely and selfish. The outdoor school experience gives them the opportunity to serve their community by putting others first, finding a purposeful and positive self-image, and developing a healthy understanding of love and empathy for others in a world desperately seeking good people.

Please support an Outdoor School experience for all students by moving the Outdoor School Legislation (HB 2648 and SB 439) forward with funding in support of a bright future for Oregon.

Thank You,

Joel Thomas  
Outdoor Education Coordinator  
[joel@twinrocks.org](mailto:joel@twinrocks.org)  
[www.odspartnership.org](http://www.odspartnership.org)



TWIN ROCKS FRIENDS CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER  
P.O. Box 6 ♦ Rockaway Beach, Oregon 97136 ♦ 503-355-2284 ♦ [www.twinrocks.org](http://www.twinrocks.org)

To the Oregon Legislature-

My name is Billy Marin. Outdoor School was the highlight of my Sixth grade year. During my time there I learned about nature and many catchy songs.

Outdoor School isn't just about the outdoors, despite the name, it is also an opportunity to bond with other students who you may not have ever met. I remember the delicious lunch and entertaining ~~the~~ camp fire meetings, and waking up next to your friends with a delicious breakfast waiting for you is ~~something~~ something that you should enjoy. If laws HB2648 and SB439 are passed then current 6<sup>th</sup> graders will be able to attend Outdoor School and in the future reflect on their time.

Sincerely Billy M.

Madison High School

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Ben Henry. I went to outdoor school in the sixth grade at Camp Howard. I remember one day we were learning about different types of rocks. The counselor asked us to say physical as loud as we could while hitting a rock with a hammer with all our strength. I don't believe I've ever had any learning experience where I was asked to put the learning tools down because I was <sup>too</sup> excited. I've never been more excited about learning than I was at outdoor school. I think outdoor school should be fully funded because if I can be <sup>that</sup> excited about learning about rocks, anyone can.

Sincerely, Ben Henry - Madison High School

P.S. - Please pass - HB 2698  
- SB 439

To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Erick, I got the wonderful opportunity to go a full week at Outdoor School. At Outdoor School, I met tons of new people, I shared tears and laughs with people I didn't know a week prior to Outdoor School. I learned many things about ecosystems, animals, decomposing, reproduction and many more things. Outdoor School deserves to be fully funded because its such a great opportunity to give to the youth. Outdoor School gave me many great memories, please consider ~~Bill~~ HB 2648 / SB 439, so other kids have the chance to make unforgettable memories with a fully funded Outdoor School.

Sincerely,

Erick Gonzalez, Madison H.S

To the Oregon Legislators -

I am Ratanya. In my 6<sup>th</sup> grade year we had gone to outdoor school for the week, we were the last week before it went to 3 days. I think it should be switched back because outdoor school is a great experience. It's not just fun, but they give us responsibilities, like kitchen duty, or flag duty. It's where we help to clean up or to put stuff out. No one is left out. And it's really hard to be left behind or alone because there were small groups so it was easier to make friends. So I recommend it being a week again. It's an experience every one should have the chance to get.

- James Madison High

• Ps please pass HB2648

• Ratanya Zachman

• SB-139.

April 20<sup>th</sup> 15

To the Oregon Legislature

My name is Marcos Michel. I really like outdoor school because it helped me bond with my teachers and friends. I learned about many things in outdoor school like how to find a beaver, poison in streams, insects, the flow of nature. It's a great experience for kids of all ages. We even got to see a rare mushroom that shoots just when you touch it. I will never forget how different our teachers treated us. They were like friends, they weren't acting as superior. Outdoor school needs to be funded because it's an experience that only comes once in a life time. Please save outdoor school by passing HB2648 and SE439.

Thank You, Marcos Michel

Madison high school



04-20

Dear Lawmaker,  
My name is Octavia. I really liked Outdoor School because I learned how to make friends and be together as community. I also learned a lot about the nature that I never knew before. Outdoor School was honestly the best community thing we could have and if you know it's something I wouldn't do. I met many people and left with more friends than I came in with. I went to camp heard for only two days that wasn't enough for me, I cried my eyes out when it was time to leave. Please save outdoor school, its needed let many other kids experience what I did it could change lives.

Sincerely

Octavia Rankins :) ♡  
Madison High School

P.S. Please pass HB2648 and SB439!

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Alistair Gibson. I went to Sandy River for Outdoor School in sixth grade for 5 days. The experience was fun and I learned a lot about cool things I would have never learned if I ~~my~~ hadn't gone. Specifically, I remember learning about pH levels, and how to test the pH level in liquids. What I won't forget is my cabin leader Macaw, and all the other cabin leaders who were so happy and nice. Outdoor School should be fully funded through HB2648 ~~and~~ and SB439 because it is a great opportunity to meet new people and have an idea of what its like to be in school away from parents. Not only did I enjoy ~~the~~ my experience at Outdoor School, but so did my friends and the new friends I made while I was there. I was just a good experience that everyone should have.

Sincerely,  
Alistair Gibson  
Madison High School

Name:

Ramon J. Jr.

Topic/Objective:

Save outdoor school!



Class/Period:

Mr. Moser's

Date:

4/20/15



Essential Question:

Questions:

Notes:

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Ramon Jackson Jr. In 6th grade, I went to Fashion Elementary school and my classmates and I went to Sandy River for our experience. I learned about trees and the environment. It was really a unique environment. I got to bond with my classmates, learn things, have talent shows, and meet new people. But what I definitely won't forget all of those camp fire songs and my instructors such as Tarzan and Mike. But most importantly outdoor school should be fully funded. Think of the children, they deserve to have a experience as well and it would suck if it wasn't fully funded. Please think about it and thanks for reading my letter.

Sincerely, Ramon

Summary:

P.S please pass HB2648 & SB439.

Sincerely, Ramon Jackson Jr from Madison High school

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Patrick K. and I like to tell you why should you fully fund Outdoor Schools. Outdoor school was a great experience and the first time I was away from home for while. Outdoor school allowed me to learn more about nature, and create new experience for myself. We've carried our names in 4th, help take care of the rabbits, and shot bows & arrows. That was learnt through five days worth of fun than getting two days. Kids won't go the same experience like how I did if you only get two days worth of learning & fun. Please fully fund HB 2648 & SB 429 for the future.

Thank you,

Patrick Kencel

Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislatures - My name is Luis Chan.  
I really like outdoor school because it is a new  
experience for boys and girls in Oregon, to learn about  
science and nature. When I was in outdoor school I did  
even know why I was going. Just that I had to go because  
my friends. When I was going back home I knew that  
I have gone to outdoor school to learn science and nature  
hand on. One thing that I will always remember is the camp  
fire. It was the biggest camp fire I have seen but that  
wasn't the memorable part it was the stories everyone  
told that night that was worth remembering. Learn about  
animal, plant, our earth and how the ecosystem work.  
Something I will never forget. Outdoor school should be fully  
founded by passing these two bills HB 2643 and SB 429  
because every 6<sup>th</sup> grader deserves to go to outdoor school  
for a full week - Thank you.

Sincerely, Luis Chan

from Madras High School

To the Oregon legislature -

Outdoor school is an adventure. Many find it being their first time away from home, and many find it as their first camp-like experience. Outdoor school is a camp made for the sake of teaching children about the outdoors and how nature works. Children learn the science in nature in a fun, exciting way. Many funny tales come from outdoor school (like how I once got stuck in a muddy river and fell backwards into the cold water! I had to walk around with water in my boots for hours!) that make it all worth while. The silliness and learning experience made it fun for me, and I am not the only one! Multiple people I know loved outdoor school, so I beg you to fund it. Please help make learning fun by helping outdoor school!

Thank you,

Sophie Mabley of  
Madison High School

P.S. Please fund HB2648

and  
SB439

To the Oregon Legislature --

My name is Phillip Lord and I went to Outdoor School. Outdoor School was the best five days of my life. The experience of being a part of nature and decompressing away from your family for a few days was amazing. Camping is one thing but learning about what's around you and exploring the woods is another. Being part of outdoor school taught me how to respect nature. It taught me that there are other worlds out there than the modern day life. Those five days show you life isn't really how it's made up to be. It's a lot simpler. Being in those woods changed how I thought. It fascinated me and made me want to explore the mysteries and unknowns about the world. Once I heard that the Outdoor School experience has been shortened, I was shocked. I thought, how could anyone get the full impact of nature in a few days instead of a week? It's horrible. This is why I think you should fully fund the HB2648 and SB339 bills. Because with that outdoor school experience, they might do something wonderful for this world.

Thank You

Truely, Phillip A. Lord  
Madison High School

Dear lawmakers,

My name is Jennifer and outdoor school is important to me because, its fun but its still school. There are a lot of things I learned while having fun. I wish I could have stayed at least for one more day, and I ask you **CAN YOU PLEASE SAVE OUTDOOR SCHOOL.**

Sincerely,  
Jennifer, 7th grade, Kent School, Portland







# A HOME IN THE WOODS

BY MIKAYLA JONES

On a night during summer camp, we were at the very last campfire—all the kids were sharing their favorite part about camp. This one little girl named Brooke stood up and said that her favorite part about camp was spending time with me. After she said that, I had an epiphany, like “wow,” I really matter to these kids.

There are moments and kids like Brooke that really make you realize how much you impact kids' lives, as the memories we help them make, and the experiences they have, stay with them forever. The week or half week that the kids get to spend at Camp Tamarack can change their lives.

Since its most recent start last spring, Camp Tamarack has been changing kids' lives week after week through its various programs (outdoor school, summer camp, TY camp, and other family events). Charlie Anderson, the camp's owner and director, started “On Belay Ty,” a non profit organization that is the base of Tamarack for and in memory of his brother, Tyler, who loved the outdoors. Since the beginning, Tyler's memory has been kept alive, as he is even on the t-shirts given to students, a silhouette looking down on the camp. From the start, there has been a vision for this camp and I believe that vision has become a reality.

RPA's George Hegarty describes the program, “The environment and facilities at Camp Tamarack create an ideal outdoor learning space for experiential education. By giving RPA students the ability to be a part of this amazing place as high school assistants, the sense of community and students ‘owning their educations’ that is a large part of our educational mission will be a powerful part of the learning experience for everyone.”

Working or volunteering at Camp Tamarack is like living in a different reality. One of the first things you do when you arrive is choose a new name (usually outdoor related,) like RPA students Comet, Taurus, Nature, Cygnus, or Maple. You become a different and better person whose purpose for a week, or months, is to give kids an opportunity to learn in a fun and safe environment.

Ever since going out to Camp Tamarack the very first week of outdoor school I have become more confident, I have found a home, family, role model, and I have realized how much I can make a difference. Tamarack has changed me for the better and the more I give to it, the more I have received.

Camp Tamarack impacts and changes many lives. RPA graduate Taylor Richards (Taurus) said he gained “newfound

confidence” and started to carry himself in a “more respectful manner” because of the influence of the kids at Tamarack. Another student leader, Faith Story (Zorra,) talked about how she gained “leadership skills and took a more positive outlook on the world.”

Tamarack brings out the best in people. It brings people together, forms friendships, as well as families - it's a home to many and an escape for all.

Tamarack is one of a few things that is one hundred percent good. Without it, Central Oregon would be at such a huge loss. In the short time it's been here, it has already changed so many lives, mine included. While many words could be used to describe Camp Tamarack, “home” has to be my favorite.



By Mikayla Jones

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Personally outdoor school is an essential opportunity or children to make friends, enjoy the outdoors, and to be thoroughly educated on the ecosystem. Currently I am in 8th grade, and am still hanging out with friends I met at outdoor school regularly. Outdoor school also gave me a chance to mingle with other schools. I also really enjoyed learning about the outdoors and being away from home for sometime it gave me a sense of independence and responsibility.

Alma

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

I believe that the law regarding the funding of Outdoor School should be passed. I myself had an exceptional time at Outdoor School. Every child should get the opportunity to experience this. I learnt so much about the outdoors and the world around me. The experience really allowed me to meet other students from different schools, and I have made good friends from it. I bonded with my cabin-mates and cabin leaders, and this gave me a chance to meet new people. In Outdoor School, we took a hands-on learning style, and that is something we couldn't have done in school.

I honestly believe that every child in Oregon should be able to experience the amazing opportunity that I have. I felt like I really learnt from it, and it was an overall great experience.

Sincerely,  
Anisha Kumar  
Age 13  
Beaverton, OR

## Attention: Rep. Gene Whisnant

Dear Gene:

How nice it is for us to have you as one of our representatives; someone we can go directly to when we have a concern. Even though we are not in your district, we know you always listen and care greatly for the kids of Oregon.

As the former owners of Camp Tamarack in Sisters, Oregon, we are appealing to you for help. There are currently two bills before the legislators in Oregon that would provide full funding for every fifth or sixth-grade student (approximately 50,000 students) to a full week (5 nights/6days) of Outdoor School or a comparable outdoor education experience reflecting local needs. This is legislation that directly affects kids in your district.

This is an amazing opportunity for the students of Oregon and is being spearheaded by the Oregon Outdoor Education Coalition. I encourage you to read about their efforts at [www.oregonoutdoored.org](http://www.oregonoutdoored.org).

We're sure we don't need to talk to you about the benefits kids get from this type of an experience. There is so much they gain which means Oregon benefits as those young people grow into adults. Currently, approximately 50% of Oregon's 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are denied the opportunity to experience Outdoor School. Inequitable access to Outdoor School contributes to the Achievement Gap in Oregon schools. Only 5 of Oregon's 36 counties report 100% Outdoor School program participation. Four counties report no participation and eight counties report less than 20 % student participation. As you can see, this is an unacceptable situation and the reason we are asking you to support:

- HB 2648: Outdoor School Bill – It Changes Lives. In the House Revenue Committee.
- SB 439: Outdoor School Bill – It Changes Lives. In Ways and Means Committee

The action needed is to amend in committee to attach mechanism for full funding at 22 Million, which would cover the costs of Outdoor School for 50,000 students as described above. That's a lot of money, however, those behind this effort have ideas for funding. They suggest coverage to come from one of two ways, those accessing new money:

- Solid Waste Fee: \$22 million per year from a fee imposed on all disposal sites that receive domestic solid waste through a \$4.40 increase in the tipping fee. This equates to \$3.75 per household per year.
- or
- Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Funds: In 2017, the sources of funds for the Outdoor Education Fund will be a portion of unclaimed returnable bottle deposits currently retained by beverage distributors in an amount not to exceed \$22 million per year.

We hope you know how much we appreciate your service and applaud the work you do. Please, say "hi" to Josie for us and hope we might see you soon.

Sincerely,

Ted and Edie Jones,  
Former owners / Directors of Camp Tamarack, Sisters, OR

## Attention: Rep. Gene Whisnant

Dear Gene:

How nice it is for us to have you as one of our representatives; someone we can go directly to when we have a concern. Even though we are not in your district, we know you always listen and care greatly for the kids of Oregon.

As the former owners of Camp Tamarack in Sisters, Oregon, we are appealing to you for help. There are currently two bills before the legislators in Oregon that would provide full funding for every fifth or sixth-grade student (approximately 50,000 students) to a full week (5 nights/6days) of Outdoor School or a comparable outdoor education experience reflecting local needs. This is legislation that directly affects kids in your district.

This is an amazing opportunity for the students of Oregon and is being spearheaded by the Oregon Outdoor Education Coalition. I encourage you to read about their efforts at [www.oregonoutdoored.org](http://www.oregonoutdoored.org).

We're sure we don't need to talk to you about the benefits kids get from this type of an experience. There is so much they gain which means Oregon benefits as those young people grow into adults. Currently, approximately 50% of Oregon's 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are denied the opportunity to experience Outdoor School. Inequitable access to Outdoor School contributes to the Achievement Gap in Oregon schools. Only 5 of Oregon's 36 counties report 100% Outdoor School program participation. Four counties report no participation and eight counties report less than 20 % student participation. As you can see, this is an unacceptable situation and the reason we are asking you to support:

- HB 2648: Outdoor School Bill – It Changes Lives. In the House Revenue Committee.
- SB 439: Outdoor School Bill – It Changes Lives. In Ways and Means Committee

The action needed is to amend in committee to attach mechanism for full funding at 22 Million, which would cover the costs of Outdoor School for 50,000 students as described above. That's a lot of money, however, those behind this effort have ideas for funding. They suggest coverage to come from one of two ways, those accessing new money:

- Solid Waste Fee: \$22 million per year from a fee imposed on all disposal sites that receive domestic solid waste through a \$4.40 increase in the tipping fee. This equates to \$3.75 per household per year.
- or
- Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Funds: In 2017, the sources of funds for the Outdoor Education Fund will be a portion of unclaimed returnable bottle deposits currently retained by beverage distributors in an amount not to exceed \$22 million per year.

We hope you know how much we appreciate your service and applaud the work you do. Please, say "hi" to Josie for us and hope we might see you soon.

Sincerely,

Ted and Edie Jones,  
Former owners / Directors of Camp Tamarack, Sisters, OR

972258590 SW  
POX Katherine

Dear Representative Lane

I would like to go to outdoor school but I can't go.

Outdoor school would be fun because I love swimming, it will be cool to adventure into the woods, I would like to have a nickname, and learn about science!

My friends will love outdoor school at Ridgewood Elementary school.

P.S Thank

Sincerely, you for your  
Olin Jerde <sup>work</sup> age 8

HB 2648

SS 434

4/13/15

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school is a chance to hang out and get to know other kids out of the school you are in. These days, everybody is always on their advanced technology and ODS gives you a break and shows you nature.

Brandon Bee

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR



Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor School, I believe, is really important to a successful education. It showed me how important wildlife is, and how we need to take care of it. Also it helped me meet new people, which was a nice change from my school's small community. I tried new things too, things I wouldn't usually do if I was in the comfort of my home.

Thank you,

Bridget McIver

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Christopher Sharpe and I am writing to you in support of a full week of Outdoor School for all 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade Oregonians. I believe that the Outdoor School program is one that sets our state ahead of the rest of the country, both in Environmental Education and responsibility, but also in preparing our middle and high school students for future careers as leaders, teachers, and stewards of our beautiful state.

I have been teaching environmental education for 6 years now, all over the country, and have yet to find a program as impactful and important as Outdoor School. Three years ago I moved from Maryland to pursue a career in environmental education, having fallen in love with Oregon on a visit to a friend in Bend, and knowing that Oregon is a pioneer in that field. Being someone who is passionate about the outdoors, I feel that the only way to foster that same love, appreciation, and stewardship in others is to start at the pivotal middle school age. At Outdoor School we bring students from Portland out in to the woods for (ideally) a week away from technology, hustle, and their everyday lives and expose them to nature, community building, and science. One of my favorite things about the Outdoor School program, and something that I've heard echoed by many teachers, is the ability to take a student who struggles in the classroom and show them that they can be successful in learning science in an environment that is not only beautiful and enriching to the soul, but is also comforting, safe, and supportive to ALL students regardless of their background or specific needs they may have.

We are able to take 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from inner city school districts and bring them out into the wilderness, mix them with other students from other schools different than their own, and watch them grow before our eyes. There is nothing more satisfying to me as an educator, than to see a student who was hesitant or even afraid to be here on the first night; crying on the last night because they don't want to leave this place. For many of the students we serve here, Outdoor School may be the only time they feel their needs are supported, they are safe, and like they can get a full 3 meals a day. When you add in the environmental education component, I believe that we create a truly transformational and impactful experience for our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, at a time in their lives when they are highly susceptible to outside influences and are just beginning to form their own identities. Why not provide this opportunity to ALL Oregonian children, why limit that experience to half a week, and most importantly, why not foster in these children an appreciation for our natural wonders and this amazing place we all live?

The work that we do here at MESD Outdoor School and programs like it is unmatched anywhere else in the country. When the program utilizes high school student leaders the impact on both the high schoolers and the 6<sup>th</sup> graders is exponentially magnified. Here at Arrah Wana Outdoor School where I work, we have high school volunteers lead cabins and even teach curriculum on one of four field studies (Plants, Animals, Soil, and Water). While the program is ostensibly for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, and while they do receive a great deal of improvements in self-confidence, STEM proficiency, and learning how to work with others who come from different backgrounds than their own, I feel that the true beauty of the Outdoor School program lies in the work we do with our high school volunteers. I cannot even count the number of times I have helped take a high school student who is unsure of themselves and what their life has in store, and watch them build self-confidence, leadership, and mentoring abilities throughout the course of a week here at outdoor school by leading a cabin of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students successfully. Similarly, I can't count the number of high school students who've told me that Outdoor School represents

a place they feel that they are safe and can be the best versions of themselves, perhaps even one that they feel they can't be at high school. Here at Outdoor School we support and encourage our high school students to be their true selves, believing whole-heartedly, that each one is special and has something to offer to their 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and we foster leadership, self-reliance, and teaching abilities in them. For this reason alone I believe that every county, school district, and municipality, should strongly consider sending their students to Outdoor School. We are creating the future leaders, teachers, and scientists of Oregon.

The work we do with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students here at Arrah Wana Outdoor School is exhausting, and laborious, but is by far the most rewarding and meaningful thing I've ever done in my life. Even as an adult I feel transformed by the power, beauty, sense of belonging, and love I've found here at Outdoor School week in and week out. I am writing to you, not as an employee, but as a citizen who feels so passionately about the need for everyone to experience this place of belonging and true fraternity with nature and their fellow Oregonians, that I would (and do) happily work 16-18hr days, 6 days a week for the rest of my life just to see the smiles on the faces of students as they learn a song, or how to identify a Douglas Fir, or better yet to see their eyes light up when they finally realize that, "Yes! Science can be fun! I can learn something!"

It is in this spirit that I urge you to support SB 439 and HB 2648 that would provide this amazing experience for a full week to our youth all across the state. Oregon has been on the forefront of the environmental movement since its inception, let's keep it that way!

Sincerely,  
Christopher "Peake" Sharpe  
Animals Field Instructor  
Arrah Wana Outdoor School

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Christopher Sharpe and I am writing to you in support of a full week of Outdoor School for all 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade Oregonians. I believe that the Outdoor School program is one that sets our state ahead of the rest of the country, both in Environmental Education and responsibility, but also in preparing our middle and high school students for future careers as leaders, teachers, and stewards of our beautiful state.

I have been teaching environmental education for 6 years now, all over the country, and have yet to find a program as impactful and important as Outdoor School. Three years ago I moved from Maryland to pursue a career in environmental education, having fallen in love with Oregon on a visit to a friend in Bend, and knowing that Oregon is a pioneer in that field. Being someone who is passionate about the outdoors, I feel that the only way to foster that same love, appreciation, and stewardship in others is to start at the pivotal middle school age. At Outdoor School we bring students from Portland out in to the woods for (ideally) a week away from technology, hustle, and their everyday lives and expose them to nature, community building, and science. One of my favorite things about the Outdoor School program, and something that I've heard echoed by many teachers, is the ability to take a student who struggles in the classroom and show them that they can be successful in learning science in an environment that is not only beautiful and enriching to the soul, but is also comforting, safe, and supportive to ALL students regardless of their background or specific needs they may have.

We are able to take 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from inner city school districts and bring them out into the wilderness, mix them with other students from other schools different than their own, and watch them grow before our eyes. There is nothing more satisfying to me as an educator, than to see a student who was hesitant or even afraid to be here on the first night; crying on the last night because they don't want to leave this place. For many of the students we serve here, Outdoor School may be the only time they feel their needs are supported, they are safe, and like they can get a full 3 meals a day. When you add in the environmental education component, I believe that we create a truly transformational and impactful experience for our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, at a time in their lives when they are highly susceptible to outside influences and are just beginning to form their own identities. Why not provide this opportunity to ALL Oregonian children, why limit that experience to half a week, and most importantly, why not foster in these children an appreciation for our natural wonders and this amazing place we all live?

The work that we do here at MESD Outdoor School and programs like it is unmatched anywhere else in the country. When the program utilizes high school student leaders the impact on both the high schoolers and the 6<sup>th</sup> graders is exponentially magnified. Here at Arrah Wana Outdoor School where I work, we have high school volunteers lead cabins and even teach curriculum on one of four field studies (Plants, Animals, Soil, and Water). While the program is ostensibly for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, and while they do receive a great deal of improvements in self-confidence, STEM proficiency, and learning how to work with others who come from different backgrounds than their own, I feel that the true beauty of the Outdoor School program lies in the work we do with our high school volunteers. I cannot even count the number of times I have helped take a high school student who is unsure of themselves and what their life has in store, and watch them build self-confidence, leadership, and mentoring abilities throughout the course of a week here at outdoor school by leading a cabin of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students successfully. Similarly, I can't count the number of high school students who've told me that Outdoor School represents

a place they feel that they are safe and can be the best versions of themselves, perhaps even one that they feel they can't be at high school. Here at Outdoor School we support and encourage our high school students to be their true selves, believing whole-heartedly, that each one is special and has something to offer to their 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and we foster leadership, self-reliance, and teaching abilities in them. For this reason alone I believe that every county, school district, and municipality, should strongly consider sending their students to Outdoor School. We are creating the future leaders, teachers, and scientists of Oregon.

The work we do with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students here at Arrah Wanna Outdoor School is exhausting, and laborious, but is by far the most rewarding and meaningful thing I've ever done in my life. Even as an adult I feel transformed by the power, beauty, sense of belonging, and love I've found here at Outdoor School week in and week out. I am writing to you, not as an employee, but as a citizen who feels so passionately about the need for everyone to experience this place of belonging and true fraternity with nature and their fellow Oregonians, that I would (and do) happily work 16-18hr days, 6 days a week for the rest of my life just to see the smiles on the faces of students as they learn a song, or how to identify a Douglas Fir, or better yet to see their eyes light up when they finally realize that, "Yes! Science can be fun! I can learn something!"

It is in this spirit that I urge you to support SB 439 and HB 2648 that would provide this amazing experience for a full week to our youth all across the state. Oregon has been on the forefront of the environmental movement since its inception, let's keep it that way!

Sincerely,  
Christopher "Peake" Sharpe  
Animals Field Instructor  
Arrah Wanna Outdoor School

Dear Lawmakers,

It is incredibly important for children to go to Outdoor School because it gives them independence that is necessary for growth and development. All kids should have the opportunity to go to Outdoor School because it teaches them things about the outdoors that they can use later in life, and learning in a new environment can be very helpful to children who are struggling. Outdoor School was a very meaningful experience, and I hope you can please support it for all Oregon kids.

Christina  
Age 13  
Oregon Episcopal School  
Portland, OR

April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

I was new to the school the year we went to Outdoor School. I was new and I had friends, but I had only known them for about 5 months, so I didn't feel very close to them. Outdoor school gave me a chance to connect with the people at my school and some people out of my school. The way the education was presented was important, because some people are visual learners and some are mental learner. I feel that both categories of people were catered so they could learn as much as they could. All kids should get to experience that because the information is important and you become closer to your peers.

Claire

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

March 16, 2015

I am a sixth grade teacher at Crook County Middle School in Prineville, Oregon. I also serve as co- director of Crook County Schools Outdoor School program; a program that was the first to start in our state in 1958.

We have organized this quality program to create a rich learning environment. Outdoor School is fun, action packed, and full of memorable moments. At the same time it is a safe place for everyone. Some classes are on riverbanks, or near lakes collecting macro invertebrate stream information; deep in the woods learning about forest ecology, or on a nearby mountain classifying plant species and learning survival skills. But most importantly we are learning about others, ourselves, and our community as we build relationships with the people in our school community.

I am encouraging you to support HR2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 6<sup>th</sup> grader. Here in Crook County this program has been an important part of the community for so many years. It doesn't just affect 6<sup>th</sup> graders but high school students as well. We feel our program is especially unique because of the influence of the senior high students who act as counselors for a 5 day period.

Through the decades we have had several students actually go as a young 6<sup>th</sup> grader, comeback as a high school counselor, and then return as a teacher. This has been a powerful life changing program for literally thousands of people throughout the years.

One of our current teachers was once a young "troubled man" as he would describe himself. He had a teacher believe in him by asking him to be a high school counselor. His week long experience was so powerful that he decided that working with kids could possibly be a career choice. He received his college degree and now is a teacher/outdoor school teacher/coach and father figure to literally hundreds of students who love him dearly. Suffice to say it is a wonderful and powerful story!!

It has been a huge energy drain on our program trying to fund raise and apply for grants year after year. As directors, we are becoming weary of the process and have decided that funding has to be solidified from either the district or state. Please contact us if you have any questions

Sincerely,

Les Parker Co-director

[les.parker@crookcounty.k12.or.us](mailto:les.parker@crookcounty.k12.or.us)

Lori Meadows Co-director

[lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us](mailto:lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us)

Crook County Outdoor School Program



Dear Senator Shields,

Monday, March 23 will bring advocates of outdoor education to Salem for the Outdoor School lobby day. Though I can't join them, as your constituent I'd like to add my voice to the lobby and urge you to support the Outdoor School for All legislation in the 2015 session, Senate Bill 439.

You know how important the Outdoor School experience is for thousands of Portland middle school students. The program is tenuous in every school district budget, and in recent years has been reduced to just two days in Portland. But worse, the vast majority of Oregon school districts do not yet offer the Outdoor School experience to their sixth graders. SB 439 will change that, and support a full week of outdoor learning for every Oregon sixth grader. All 42, 500 of them!

My daughters Laurel and Lydia both participated in Outdoor School as sixth graders at Beaumont Middle School and returned many times as student leaders when they attended Grant High School. Lydia told me about a little girl named Maria in one of her groups from a school in North Clackamas. Maria's family had only recently arrived in Oregon from Mexico and she spoke very little English. At Outdoor School Maria flourished because she and her classmates learned the unfamiliar plant names TOGETHER, and right there she became part of her class in a way she had not been before. At campfire, Lydia said, Maria sang the camp songs with the brightest eyes in the group.

That's what Outdoor School means to Oregon kids. Connection — with one another, with the rivers and forests of Oregon, with their own love of learning. Please support Outdoor School for All, and vote for Senate Bill 439.

Sincerely,

Edward Wolf  
3414 NE 18th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97212  
503-331-1498

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

I'm fourteen years old and in eighth grade. Two years ago, I had the amazing experience of going to Outdoor School. This was the first camp I'd ever been to with kids from different schools, and I loved it. At Outdoor School, I met and made friends with kids from other schools, some of which I still know today. It's a unique and special tradition to me, a memory I will cherish forever. Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids, and help them to have the experience I had.

Thank you,

Ella

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

## ROBIN ZIMMERMAN

---

1282 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Unit 25  
Lafayette, OR 97127  
Cell (503) 560-2517  
grielbill@gmail.com

April 23, 2015

To the House Revenue and Education Committee:

I am asking for support of HB 2648. I am a grandparent, parent, an Outdoor school attendee, a Outdoor School volunteer, and a citizen of Oregon. I want the best for our children and young adults. I believe every student should have the opportunity to experience outdoor school.

At 54 it has been more then 40 years since I attended outdoor school as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. I still carry the memories and lessons I received there. For myself and many of my classmate at James John School in North Portland this was our first experience out in nature and away from home. We arrived at camp both excited and fearful. Soon we were placed in groups with other kids from all over the city. In the short week there we learned trust and how to work as a team. Without even realizing it the science of nature was brought to us in real world scenarios. Many things we learned in classrooms now made sense. And many new lessons that could not be attained through a book were brought to life.

A few years later as a high school student I had the opportunity to volunteer as a camp counselor. I wanted to repay the gift I had received. This was my first experience leading a group of my own. I remembered how I felt back in sixth grade so I was able to relate now. I understood the tension and fear they carried. I was almost overwhelmed at the idea that these kids were looking to me to lead. I remember one boy asking me if I liked having the week away from school and no school work. I explained that as a volunteer I was not exempt from my class work and was expected to make it all up when I got home. The look of appreciation he gave me was priceless.

These experiences are vital in creating an adult that cares. Care about their school work. Care about nature. Care about others. These are the things that make a good "citizen".

Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Robin Zimmerman

March 12th, 2015

Dear Senator Richard Devlin,

Outdoor School is the place where I learned the skills I use in everyday life today. It is the place where I learned the confidence and determination I used to get to get a stable well paying job at 16. It is the place I learned how much I love the natural world, and the people in it. Outdoor School is where my eyes were opened to a new potential for me, a greater me.

Before I stepped off the bus at Sandy River Outdoor School for the first time to be trained as a Student Leader, I was timid, quiet to most, and speaking in front of more than five people would put me in a panic. I knew no one, I sat alone quietly in the loud dining hall, barely spoke a word to anyone. My first week I went home sick near the end. After that I was not going to go back, didn't want to. In December I got a small postcard in the mail, wishing me "Happy Holidays" and on the back was every signature from the staff members I was convinced had forgotten about me entirely. But they hadn't. That moment there I knew I had to come back and put my best two feet forward. The next session I went to Outdoor School three times, each time growing more confident and more willingness to learn. My time at Outdoor School is not done, I still have more weeks to learn more about myself, the wonderful kids I teach and befriend, the natural world, and the people around me. I had moved around a lot, never being in a house for more than three years, I had finally had found a feeling of "Home" that I had never felt before.

Each time I step off that bus one or many new challenges will arise, some things that I'm not ready for, some that I am but thing I need to pull through all the same. I know now that this is the case throughout life. A wise person once told me "The moment you think you know everything is the moment you know nothing at all" and I take that with me wherever I find myself. I am not done learning, I am not done growing, and I am not done supporting Outdoor School and the people attached to it. I never will be. Outdoor School is a place where Sixth graders learn to be themselves through learning about the world around them. Its where High School students learn to be leaders. Its where the future of Oregon is shaped. I urge your support for HR 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to experience Outdoor School.

Thank you for your time,  
Gunnar Pedersen

April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

To me outdoor school is a change to get outdoors and explore the worlds around us. It can teach kids to be more active and that you can have fun away from the computer.

Thank you for supporting outdoor school to all Oregon kids.

Ian

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

April 13 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

I think that Outdoor school is super important. The first time I went to outdoor school was in first grade and I remember being really scared to be away from my family but my classmates were always there for me and the experience helped build my friendships. The way that my classmates treated was so great that it inspired me to treat new students the same way the next year. I don't think this would have happened if I hadn't gone to Outdoor School. I hope you will pass this law to give these experiences to everyone.

Sincerely,

Ingrid Doubleday

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor education is important to me because of the experience and the knowledge of nature you did not know before. You also gain skills you did not have.

Please support outdoor school.

Jacen

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

When I first came to OES for 6th grade, I could not wait to go to Outdoor School. I am the type of person that lives practically half their life outside and I couldn't bare to live somewhere that didn't have anywhere to hike. When I first arrived at Outdoor School, I couldn't believe my dream was coming true. It turned out that Outdoor School was actually a lot better than I had expected, even though I was convinced that it was going to be the best place in the world. Outdoor School became a second home for me, and I still remember the sadness I felt when it was over. I remember bursting into tears as I got on the bus to go home. Outdoor School was all I could think about and I even wore my name tag for the next week afterward. All kids should be able to become this close with nature and the outdoors as I have. In my opinion, it is a very important part of learning. Please give other middle schoolers this chance at being this close to something and having a chance to bond. For the future of our country and our world, give us this experience.

Jacquie Molloseau

Age 12

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR



4/13/15

Dear Lawmakers,

I think that all kids should be able to experience outdoor school because it was a really great learning experience for me and I think it is very helpful both educationally and socially. It helps you learn about nature and the world, which a lot of people don't have access to education about. It also helped me build social skills because, outside of my friends, I am pretty shy, and I don't introduce myself to people that often. I think it helped me because we all needed to learn how to get to know new people in a short period of time, which I think is a good skill to have for the future. These are just a couple of concrete reasons I have for wanting all kids to go to outdoor school, but I think you should support kids getting to go just because it is an amazing and fun experience everyone should have.

Please support Outdoor school for all kids!

Karenn Hall

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

When I first went to outdoor school, I wasn't excited at all. In fact, I wasn't looking forward to it. I was nervous about being away from home for so long, and I hadn't really had the experience of being away for extended periods of time. When we got to outdoor school, it slowly started to grow on me. The friends I made were so much fun, and so were the counselors and teachers who were there. I still remember some of the things that we learned about the soil and environment. Also, I made much better connections with my grade. I was so upset to leave, and I am still in touch with a few of the people I meet. I hope that you will pass this law, because I think that this a valuable experience that I want everyone to have.

Thank you for supporting Outdoor School.

Kendall  
Age 14  
Oregon Episcopal School  
Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

When I went to outdoor school in the sixth grade, I didn't know what to expect to be honest. It became more and more clear to me the further into the trip that outdoor school was a real treat, and it was a reward that just couldn't be matched.

Colin

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Lake Oswego, OR

April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school was important to me because it helped me become educated about the environment and how nature works. All kids should get the outdoor school experience because it is a fun time with friends that also helps educate.

Cole

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor Education gives an opportunity for students to challenge themselves, make new friends, and learn in a new environment. Children that attend outdoor school come back with fun memories and building blocks for their futures. Hands on learning about the environment, making new friends from other schools within your cabin, taking responsibility and having freedom (away from your parents). My experience at Outdoor School incorporated all of these things. I attended Outdoor School in 6th grade (Camp Arrah Wannah). It was a really fun and interesting experience that I will never forget. I made a few new friends that I am still in touch with, spent a week without my family which helped me for later trips, and I learned a lot about the environment we live in. Please support Outdoor School for all Oregon kids, as it will provide building blocks for their futures.

Ky

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School  
Portland, OR

Dear Senator Chip Shields,

My name is Lena Grover and I am a junior at Grant High School. I have been a student leader with the Outdoor School program for three sessions and plan on being a part of the Outdoor School community long after I graduate. I am urging your support for HR 2648 to secure funding for every 5th or 6th grader in Oregon to go through the Outdoor School program. This program is imperative for kids to experience because they receive hands on experiences and they are in an environment that allows the opportunity for success.

I personally went through the Outdoor School program as a sixth grader, and it was one of the best experiences of my middle school career. Because of my student leaders and the supportive environment that was created by Outdoor School, I was finally able to understand how the environment directly affected me and my community. The learning environment that Outdoor School provides encouraged me to come back as a student leader. In doing so, I have taught many sixth graders about environmental sciences. By learning out of a classroom, kids benefit from hands on experiences by being able to see and touch what they are leaning about. By giving 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders an experience, they are able to absorb and comprehend science more effectively because the information is being presented to them in a way that appeals to multiple learning styles. During my time at Outdoor School, I have gained leadership skills and furthered my knowledge on the Pacific Northwest ecosystem. This encouraged me to take college level courses in environmental sciences and has also inspired my future career. Before Outdoor School I was soft spoken and unable to talk in front of large groups, but this community has given me an indescribable confidence that I can now apply in my everyday life. I will forever be grateful for the program that has taught me so much, and hope for every 5th and 6th grader in Oregon to get the same opportunity.

At the end of every week, our site supervisor tells us to never forget the “real world”. Many think that Outdoor School is a vacation from the “real world”, but I can assure it is not. The world we are surrounded by in our day-to-day lives, filled with cell phones, cement buildings, and city lights, is not the real world. Being out in nature, surrounded by a plethora of species and microorganisms, that is the real world. If we do not educate the future generations about the environment, it will crumble. Students should be given the opportunity to inform themselves about the environment that surrounds them everyday. If we do not give them this opportunity now, there will be no world left.

Thank you for your time,  
Lena Grover

## **Letter to Camp Tamarack Leaders from a High School Camp Leader in 2014**

Camp Tamarack and the wonderful people who make it work are a rare gem that cannot be summed up in any amount of words. I have lived in many different places in my life but none as beautiful or wholesome as the environment we are blessed with here. I had an amazing, life changing experience that has given me the confidence to thrive in the real world. Tamarack is not the real world. This place is unlike any other and I hope it lasts forever.

The staff is caring, compassionate and dedicated to providing the perfect atmosphere for outdoor education. Their purpose is to deliver a message to the youth of Central Oregon. They teach us to connect with one another and the importance of our natural world.

They provide a loving, caring, and understanding environment that not every child experiences in the home lives. This place is made to change lives and I am honored to be a part of it. Tamarack is given a handful of terrified student leaders and over a hundred hyperactive 5th grade students. It returns a handful of confident adults and a united understanding group of prepared middle school students. What happens in between is what I call, The Magic. In a matter of a week there is a complete turnaround in attitude, respect, and self-confidence for every individual involved. The amount of personal growth I witnessed in my time at Tamarack was inspiring.

Each night before bed I felt a feeling of proud accomplishment that I do not feel too often. I carry that feeling with me everyday because it gives me the freedom and confidence to take my life in any direction my heart desires. I will be forever grateful to this place for bringing out the best in myself and those around me. Nothing compares to the love of nature and the magic of Tamarack. –

Taylor Richards, High

School Student Leader

March 15, 2015

Heather Stout  
1236 NE Jones RD  
Bend, OR 97701

Representative Knute Buehler  
900 Court Street NE  
H-389  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Representative Buehler,

I am a retired wetland scientist who also reviews Outdoor School grant proposals for the Gray Family Foundation. I am requesting your support for HR2648, which will secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grader to experience Outdoor School.

As a parent who taught stream ecology at Outdoor School, I have seen first-hand how this experience exposes many children to the opportunities and challenges of a week away from parents in an outdoor setting. One would think that living in an area like ours, most of the students would have been exposed to the outdoors, but surprisingly, this is not the case. For many, this is their first time away from home, and often their first time more than 25 miles from where they live.

I have watched how this experience builds self-sufficiency and leadership skills, particularly in the high school "counselors". Many of the activities teach the students to collaborate and work together. Perhaps the most amazing result is to watch the light go on in a child who has had no previous interest in science. I remember one young man who was totally fascinated with a stone fly larva on a rock I had pulled out of the stream. In fact, my own son subsequently served as a teacher at an outdoor school run by a local watershed council.

Thank you for your interest in Outdoor School. If I can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions regarding Outdoor School benefits, please contact me at my email: [ha.stout@charter.net](mailto:ha.stout@charter.net).

Sincerely,

Heather A. Stout



Honorable Representative Doherty  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97310

Benno Lyon  
5738 SW Brugger St.  
Portland, OR 97219

Re: House Bill 2648 "Outdoor School for All"

March 10, 2015

Dear Representative Doherty,

I am asking you to support HB 2648 that would create a funding source for all Oregon 5th or 6th graders to attend a full week of Outdoor School. Outdoor School changed my life, and my current career as a 6th grade science teacher can be directly linked to my own trip to Camp Howard in 6th grade, and the five times I volunteered as a high school Student Leader at Outdoor School.

Oregon has long been a leader in outdoor education. Outdoor School began over 60 years ago in southern Oregon as a way to educate an urbanizing population on the importance of agriculture, forestry and healthy natural systems. We've learned that the kind of hands-on learning rooted in science practiced at Outdoor School successfully engages students and improves learning outcomes. In 2010, Oregon adopted an "Environmental Literacy Plan" targeting all grade levels with age-appropriate experiences using STEM standards that will directly result in improved career opportunities for graduates as well as creating more aware and knowledgeable citizens. Now all we need is to put these great ideas to work for us.

A recent study conducted by the Gray Family Foundation found that less than half of Oregon middle schoolers attend any kind of Outdoor School. Students in poorer districts are particularly deprived of this effective and transformative experience. We are losing a critical opportunity to connect Oregonians across divides of income, geography and knowledge.

Please be a part of the solution to the inequities we currently have in experiential education. Please help create the opportunity for all Oregon students to go to Outdoor School for all. *Outdoor School for All! Oregon grown. Naturally smart.*

Thank you very much for considering this request.

Sincerely,  
Benno Lyon  
6th Grade Science Teacher  
Oregon Episcopal School

April 13<sup>th</sup> 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school is very important to me. From 1st to 3rd grade, my school did a three day outdoor school program. Now, every summer, I go with OMSI for week long over night camps, very similar to outdoor school. The one thing I learned in outdoor schools is the importance of doing your part. You learn this in school, but it is very important on Outdoor School so that your cabin is clean, that you complete tasks on time, and so that you have a good time. I think Outdoor school should be provided for everyone so they can have time to make new friends, have fun, and relax away from the stresses of normal activities.

Makana

Age 12

Portland Oregon Episcopal School

April 9<sup>th</sup> 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor education is important to me because we can learn about the outdoors and how to help it, we can make a difference in the world later in our lives because we have this experience and education in the outdoors. All kids should have the opportunity to participate in outdoor school because we can learn how to help the outdoors and, we can be independent and learn how to think for ourselves at outdoor camp or any other camp.

I think that every kid should have the opportunity to go to outdoor camp because we should have a chance to learn about the outdoors and its many wonders.

Sofia

Age 11

Portland, Oregon Episcopal School

Dear lawmakers,

Outdoor school is very important to a kids life, education and friendships. Outdoor school helps kid learn about nature and the environment. I have learned to love a respect the outdoors from outdoor school. I deeply encourage you too pass this law.

Luke

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

Dear Senator Chip Shields,

I'm an Urban Land Steward at an Oregon land trust, the Wetlands Conservancy. I'm writing on behalf of my personal experience with Oregon's Outdoor Schools.

There is a hidden reason for Oregon's amazing culture. From Portlandia to the small rancher out east, Oregonians are full of surprises because we go against the norms. Oregonians have strong opinions, but they are also open to discussion and think for themselves. Oregonians are something special, and we need to support HB 2648 to keep that critical Outdoor School experience alive. Oregonians are better citizens because of Outdoor School, and I've seen testimony to that on every angle.

I grew up in Beaverton and went to Outdoor School as a 6th grader. I could tell you about how that sparked a change in me that led me to work for an Oregon non-profit dedicated to saving Oregon's estuaries, wetlands and wildlife and educating people of all ages, but I can do one better. On my path to working for this non-profit, I taught at Outdoor School.

Today's children are more relevant than my experience. My brother, a doctor at OHSU, could tell you how the widespread overuse of technology is becoming dangerous to children's health. I'm sure you have a good understanding of this. My best friend, working in social work, could tell you how she sees Portland youth failing to communicate healthily with their friends and family because so much of it happens through a screen. You probably know this, too.

I've seen thousands of students come off of buses and walk into nature, their hands free of machines, their eyes and ears open to the world. They're uncomfortable and vulnerable without their digital safety-net. Although I'm a huge advocate for learning about nature, I would argue the most important thing that's happening at Outdoor School is purely humanitarian. Students are learning to be social and part of a healthy community. Students are learning to observe and listen to nature, and to each other. Students are experiencing their peers and teachers on a whole new level. Students are learning that you can see millions of things on a screen, but a screen doesn't allow you to *feel* anything.

I wish there was a before and after photo of every child at outdoor school. Arriving, students are frightened, nervous, anxious, and shut down. Leaving, students exhibit emotions you want to see in your population. Students are kind, excited, active, smiling, caring, feeling, and charged up for more

experiences. If you want Oregon to be a strong community, you must have Outdoor School. Outdoor School is where people learn to be human to each other.

I will let others tell you statistics and figures. What I know for certain as a born and bred Oregonian is that we need to love this place and each other to survive. Unfortunately, I am unable to be present Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015. However, I would be happy to follow up.

One quick story: Once, a troubled student went missing after dinner at Outdoor School. Staff went running and searching for this student, and he was quickly found sitting in the estuary alone. He said he wanted to go home. Later, I sat with him in the lodge talking. This student had never had anyone run to find him. He didn't grow up in a home that listened and validated his feelings. He acted up a lot in school. It was policy to send the student home and a parent was on their way. At the end of our talk, he looked me in the eye with tears streaming down his face because he was scared to go home. It's not always this obvious, but Outdoor School is a place where people learn what a home really is.

Thank you for working for our future,  
Megan Garvey

Dear Lawmakers.

Please keep outdoor school open to all children of Oregon. Outdoor is important to us all. Me and my class have had many memories there, from making new friends to having fun playing in the fields and coming back to the cabin covered in mud. Kids should all experience outdoor school because it helps kids connect to the outdoors and get away from the modern civilization of technology. As a child, outdoor school helps us connect to our friends and even ourselves.

Nicholas Chang  
Age 13  
Oregon Episcopal School  
West Linn, OR

Oregon State Legislature

I am a long-time outdoor school educator, having taught in programs in Oregon and California for eight years. I also attended a Washington County ods program in the '70s. I recently attained an MAT in environmental education from George Fox University in Newberg in which I focused research on the implementation of the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan (OELP) and HB2544 which calls for Oregon to be environmentally literate by 2030.

Today I write to you on behalf of efforts on HB2648, in which outdoor school programs are provided for all students in the state. Knowing the vast benefits of outdoor education (far beyond the environmental science applications of hands-on learning), I encourage legislation that hastens our state's environmental literacy. The opportunity for 6th grade kids to interactively see nature at work in a residential program, making connections with each other and with their environment, affords many different benefits that are otherwise not on the proverbial test. Of course, outdoor school presents natural science by its very design, but its design also presents cross-curricular benefits across the educational spectrum; individual confidence, citizenship, health and physical fitness, inspiration, community-building, and environmental awareness derived from a well-run outdoor school program can translate back into the classroom as better-rounded students. My graduate studies suggested that outdoor schools set a grand foundation for all the strands of the OELP.

I know that many schools in the state are striving toward achieving a better sense of ecological awareness and that many teachers are open to addressing real community issues. I also know that, around 6th grade, students reach a sense of awareness that allows them to see a larger picture of the world: one larger than simply their own personal world-view. Finally, I suggest that localized and grass roots understanding of one's immediate surroundings (rather than trickle-down standardized education) serves to tie students to community and region. In building an environmentally literate Oregon, a hands-on learning opportunity like outdoor school sets young adults on a path toward understanding their (our) communities, thus empowering them to help make informed and responsible decisions as adults that pertain to focused community issues.

While there is no silver bullet toward reaching environmental literacy, the opportunity for students to recognize the needs of their community by experiencing systems thinking, hands-on learning, team building, exercise, and independence in the course of a residential stay at science camp sets up a phenomenal basis upon which classroom teachers may draw. With concerted effort between schools and environmental education programs, teachers will be able to draw upon outdoor school successes. With more emphasis on what isn't on the test, students become individuals - thinkers - and more than just statistics. Outdoor school teaches children to become active participants in society and that, to me, is what education is all about: not a test score.

Oregon is supposed to be a leader in the country in environmental issues. Our national Congresspeople are a very positive force in this. With the 2009 passage of No Oregon Child Left Inside (HB 2544), the Oregon legislature seemed committed to that goal as well. Six years have passed and, still, the overlapping of the complementary environmental literacy curricular goals with common core goals seems very far removed from public schools. The availability of outdoor schools statewide could serve to bolster the adaptation of environmental literacy to our students and could make our 2030 goal reachable.

There are many environmental education practitioners in the state eagerly waiting for an opportunity to inspire students towards sustainability and environmental literacy. Residential schools can be operated very efficiently - the Corvallis school for which I worked as an undergrad paid only administration, medical personnel, and cooks, while utilizing university students as instructors and high school students as cabin leaders - and resources abound. HB2648 would be a definite step in the right direction toward meeting our 2030 goals in environmental education.

I thank you for consideration of this bill and believe that your support of outdoor schools for all Oregon students will serve a huge service to the state.

Sincerely,  
William F. Nelson  
Bend, Oregon



March 16, 2015

I am a sixth grade teacher at Crook County Middle School in Prineville, Oregon. I also serve as co- director of Crook County Schools Outdoor School program; a program that was the first to start in our state in 1958.

We have organized this quality program to create a rich learning environment. Outdoor School is fun, action packed, and full of memorable moments. At the same time it is a safe place for everyone. Some classes are on riverbanks, or near lakes collecting macro invertebrate stream information; deep in the woods learning about forest ecology, or on a nearby mountain classifying plant species and learning survival skills. But most importantly we are learning about others, ourselves, and our community as we build relationships with the people in our school community.

I am encouraging you to support HR2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 6<sup>th</sup> grader. Here in Crook County this program has been an important part of the community for so many years. It doesn't just affect 6<sup>th</sup> graders but high school students as well. We feel our program is especially unique because of the influence of the senior high students who act as counselors for a 5 day period.

Through the decades we have had several students actually go as a young 6<sup>th</sup> grader, comeback as a high school counselor, and then return as a teacher. This has been a powerful life changing program for literally thousands of people throughout the years.

One of our current teachers was once a young "troubled man" as he would describe himself. He had a teacher believe in him by asking him to be a high school counselor. His week long experience was so powerful that he decided that working with kids could possibly be a career choice. He received his college degree and now is a teacher/outdoor school teacher/coach and father figure to literally hundreds of students who love him dearly. Suffice to say it is a wonderful and powerful story!!

It has been a huge energy drain on our program trying to fund raise and apply for grants year after year. As directors, we are becoming weary of the process and have decided that funding has to be solidified from either the district or state. Please contact us if you have any questions

Sincerely,

Les Parker Co-director

[les.parker@crookcounty.k12.or.us](mailto:les.parker@crookcounty.k12.or.us)

Lori Meadows Co-director

[lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us](mailto:lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us)

Crook County Outdoor School Program

To the Oregon Legislature,

As a high schooler who has experienced all five days of Out door School, I believe the amount of days now should change. Out door School teaches people many skills and provides experiences that schools can't offer. I remember the weather being rainy, but they manage to have fun. I learned skills like public speaking. We had to talk in front of people and that made me stepped out of my comfort zone because I'm not much of a talker. Outdoor School should be fully funded because young students will be able to learn about the outdoors in a fun and better perspective and this is also a fun experience that all students should receive. So can you please support the bills. - HB 2648 and SB 439

From: Madison High School  
Sincerely, Lheiana May

To the Oregon Legislature,

I am Shaun Hannan and I was a part of the final Outdoor School Group to stay 5 days. In these 5 days I got to meet new people from High School, some who would have had me for a job (if I wasn't a 6th grader). I got the hang of things on the 3rd day and once I did that things were great I knew everything was and what to do. The first two days I didn't like too much I couldn't adjust that quickly. The final day was the best of all because everyone was a part of everything and I got to plant my own tree next to the Digger Tree. So I ask that the Oregon Legislature, please, fully fund Outdoor School and the HB 2648 and SB 439 Laws to give the 6th graders a real taste of Outdoor School

Sincerely,  
Shaun Hannan  
Madison High School Student

To the Oregon Legislature,-

My name is Carlee Slorarp. My outdoor experience was great. I remember how everyone throughout the week there switched doing jobs. For example, raising the flag in the morning, taking it down at the day or serving people dinner. So it gave us some responsibility during the week we were there. I learned how to shoot a bow and arrow, about how to tell plants a part and fungus. I learned many more things as well. I won't forget about how every day it was something different and each day something new was learned. Just a couple days don't even compare to a week's experience at outdoor school. A couple days won't cover really anything, a week is perfect. Outdoor school should be fully funded because it's an amazing trip every 6th grader should be able to enjoy. I know I won't forget my outdoor trip in 6th grade, it was the highlight of my 6th grade year. Please pass HB 2648 and SB 439, every 6th grader deserves to experience outdoor school.

Thank you,  
Carlee Slorarp  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

Outdoor School is a place of social freedom and exhilarated and enhanced learning. Mine and the experiences of my classmates at Outdoor School brought them to a new social understanding of themselves, the people around them, and their communities. I felt I knew my friends better, and knew how to make others feel better after I departed during my sixth grade year. Along with the social aspect, Outdoor School educated me in an extreme way. I learned more about biology in five days than I did in three years of middle school science.

The happiness and intelligence which Outdoor School presents to each of its students should be encouraged and supported. Please save and fund Outdoor School approving HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Zane Provenzano

Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature—

My name is Simona Neumann. My outdoor school experience was awesome, and I can't imagine my full week fit into only two days. I remember all the science I learned from the trails and instructors. I also will never forget my counselors, girls I shared my cabin with and even the food! When my brother went to outdoor school the year after me (hearing about all the activities I did beforehand) said it was boring and didn't do any of the things I told him about even though he went to the same site. It was important for me, and it's too bad for kids that they won't be able to experience it for a whole week.

Sincerely,  
Simona,  
Madison High School

P.S. please pass HB2648 and SB439!

Dear Lawmaker,

My name is Ericson Gacutan. I really like Outdoor School because I had an amazing experience meeting new people and learning more about outdoors. What I won't forget is all the things they taught us about outdoors. Please pass the HB2648 and SB439 bills so that a lot of kids like me can have more days to have fun and learn in outdoor school.

Thank you,

Ericson Gacutan

Madison High School student.

TO the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Grayson George I went to outdoorschool and I really liked it, I thought they taught very cool becaus they made it fun and they showed that Science, reading, and math could be a fun thing to do but in a different way of teaching. I loved the activities, the food and the learning my favorite part of our door school was two things. It was the food and the skits they taught to show a lesson. I will never forget the time me and my friend had a hot sauce challenge. I feel like the six graders should have a full week of outdoor school. I would totally do it again if I had the chance. So please fund the HB 2648, and the SB 439 bills.

Thank You, Grayson George

Grayson George, Madison  
Highschool



MAXWELL DOWNING

Dear OREGON Legislators - I THINK that outdoor  
school was a GREAT experience for me for the most part.  
the reason why I say that because I had  
to miss my mother's birthday. I was upset  
about missing it but, it was fine. I THINK  
that the bill should be passed only if  
this happens. use your time wisely  
in those camps and keep better track of the games  
so that someone may have a chance to play  
them. When I was there I was never  
chosen for the stuff I wanted to do  
so I was stuck with field games but  
everything else was quite fun to  
participate in and want to be a  
counselor inside outdoor school next year.  
Please pass HB2648 and SB439 for  
the sake of 6 GRADERS

Sincerely MAXWELL DOWNING  
MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

To the Oregon Legislature-

In middle school, I participated in the last full week that was offered for outdoor school. The full week of outdoor school was among the unforgettable experiences with achieving certain needs for objectives we needed to complete. With all the complete songs I learned, the full week skills we got to work on a present before we left. Limiting outdoor school to only a couple days or taking it away all together limits what the students will learn, and give them the chance to have fun and learn as well, with hard to find that in the learning. Over all outdoor school will help student with learning, and a memorable experience that they will always remember so please fully fund HB2648, and SB439.

Sincerely - Tim Wick

From - Madison High  
School.

To Oregon Legislature,

4/20/15

Hi, my name is James Wark. I really enjoyed my week at outdoor school. It was a ~~opp~~ opportunity for people to meet a bunch of new people form friendships and bond that last forever. I believe the future 6<sup>th</sup> graders need that experience it makes people so much closer and kids don't even complain when it's raining people look forward to go do the activities.

From,  
James Wark Madison high school

P.S. Please Pass HB 2648 and SB 139

To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Jenna Peelen-Higgins. Have you ever gone on a nature hike only to look at leaves and exotic mushrooms? Or wake up with a deer at your window? I have, at Out Door School. I learned about the importance of a good pH level of river and how it affects the fish. We haven't even learned this in either our chemistry or biology class. I won't ever forget singing songs at Camp Fire and just being happy. Who doesn't like being happy, therefore you should look at a couple bills, HB2648 and SB439 to be specific. Think about everyone who loves learning hands on, then look at these bills.

Thank you,  
Jenna Peelen-Higgins  
Madison Highschool

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Naima Gandzadi. How many of you have ever seen a fawn out in the wild? Outdoor school is the only time I've seen one so up close and I'll never forget that experience. On my first day of outdoor school, I was greeted by the sight of a family of deer. Two fawns, a doe, and the only buck I've ever seen in my life. I learned so much about nature and Oregon's environment, that I think all children should be allowed to have a whole week of education in Oregon's wilderness. Three days is not enough to learn and experience everything. It really saddened me when my brother only received three days. Outdoor school should be fully funded so children can fully experience the uniqueness of outdoor school. Please fund HB 2648, and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Naima Gandzadi  
Madison High School

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Madely Cahill. Some of my favorite memories at outdoor school are the campfires and the nature walks. We learned about the pH levels in the water and we learned about dirt. I won't forget the first time I shot a bow. Outdoor School was a really fun experience and therefore you should fully fund HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,  
Madely  
James Madison  
High School  
Student

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Shayla Villegas. I really enjoyed the week I had at outdoor school. I believe that future sixth graders deserve to have a week of outdoor school just as we did. They need time to bond with the cabin leaders as well as the new friends they make. Please pass HB2648, and SB439. Outdoor school should be a thing every sixth grader experiences. You don't get to be that hands on in an actual school.

Thank you,  
Shayla Villegas  
Madison high school

To the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Amalia Price. Have any of you spent time in Nature's arms? Felt the wrath and the love? I did.

It was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. One time, at the nightly campfire, the staff members all got together and did a parody of Lady Gaga's song, Bad Romance! Instead of "Ra Ra Ra" it was "Ara, ara wanna, you should where long pants!" I learned at Outdoor School how to respect Nature and its beauty. And that is something I'll never forget.

Outdoor School should be fully funded because it educates youth on the importance of the environment and they start to become aware of things besides themselves. Please fund HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Amalia Price

Madison Highschool



To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Redsea Truong, I am a Sophomore at Madison High School in Portland. My year was the last class to have experienced a full week of Outdoor School. My time at outdoor school has passed, but the incoming sixth graders have not, and now Outdoor School has been grievously shortened to two days. I remember when I did archery at Camp Namanu, it was Wednesday and raining, yet we all still went outside, got soaked and had a joyous time. I learned in archery that I am a left-handed archer. I also remember learning about pH, something that I have only been skimming over briefly in my current Chemistry class. I won't forget celebrating my birthday at outdoor school, my friend even bought a present with her to give me! Cutting off Outdoor School to two days has been a massive mistake, as there was so much to do, and so little time, even with the full week, there are some things

Dear Oregon Legislature

My outdoor school experience was something that I know I will never forget. It helped me ~~to~~ come out of my shell and go from shy bullied kid to a strong leader. I feel without it, I may not have taken opportunities to build strong relationships, career experience, and of course scientific knowledge. Please pass HB2649 & SB439

Yours Truly,  
Mick Ventrone  
Madison H.S.

To The Oregon Legislature,

My name is Gloria and I can proudly say that the best part of 6th grade was being able to go to outdoor school for a whole week. All my great 6th grade memories happened while in outdoor school. All the new friends I made after falling in the mud multiple times was one of the many great experiences I had on my trip including the time I got to see a deer up close in person, a memory I wouldn't trade for the world. At outdoor I learned many valuable things like how to bring a lot of extra socks because you never know when you might step in the biggest puddle in the world, or to never pick the top bunk because you'll regret it at night when you need to go to the bathroom, but the most important thing I learned at outdoor school is to learn how to meet new people. believe it or not but 2-3 days isn't enough time for people to meet so why not keep it a week? that's why I hope you change your mind with this letter and consider extending outdoor school to a week.

Sincerely,

Gloria

(Madison H.S.)

P.S please pass

HB2448, SB439

To the Oregon Legislature

Dear Legislature,

My name is Bonnie Huynh. I really like outdoor school because I was the last group to be fully funded for five days at outdoor school. I learned about the pH at outdoor school and had a fun time whenever it was recreational time there. Going to outdoor school made my sixth grade class grow a bond together and get close to kids in my class. What I won't forget about outdoor school is dreading to get to the camp and not wanting to leave at the end of the trip. Outdoor school should be fully funded by HB2648 and SB439 because it will be a new experience that kids will enjoy.

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Huynh  
Madison High School

To the oregon legislature.

My name is griffin and I'm from madison high school. I think outdoor school is a worth funding project because kids need to have experience in the outdoors and some of the may pool kids there only opportunity to be in the outdoors and I think every kid should be able to go thru that. The time that I spent at outdoor school was amazing and I learned a lot and also had a great time. If you phase out outdoor school you will phase out Nature in our kids future therefore leaving the future generation less aware. Please save outdoor school.

-HB 2648  
-SB 439

Sincerely griffin Steele  
from madison  
~~High~~ High school

Matthew Simpson  
Musasels  
English 4 p. 4  
4/20/15

Dear lawmaker,

My name is Matthew Simpson. I really like outdoor school because it gave us city kids a chance to experience the outdoors and what makes Oregon so unique and beautiful. I learned about the land and River and had an overall good time while we learned about nature. Not finding outdoor school would rob the youth of an experience that I still hold dearly today.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Simpson from Madison HS

P.S. please support HB2648 &  
SB439

-To the Oregon Legislature-

My name is Noemy Antunez Morales. I am a Sophomore and have carried a childhood memory I will never forget. It was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade when I went to my 1<sup>st</sup> camp. I loved the people and what we learned. We would go to the creeks and look for little insects in the water, with nets. We would inspect them and write observations in our notebook. I still remember the games we played. It was really easy meeting new people, and especially with our cabin people. We didn't want to go to sleep, it was like having sleepovers every day. This camp was outdoor school and no child should be taken away this opportunity to enjoy adventure and meet new people. This was a fun, learning, and exciting experience for me and I hope you fully fund HB2648, and SB439 so they can have the same childhood memories I have.

- Sincerely, Noemy Antunez Morales  
Madison High School

- To the Oregon Legislature -

My name is Jimmy Tran, I really like outdoor school because it gives me a special childhood memory that I would never forget. During my time at outdoor school, I learned how to make friends and ~~enjoy the other~~ actually enjoyed it without be all weird and awkward. I remember ~~that~~ it took me like 2 days to adjust with everything. I couldn't sleep and it was so cold, I just ~~wasn't~~ couldn't stay there until the 3rd day. The 3rd day was when I finally felt like I belong, I enjoyed everything. My favorite part of outdoor was the ~~camping~~ 5 days of good food. So in my opinion all 8th graders should experience 5 days at outdoor school. It's like taking candy away from a baby before the candy even reaches the mouth. Therefore the Oregon legislature should fund H.B. 2648 and S.B. 439. PLEASE GIVE KIDS THE BEST CHILDHOOD MEMORY.

Sincerely, Jimmy Tran  
Madison High School.