

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 Tufan

from

Madison Highschool

P.S,

please consider passing House bills HB2648 and SB439.

Dear Lawmakers,

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

Dear Lawmakers,

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

March 12th, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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

Dear Lawmakers,

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 6th 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

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

Dear Lawmakers,

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

March 15, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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 5th or 6th 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.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Stout
1236 NE Jones RD
Bend, OR 97701

March 16, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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 6th grader. Here in Crook County this program has been an important part of the community for so many years. It doesn't just affect 6th 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 6th 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
Lori Meadows Co-director lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us
Crook County Outdoor School Program

April 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

I am a retired teacher with most of my experience at the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade levels. My husband is retired from the National Park Service as a Resource Management Specialist. Together we have been involved in Outdoor Education Programs in Florida, Oklahoma, and most recently in the Outdoor School Program in the Baker 5J School District in Oregon.

Many students in Oregon are not exposed to contact with the outdoor world around them. We urge your support for HR 2648.

- Passage of this bill will allow all 5th or 6th grade students to experience the hands-on learning needed to understand the environmental relationships that exist within their local communities and in the world at large, as well as the necessity of maintaining these healthy relationships.

- In programs such as those established by the passage of this bill, students learn collaborative skills, self-confidence, and social skills in working with other students to meet the goals of an assigned activity.

Here in Northeast Oregon, we have many opportunities to interact with our surroundings. As instructors in Baker 5J District's Outdoor School for ten years, we have seen students grow in their understanding of forest lands, wetlands, conservation, wildlife habitat, recreational and survival skills.

Please support this worthwhile HR 2648,

Thomas M. and Barbara E. Taylor
40049 Rhody Road
Baker City, OR 97814
541-894-2473
ghosttrail@msn.com

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Gigi Meyer and I own Windflower Farm LLC, a 20-acre, sustainable, bio-diverse produce and livestock farm in Bend, OR

I am urging your support for HR 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to be able to experience Outdoor School. Our state has a proud and longstanding reputation for nurturing our natural resources and appreciating our spectacular, natural environment. Enabling our youth to partake in hands-on, outdoor learning will not only invigorate their individual minds and bodies but also hold promise that Oregon's environmental legacy will continue into the future.

As an elementary and high school student at Catlin Gabel School in Portland, I was fortunate to have many opportunities to explore and study my State's varied and landscapes and ecosystems. These early forays made a lasting impression on me and cemented my desire to create a life that was appreciative of and in tune with the natural world. My stints after college as a caretaker of farms in Puget Sound, WA and in Tuscany, Italy provided me with hands-on education and became critical stepping-stones towards my ultimately owning and managing a farm of my own.

At 56 years of age, I represent the typical age of the American farmer and feel a sense of urgency and concern that our youth be exposed, excited and encouraged to take up the plow and help feed the coming generations in our local communities. Windflower has hosted all ages of students for on-farm activities and learning. This year I've signed on with Rogue Farm Corps' internship program to provide intensive training to a future farmer.

In an era where young children are plugged in early and often to passive electronic devices and spend an increasing number of hours indoors in non-physical pursuits, I feel it is urgent that we provide an antidote to "nature deficit disorder". Funding for Outdoor School would provide young students, at a pivotal time in their development, amazing adventures and meaningful experiences to better connect them to their world and open their eyes to possibilities they might not otherwise know.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet L. (Gigi) Meyer
Windflower Farm
26285 Walker Rd.
Bend, OR 97701
541.318.1417

March 20, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

I am an OSU Extension Service 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent in Baker County, Oregon. For the last 20 years Baker County has conducted a 6th Grade Outdoor School program and I have been a volunteer instructor and an evaluation analysis facilitator.

I encourage your support for HR 2648 to secure funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to experience an outdoor school event.

From my 20 years of outdoor school teaching experience, observation, and compiling evaluation data here is what I know:

- an average of 13 science classes are presented in one week, subjects include forestry, fire, entomology, ecology, botany, watershed, wildlife, archaeology, soils, geology, orienteering
- youth observe adults as instructors in a leadership role and interact with professionals living in their community
- parents have the opportunity to participate and interact with their children during classes
- youth are introduced to possible career paths available in the natural sciences
- youth learn how forestry, insects, ecology, fire, botany, etc. all tie together
- every year, evaluation results indicate a significant impact in knowledge and skills learned at the statistical level of $p < .05$. This means that the program makes a significant difference to their science skills and knowledge learned and we can prove it
- the program provides the opportunity for social skill development within groups. Classes are mixed so students must partner with others they don't know to accomplish a goal or skill
- the program introduces youth to high school science subjects, fulfills science Benchmark requirements, and expands the scope of science learning that the regular classroom curriculum doesn't provide and the teachers don't have time to include in their schedule

Thank you for your support.

Janice Cowan

environment. He increased his knowledge of science significantly in those five days, and overcame many fears related to his social anxiety. He gained the confidence to take on additional new situations after that time. But, we are blessed to have the money to pay for that experience for him. Other students, with needs like his, or other, similar needs, don't have the money. They would benefit so much from this experience, if only they could access it through their public school.

But beyond the emotional connection to this program, Outdoor School is a tremendous educational opportunity for students. So many individuals don't have the ability to learn just by reading a textbook, or listening to a lecture. So many are kinesthetic learners, who need that hands on opportunity. Outdoor School does this. The curriculum incorporates STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math core standards as well as Next Generation Science Standards; and uses hands-on science based applied teaching methods.

Again, I urge you to pass House Bill 2648, to allow every student in Oregon an opportunity to participate in this wonderful program. If you have any questions about the information I have shared with you today, please feel free to contact me by email (taramarieh@msn.com) or by phone (503-348-5660). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tara MH Martin

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Tara Martin, and I am an alum of Multnomah County's Outdoor School Program. I attended as a sixth grade student at Harriet Tubman Middle School, and participated for five sessions as a Student Leader (at the time called a Junior Counselor) while attending Jefferson High School. I returned to Outdoor School while attending Oregon State University to volunteer my time for a week as a Special Needs Student Leader, providing one-on-one services to a student identified with Severe Emotional/Behavioral Needs. I again returned after completing my Bachelor's degree, for two sessions as a staff member with Outdoor School.

As a student, I was shy and hesitant in new situations. The warmth and support I felt while at Outdoor School, and the ability to become a leader in small group situations helped build my self-esteem, as well as my communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills. In high school, my family went through significant stress as my parents divorced, and I suffered from my own struggles with depression and suicidal ideation. My time at Outdoor School helped keep me grounded and brought me a great deal of happiness. I formed friendships at Outdoor School that I still have now, over twenty years after graduating from high school.

My experiences at Outdoor School also helped me determine who and what I wanted to be when I grew up. I developed an appreciation for the forests of Oregon, and a desire to help sustain them through thoughtful practices. Initially, when I went to Oregon State University, I entered the Wildlife Biology Program. This love of the outdoors and science was fueled by my experiences at Outdoor School. When, by the end of my freshman year, I learned that academically, my brain was geared for a different type of learning than that required for a degree in Wildlife Biology, I turned toward another interest that I developed with Outdoor School--caring for kids. I majored in Human Development and minored in Psychology, and knew that I wanted to work with kids who were struggling, just as I had been, and give them the support and light that I was provided while at Outdoor School. I went on, after working on the staff at the Collins and Sandy River sites, to complete a Master of Social Work degree at Portland State University. For the past 15 years, I've been employed as a Child Welfare Social Worker with the State of Washington, where I have been a supervisor for the past two years. Outdoor School can do the same thing for so many other students, instilling self-confidence, social skills, leadership potential; as well as offering High School students experience in teaching, coaching, counseling and other career paths.

Now, as a parent of a first grader at Butler Creek Elementary School in the Centennial School District, I am saddened to know that he will not be able to attend Outdoor School. Our district cut the program because of the reduced budget the last several years. I am active in our school, and currently I am a Vice President on the board of our PTA. But I know that no matter how hard I hope, I cannot change these policies on my own, and I cannot secure the funding for Outdoor School on my own. That is why I am urging your support for HB 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to experience Outdoor School. Today, 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 report 100 % Outdoor School program participation. Four counties report no participation and eight counties report less than 20 percent student participation.

My son has special needs as a result of his premature birth, which include Sensory Integration Disorder and Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Last summer, he was fortunate enough to participate in the weeklong summer day camp, Adventure Wild, that is connected with Outdoor School. He blossomed in that

Dear Lawmakers,

I am a former Outdoor school 6th grader, high school student leader, and staff member.

Outdoor School (ODS) was a pivotal part of my experience and is the reason I work in natural resource restoration and community development today.

Though ODS may seem like a low priority on the list, it provides a lot of what participants are lacking in their lives, providing critical insights for how to work together and collaborate, find joy in learning, teaches critical thinking skills and much needed science, and fundamentally makes our world a better place.

Please support full funding for Outdoor School with HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Sara Ennis

Dear Lawmakers,

I am a former Outdoor school 6th grader, high school student leader, and staff member.

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Though ODS may seem like a low priority on the list, it provides a lot of what participants are lacking in their lives, providing critical insights for how to work together and collaborate, find joy in learning, teaches critical thinking skills and much needed science, and fundamentally makes our world a better place.

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Sincerely,

Sara Ennis

To the Oregon Legislature - my name is Jacks Vin 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 walk 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 me 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, Jacks Vin
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^{heard} 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 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

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 ^{became} ~~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~~ 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 passy 1132648, and 813439.

From Saul Meneses Zurita
Madison High School

I like outdoor
class rooms because,
I like animals and
peeps. We get to learn
with our hands.
Coffey James

Riley Creek
School
7th/8th
4th/5th
Drift Creek
School

R

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Dear Legislators,

I think outdoor education would be very important for school. You should fund this activity because people in Oregon deserve to learn more about where we live. If we don't learn why we should take care of nature how do you expect us to know how to. Outdoor Education would help us very much. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Danni Young

I like outdoor class
rooms because they
are fun.



Dear Legislator,

Can you fund Outdoor School. I would appreciate it. I would love to learn more about nature. It also sounds very fun. I can also make lots of new friends here. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jery Greer

Dear lawmaker,

Hi I'm Alyssa. I think we should have outdoor school because it will be good for us. It's fun and we can learn science in it which is amazing. I don't know how a day don't go outside so it will be good and healthy. Please allow us to go camping to, then we can have a nice day.

Love,

Alyssa Delano

Dear Legislator,

I wish you would put aside some money so that we who want to go could go. Some of my friends and I would love to go to the Outdoor School. One of my best friends Joey and I love the outdoors. We used to go up into the mountains and watch the birds and the deer fly and run around. Any way, I wish that you could leave some money aside so that we (all) could go to the school.

Thank you for
your time,

Emanuel Quisora
Galaxie Spray Paint Art

Dear Lawmaker,

I highly support the idea of an outdoor school. Outdoor school would provide a different environment for education but still be fun.

Outdoor school has taught me about how to help the environment by doing small things that would have a big effect on the environment.

I enjoy outdoor school because I can hang out with my friends and make memories with them, like the time we helped to clean the creek and we ended up having fun by seeing who could clean up the most trash out of it.

It would be amazing if outdoor school was funded, so we could go to the camp and learn more!

Sincerely,
Katie Schaller

Dear Legislator,

Outdoor school / education is very important for us, not only to learn, but to be active. We can learn about invasive species and other animals/plants. I would really appreciate it if you would let us kids at Riley Creek go. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Destiny

Dear Legislator,

I would be to go to
an outdoor school. I would
really be fun and I would
to be with them. I would
I would be with them. I would
It is so fun.

Dear Lawmakers,

I'm a student from Gold Beach, OR.
I've never done or been to an outdoor
school. When we go outside in science
it's fun because we get to go out to the
river and work on it to make it even more
beautiful. I would love to go outside
more than just science. I love the outdoors.

Jordann Hogue

Out door school is important to me
because I get to get in touch
with nature. And it helps me chill
out.

Dear, law maker

I think outdoor school is really important because it helps with the environment, and it helps all the animals there too. Even though I haven't been to an outdoor school, it still is very important, and I think would be a great experience.

Sincerely,

-Brandon

I would want to go to outdoor school, because I've never been, and it sounds like a fun experience

Dear Law Maker,

I would really love to have an outdoor school. Because I've never gotten to go to an outdoor school, but when we go outside in science class I love it.

Kiana
5/11/13

Dear law makers,

I am a 8th grader in Gold Beach. I really enjoy outdoor classes. It actually gets the entire class involved. And we all look forward to it. It makes us see the beauty of doing good in nature.

Sincerely

Jessica

Dear Lawmaker

I would love it if you funded
outdoor school because it
is amazing and I would love
to go to outdoor camping for
five days with my friends.

Sincerely Yours,
Jonny more

Kathryn T.

Our outdoor school is helpful
to me because it teaches me
the importance of taking care
of nature and restoring
natural habitats.

Dear law makers,

I am a 8th grader in Gold Beach I really like Outdoor classes because the whole class contributes to the amazing project that we do to our creek area.

Sincerely

Alyssa

Carroll

Devon
Wolford

I've never gotten to go to outdoor school, but every time we go outside and do physical work I love it. It would be cool to me if we were able to do that.

Phoenix
Callarza

I would like to go to outdoor
School because I like to do stuff
outside and it helps keep me active

Dear law maker,

I've never
been been to
out school before.
The closest I've
ever been to out
door school's going
out to the creek once
a month.

- Sammy.

Shada

I like outdoor classrooms
because I Love to spend time
in NATURE!



Ansen
4-13-2015 Converse

what I like about an
outdoor classrooms is that
you can move around more
and you can learn things
outside.



Outdoor education

We should have outdoor education
because if we are inside we
can't plant plants. If we are
outside we can't get air + everything

Ruth

Brooke Richard

I like outdoor classrooms because you get
to explore outside and learn about
the outdoors and we got
to catch bugs and it was
really fun and interesting



Outdoor Classrooms

So you're asking me about my opinion on outdoor Classrooms? Well, my opinion is not good... it is way better, it is great! I love getting out of a building and stretching but, most of all having fun! An outdoor Classroom is a good experience for students and adults too! I also love to do activities that are both fun and you learn at the exact same time!! Also the students can have a privilege of learning about things you don't normally learn about in classrooms,

By: Neesa Nelson

The Outdoor Classroom

I like the outdoor classroom because when we go on field trips with Statia we learn about nature outside, hands on. I also like the outdoor classroom because we are not trapped inside all day. That is why I like the outdoor classroom.

The end

by, Tiana

My favorite thing about outdoor education is that you are outside not trapped in a classroom. I also enjoy learning the different things that outdoor education teachers teach which is something not all students learn, we get this privilege which I am so glad that we have it.



Sincerely,
Wiley



Ruben
Watson

I like outdoor

classrooms because

you get fresh air.



I love outdoor class rooms
because you learn more because
you get fresh air and get to exercise.



Sierra White 4/14-15
Driftwood School

My favorite thing about outside watershed is how we are
learning how animals survive and how we can survive in the
wilderness. The reason I love learning how me an other
living things is because it is so cool to see animals
and see how awesome it is. I also like how we
are not in a small classroom I like space. That is
why we should have outside classrooms.



Ty
Dear 6th grader's student

These last 


Cople day have
been good. here are

Some good tip's for


you today ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

- 1 be good to other student's
- 2 if a student's are picking on you tell a teacher
- 3 do your best
- 4 have fun



- 5  be good for your teacher's & yourself
HAVE A GREAT T.I.M.E

dear, 6th Grader

You will PROBABLY have A GREAT TIME AT Outdoor
School The food is great And The student
leaders ROCK!!! ~~Rock~~ Well. AT least some
~~the~~ I went To CAMP AddAMS Milk
Creek I Wished I Could have Gone To
Namamu But I still had lots of fun if
you do go To MilkCreek They have heated
CABBINS And Cool People if you do go
look for Cherrio, Monkey, SEAweed, PIKA, ~~And~~ Golly
Theres More But ~~these~~ These Are my favorite
yep Thats Right I AM Really nice  Anyway
WHATEVER CAMP you go to AS long AS you
NOT Goth, emo, preppy, PLASTIC, OR ^{any} CLEAN FREAK---
you might ~~to~~ HAVE fun

Sincerely: AnonAmou5

Regina

Dear 6th grade students here in out door school
I think U would really like the field study's
~~are~~ They are awesome U get to learn so much
about soil, plants, water, and Animals. U will also like
all the student leaders.

Monkey

Pika

Gorilla

Scalped

Opah

Cherrieo

Comet

Snow Flake

Ninja

Lycs

These are not all of them but those are my
favorite they are awesome and really funny.
I think the worst part of out door school
is that U have so many rules and a lot
of things has to be super perfect but
U will have lots of fun and learn a
lot. And follow Perch.

Perisafate

Enviement

Respect

Caroperate

have fun

to the out door school is a wonderful
place the food is some of the
best food I have had in
my life. I am a bit sad
about leaving because some of
my best friends stay here
I really like our student leader
Leonardo and all the other
my cabin mates are
a little crazy and we wake
up to early

Dear, future 8th graders

Hi I am writing in a clearing on a log
 submerged in water. The campout was okay
 the only thing is that I have to sleep in a
 cabin with other Behads. It's okay here the
 food is the best thing here. So don't
 come unless you are a bottom less pit
 like me ~~if~~ if you have foul stories
 the stuff will gladly fill them up. I
~~will~~ yes I have foul
 stories.

Hungry awaiting next meal,
 Dorian P. D

Participation

Dear 6th Graders If you are
reading this than you must be
riding the bus to our school so
let the fun begin here are a few
tips,

1. Sing the songs and don't be embarrassed
2. Listen to the ~~field~~ ~~street~~ ~~teachers~~ it will serve you well

Here's a list of the awesome staff

Cruz, tempo, Odacide, Stanely, Golly, Monkey, Snowflake.

P.Ha, seaweed, Boah, tortuga, Mo, Clover, Sherlock, Cosmo

Proctor, Leopardo, Abeldien.

If you see them say Hi.

Sincerely, Aubrey

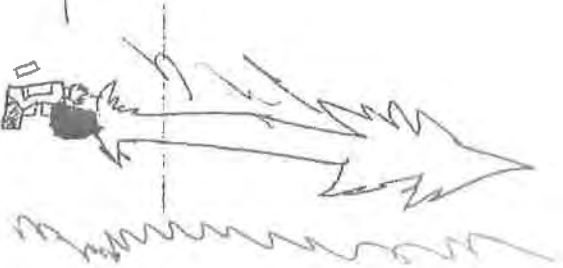
P.S. the Food and Rec.
is Great!!!

00x

Pew whoever,

the Food Amazing!
Field Study Great
Other schools mean

Ben S. — Out —



to Andan

hello Mr. Future! im from the Past... do you
have any more beads yet? did you lose any? !!
did you tell anyone the.... "Secret" hat, and can
you tell me how to Play the stick game?
remember the weird Song tongue twister...



Gabe

hi I'm from the past whats up
dont think about your family or call
them it makes it worse if you miss
them oh ya ~~WAAAAA~~ I quot from Joe
"dont get a crash on eny of the girls"
they have great food so many cookies
its osom but you will cry when you
leave I did



Dear 6th grader,

Outdoor School is very Fun, the Food is very good and the Activities are great. There are a few rules but if you follow them you should have Fun... Oh, and if they are there, say hi to Crash and Tempo for me. They are some of the coolest people there.

Ben P.

Skyler B

Dear future self!!

All of the student leaders names
Monkey, Pika, Comet, Snowflake,
Odacidae, Aberdeen, Gally, Igua, Ooh,
Seaweed, Cheerio.

I had so so so so so so much fun
and remember the Purple Stew song
me regina and king and maria monkey
and pika all had so much fun doing
the ma and pa skit. all of the student
leaders were so so so so much fun
to hang out with we did so much
cool stuff together.

But most of all we

Had

Fun!

Samuel

Dear 6th grade student

If you are reading this you are probably wondering about If outdoor school will be fun or not well It will be **AWESOME!** I'm having tons of fun. If you go you will remember the outdoor school always. SO GO!!!

Sincerely,
Samuel

11/11

Dear 6th Grade students, Jackie T.
The student leaders that I like,
Oh and you mite like to...



- 1 Seaweed
- 2 Snowflake
- 3 Golly
- 4 Iguana
- 5 Ooah
- 6 Comet
- 7 Cheerio
- 8 Monkey

Remember

Participation : PERKUT
Environment
Respect
Cooperation
HAVE FUN ▽

There not in order the way
I like them but I like all
of them ▽

It is so much fun here ▽ You
will have different classes/field study, like
water, Animals, Soil, and plants ▽ water
is soooo much fun and so are the
rest ▽ when your in soil you will get
to put this stuff on your face and you
will look sooo cool ▽ In water you
will get to say mujaiaahaha ▽ but you
only say that if the teacher says
"Dangerous Chemicals" lol ▽

Recreation is fun too ▽ I really like
capture the flag ▽ I have also done
arturey ▽ that is with bows ▽  
And you mite see deer ▽ The view
from the water is really great ▽ Oh
and the cabins are heated ▽ that's
fun ▽ You go to bed at 9:30 and
wake-up at 6:45 In the morning ▽
Hope you have fun peace ▽ Jackie →

Dear 6th grade students,

If you want to know about Outdoor School, you don't ~~get~~ get much free time at all whatsoever. They sing songs every chance ~~you~~ they get. You raise and take down the flag twice a day. You must participate in songs, flag and games if you don't want a gross look from either student leaders or other kids. Everyone learns at the same pace and so if you are intelligent then you'll probably not learn much at all whatsoever. If you want something more positive, some of the student leaders are pretty cool and the food is exceptional, and you do get to sleep on mattresses. But other than that, don't give your hopes up. This place is like a mix between the military and a nut house. Enjoy!

signed,



Hazel

~~Dear~~

~~to~~

Dear 6th grader!

if you go to outdoor school here
are some tips:

- follow P.E.R.C.H.

Perch is:

P = participation

E = Eco-friendly

R = Respect

C = Cooperation

H = **HAVE FUN!**

- don't forget to ~~sing~~ sing along & the sing along song!
- make as many friends as you can (not from your school!!)
- follow your group leader!!
- Do the best you can to make this fun for everyone around you and yourself as well!

HAVE FUN! Love, Hazel y and ²⁰⁰⁹ 6th graders

Dear fifth grader,

I apologize if your dear parents forced you to come.
This is a military camp with out the guns. ~~Any day~~
Asylum I say!



Dear 6th grader, here are some things to know
about Outdoors School:

the people have a song for about EVERYTHING!
So don't take it as a joke when people tell you
that.

try and make "freinds" so that way if you
don't get with all your friends you can have
some connections =)

make stuff FUN, I know that sounds weird.
but Really if you =) Just TRY making stuff be
fun, it will go muchh smooother = x

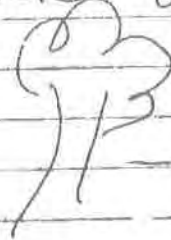
Don't Eat flie's! :-> Haha, that made me laff! P

~~HOPE STUFF WORKS OUT =)~~

(and you don't get stuck with

MEAN people :))

Haha Sierra Sunshine!



tree!

To Representative Mike McLane –

My name is Gigi Meyer and I own Windflower Farm LLC, a 20-acre, sustainable, bio-diverse produce and livestock farm in Bend, OR

I am urging your support for HR 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to be able to experience Outdoor School. Our state has a proud and longstanding reputation for nurturing our natural resources and appreciating our spectacular, natural environment. Enabling our youth to partake in hands-on, outdoor learning will not only invigorate their individual minds and bodies but also hold promise that Oregon's environmental legacy will continue into the future.

As an elementary and high school student at Catlin Gabel School in Portland, I was fortunate to have many opportunities to explore and study my State's varied and landscapes and ecosystems. These early forays made a lasting impression on me and cemented my desire to create a life that was appreciative of and in tune with the natural world. My stints after college as a caretaker of farms in Puget Sound, WA and in Tuscany, Italy provided me with hands-on education and became critical stepping-stones towards my ultimately owning and managing a farm of my own.

At 56 years of age, I represent the typical age of the American farmer and feel a sense of urgency and concern that our youth be exposed, excited and encouraged to take up the plow and help feed the coming generations in our local communities. Windflower has hosted all ages of students for on-farm activities and learning. This year I've signed on with Rogue Farm Corps' internship program to provide intensive training to a future farmer.

In an era where young children are plugged in early and often to passive electronic devices and spend an increasing number of hours indoors in non-physical pursuits, I feel it is urgent that we provide an antidote to "nature deficit disorder". Funding for Outdoor School would provide young students, at a pivotal time in their development, amazing adventures and meaningful experiences to better connect them to their world and open their eyes to possibilities they might not otherwise know.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet L. (Gigi) Meyer
Windflower Farm
26285 Walker Rd.
Bend, OR 97701
541.318.1417

April 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

I am a retired teacher with most of my experience at the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade levels. My husband is retired from the National Park Service as a Resource Management Specialist. Together we have been involved in Outdoor Education Programs in Florida, Oklahoma, and most recently in the Outdoor School Program in the Baker 5J School District in Oregon.

Many students in Oregon are not exposed to contact with the outdoor world around them. We urge your support for HR 2648.

- Passage of this bill will allow all 5th or 6th grade students to experience the hands-on learning needed to understand the environmental relationships that exist within their local communities and in the world at large, as well as the necessity of maintaining these healthy relationships.

- In programs such as those established by the passage of this bill, students learn collaborative skills, self-confidence, and social skills in working with other students to meet the goals of an assigned activity.

Here in Northeast Oregon, we have many opportunities to interact with our surroundings. As instructors in Baker 5J District's Outdoor School for ten years, we have seen students grow in their understanding of forest lands, wetlands, conservation, wildlife habitat, recreational and survival skills.

Please support this worthwhile HR 2648,
Thomas M. and Barbara E. Taylor
40049 Rhody Road
Baker City, OR 97814
541-894-2473
ghosttrail@msn.com

environment. He increased his knowledge of science significantly in those five days, and overcame many fears related to his social anxiety. He gained the confidence to take on additional new situations after that time. But, we are blessed to have the money to pay for that experience for him. Other students, with needs like his, or other, similar needs, don't have the money. They would benefit so much from this experience, if only they could access it through their public school.

But beyond the emotional connection to this program, Outdoor School is a tremendous educational opportunity for students. So many individuals don't have the ability to learn just by reading a textbook, or listening to a lecture. So many are kinesthetic learners, who need that hands on opportunity. Outdoor School does this. The curriculum incorporates STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math core standards as well as Next Generation Science Standards; and uses hands-on science based applied teaching methods.

Again, I urge you to pass House Bill 2648, to allow every student in Oregon an opportunity to participate in this wonderful program. If you have any questions about the information I have shared with you today, please feel free to contact me by email (taramarieh@msn.com) or by phone (503-348-5660). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tara MH Martin

Hello Representative Piluso,

My name is Tara Martin, and I am an alum of Multnomah County's Outdoor School Program. I attended as a sixth grade student at Harriet Tubman Middle School, and participated for five sessions as a Student Leader (at the time called a Junior Counselor) while attending Jefferson High School. I returned to Outdoor School while attending Oregon State University to volunteer my time for a week as a Special Needs Student Leader, providing one-on-one services to a student identified with Severe Emotional/Behavioral Needs. I again returned after completing my Bachelor's degree, for two sessions as a staff member with Outdoor School.

As a student, I was shy and hesitant in new situations. The warmth and support I felt while at Outdoor School, and the ability to become a leader in small group situations helped build my self-esteem, as well as my communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills. In high school, my family went through significant stress as my parents divorced, and I suffered from my own struggles with depression and suicidal ideation. My time at Outdoor School helped keep me grounded and brought me a great deal of happiness. I formed friendships at Outdoor School that I still have now, over twenty years after graduating from high school.

My experiences at Outdoor School also helped me determine who and what I wanted to be when I grew up. I developed an appreciation for the forests of Oregon, and a desire to help sustain them through thoughtful practices. Initially, when I went to Oregon State University, I entered the Wildlife Biology Program. This love of the outdoors and science was fueled by my experiences at Outdoor School. When, by the end of my freshman year, I learned that academically, my brain was geared for a different type of learning than that required for a degree in Wildlife Biology, I turned toward another interest that I developed with Outdoor School--caring for kids. I majored in Human Development and minored in Psychology, and knew that I wanted to work with kids who were struggling, just as I had been, and give them the support and light that I was provided while at Outdoor School. I went on, after working on the staff at the Collins and Sandy River sites, to complete a Master of Social Work degree at Portland State University. For the past 15 years, I've been employed as a Child Welfare Social Worker with the State of Washington, where I have been a supervisor for the past two years. Outdoor School can do the same thing for so many other students, instilling self-confidence, social skills, leadership potential; as well as offering High School students experience in teaching, coaching, counseling and other career paths.

Now, as a parent of a first grader at Butler Creek Elementary School in the Centennial School District, I am saddened to know that he will not be able to attend Outdoor School. Our district cut the program because of the reduced budget the last several years. I am active in our school, and currently I am a Vice President on the board of our PTA. But I know that no matter how hard I hope, I cannot change these policies on my own, and I cannot secure the funding for Outdoor School on my own. That is why I am urging your support for HB 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to experience Outdoor School. Today, 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 report 100 % Outdoor School program participation. Four counties report no participation and eight counties report less than 20 percent student participation.

My son has special needs as a result of his premature birth, which include Sensory Integration Disorder and Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Last summer, he was fortunate enough to participate in the weeklong summer day camp, Adventure Wild, that is connected with Outdoor School. He blossomed in that

April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

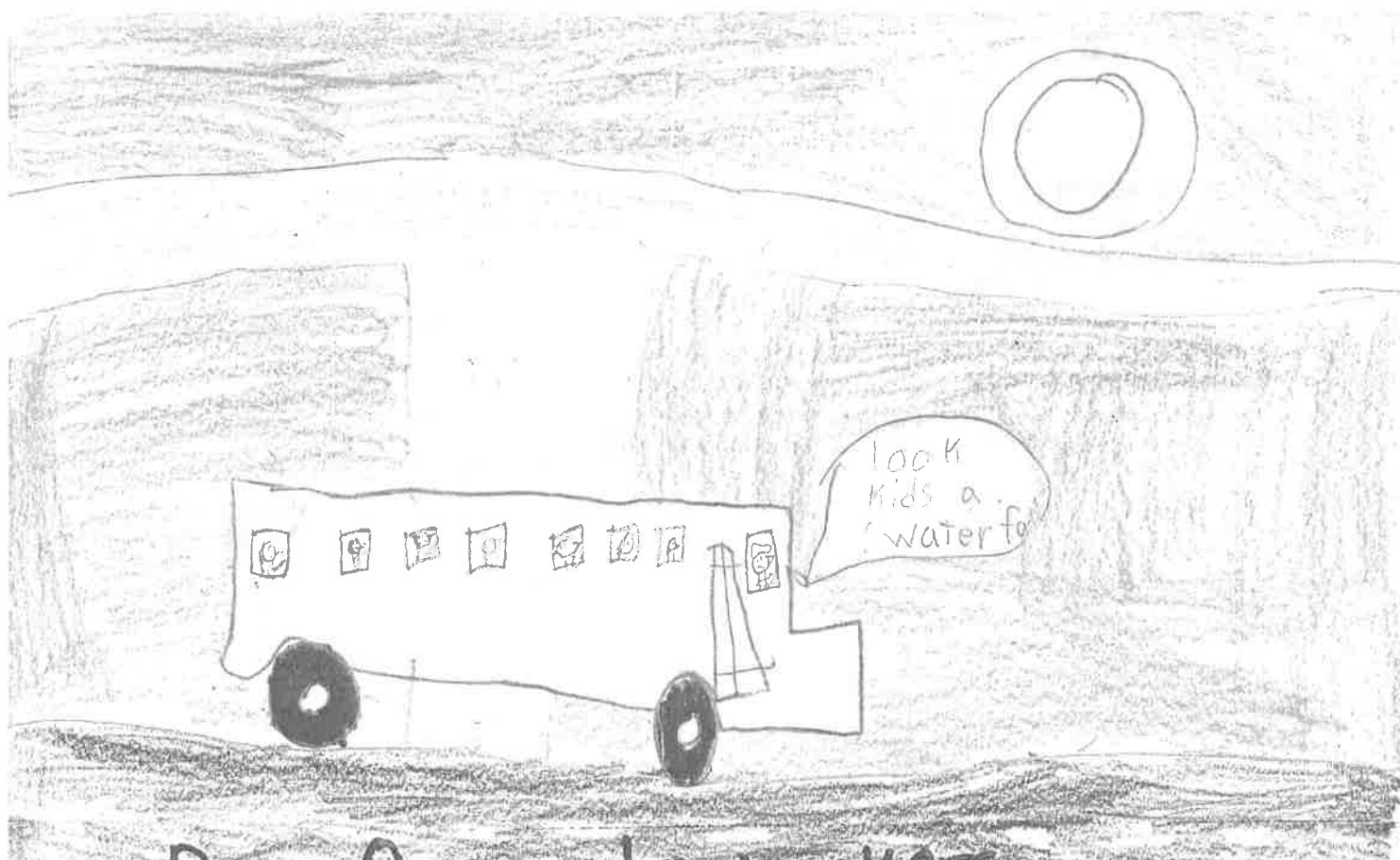
When I was in 6th grade, my class got the opportunity to go to Outdoor School. I remember hearing seventh graders talk about their experiences and hearing them talk all about the amazing time they had. I have to admit, the idea of leaving my family for a week and spending it with people I had never met before was scary. However, by the end of the week I had many new friends and from different schools all over Oregon. Not only was Outdoor School educational, but it gave me a chance to be more outgoing and step outside of the box to meet new people. I remember that the last night at outdoor school was full of tears. My entire cabin could not stop crying because we had become so connected over the course of the few days. Before departing, I remember crying as I waved goodbye to all of the awesome counselors and my new friends. I hope that other kids will be able to say they had an experience like this because I know that I will never forget spending nights by the campfire talking with my newfound friends about the salmon migration process and comparing the beads and badges we had earned over the course of the day.

Skylar

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR



Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

Please support Outdoor Education
for all students in Oregon.

The best part of learning
outside is that we can
learn about science outside.

We love Going outside. ☺

Crook Co. Sincerely, Isabelle

2nd Grade Powell Butte Community Charter

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

When I went to Outdoor School in 6th grade, I had a really fun time. I got to meet new people and make new friendships, I got to learn new things that I wouldn't have learned in normal school, and I got to try new skills that I didn't know I had. Outdoor School is a great way for children to connect with the environment and other schools that they wouldn't have been able to without this program. I believe that every kid should be able to go to Outdoor School and should be able to connect in this way.

Thank you,

Rhea Mehta

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school may seem like a minor experience that costs money and is slowly becoming an old tradition fading away. When it is actually an amazing experience that teaches kids valuable information about the world around them. Here in Oregon we are known for being "green" with lots of natural forests and wildlife. What would be the point of our future generations not knowing the importance of what Oregon is so proud of.

I was lucky enough to go to Kiwanilong, Hancock, and Arrah Wanna for outdoor school. I had an amazing time and wouldn't hesitate to go back. I cannot imagine Oregon without outdoor school.

Rebecca Walters

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor Education brings students together and teaches them how to appreciate the natural world. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend Outdoor School and have since been a changed person. I became more open to nature and to my peers and learned in a complimentary but different way from my classroom experience during the trip. I feel that everyone, no matter what background they come from, should be able to experience Outdoor School. Please support Oregon's youth.

Raja

Age 14

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 6th grader. Here in Crook County this program has been an important part of the community for so many years. It doesn't just affect 6th 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 6th 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

Lori Meadows Co-director

lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us

Crook County Outdoor School Program

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

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

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 23rd, 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 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

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

April 9th 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

April 13th 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

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

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 5th or 6th 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.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Stout

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

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 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

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

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,

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

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

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 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

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

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 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,

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

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

ROBIN ZIMMERMAN

1282 3rd St. Unit 25
Lafayette, OR 97127
Cell (503) 560-2517
grietbill@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 6th 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

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

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

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 6th grader. Here in Crook County this program has been an important part of the community for so many years. It doesn't just affect 6th 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 6th 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

Lori Meadows Co-director

lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us

Crook County Outdoor School Program

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

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

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 6th 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 6th 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 Lawmaker,

My name is Christopher Sharpe and I am writing to you in support of a full week of Outdoor School for all 5th or 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 Lawmaker,

My name is Christopher Sharpe and I am writing to you in support of a full week of Outdoor School for all 5th or 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th 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 6th grade students successfully. Similarly, I can't count the number of high school students who've told me that Outdoor School represents

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

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

972258590 SW
PDX Kathrine

Dear Representative ^{long}

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, ^{writer} you for your
Olin Jerde age 8

HB 2648

SB 439

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.

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 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 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.

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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

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

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

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

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



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 standardized, 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 SB239 bills. Because with that outdoor school experience, they might do something wonderful for this world.

Thank You

Truely, Phillip A. Lord
Madison 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 1432698

and
53439

To the Oregon Legislature - My name is Luis Chan.
I really like outdoor school because it is a new
experience for boys and girls in Oregon. I 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
I my friends. When I was going back home I knew that
I have gone to outdoor school to learn science and nature
hands 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
animals, plants, our earth and how the ecosystem work
something I will never forget. Outdoor school should be fully
founded by passing these two bills HB 2648 and SB 418
because every 6th grader deserves to go to outdoor school
for a full week - Thank you.

Sincerely Luis Chan

-1005 Madison High School

To the Oregon DFG, Wildlife,

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 covered our names in wood, help
take care of the wildlife, and shot bow & arrow so
that was learnt through five days more
than getting two days. Kids won't
get the same experience like how I did it
you only get two days worth of learning
& fun. Please fully fund HB 2648 &
SB 429 for the future.

Thank you,

Patrick Kenna

Madison High School

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Name: <u>Ramon J. Jr.</u> | Topic/Objective: <u>Save outdoor school!</u> |  |
| Class/Period: <u>Mr. McDaniel's</u> | | |
| Date: <u>4/20/15</u> |  | |

Essential Question:

| Questions: | Notes: |
|------------|---|
| | Dear Lawmaker, |
| | My name is Ramon Jackson Jr. |
| | In 6th grade I went to Madison 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 campfire 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 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 ~~to~~ 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

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 do! If you know me 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 Howard 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, it's 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 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, plants, animals, 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 a 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 SB434.

Thank You, Marcos Michel

Madison high school

To the Oregon Legislators -

I am Ratanya. In my 6th 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
• SB139.

• Ratanya Zachman
April 20th 15

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 it's 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

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 ^{too} 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 ^{that} 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 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 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 SB4139 are passed then current 6th graders will be able to attend

Outdoor School and in the future reflect on their time.

Sincerely Billy M.

Madison High School

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
www.odspartnership.org



TWIN ROCKS FRIENDS CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER
P.O. Box 6 ♦ Rockaway Beach, Oregon 97136 ♦ 503-355-2284 ♦ 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 Core² and the Next Generation Science Standards³ 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.

² <http://www.corestandards.org/>

³ <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

April 20, 2015

Regarding HB 2648 and SB 439

Dear Lawmakers,

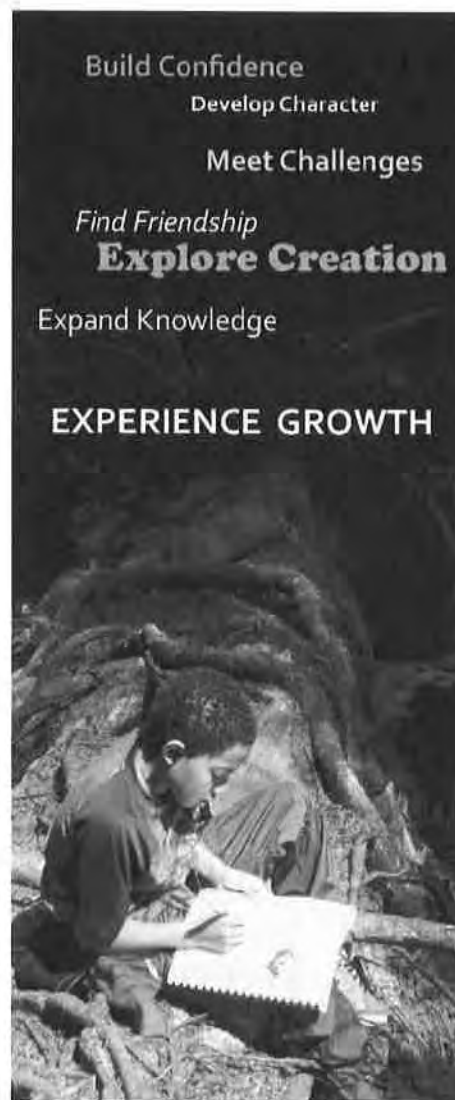
I am a trained teacher licensed in Oregon and have committed much of my life to outdoor schools because they address my personal goals and philosophies as a holistic educator. Ron Miller, founder of the journal *"Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice"* gives the following definition for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

"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

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



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-JH.

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

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!

dyl/27 megan

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

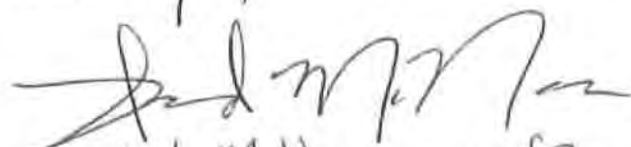
Re Outdoor School
SB 439
HB 2648

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 McNamee, mom of 2

and former outdoor school participant.

Dear Oregon Legislature,

Please fund Outdoor School
for all 6th 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

4.11.15

Dear Oregon Legislature,

Please fund Outdoor School
for all 6th Graders in
Oregon.

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

Thank you! - Matt Taylor

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

Dear Oregon State Legislature

Outdoor School is a transforming experience for many Outdoor 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 ~~cabin~~ 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

Thank you for supporting all
6th graders, ^{including} 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

RE: Senate Bill 439 > YES!
House Bill 2648

4.11.15

Dear Oregon Legislature,

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.

This year my daughter is a 6th grader who will finally get to go - a bit late & for a shorter trip, but she is very excited. 6th 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 6th graders.

Thanks Anne Mullan
Portland 9/2/14



11th 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 6th 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. ↴

Re: Senate Bill 439
House Bill 2648

Dear Oregon Legislature -

I urge you to fund outdoor school
for all 6th 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 read "John Munn", is written below the main text.

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

Dear Oregon Legislature,

It's very important to fund outdoorschool.
I personally am a 9th grader who had the
luck to be able to go to the (admittedly
shortened) outdoorschool over Halloween sixth
grade.

~~There~~ There was the initial tears & disap-
pointment but ~~and~~ 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 if you'd
like it or not out there.

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

Andra M.

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 6th graders (in OR),
because we all know it as
one of the main highlights
of 6th grade. ~ Maggie C, 6th grader

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 6th grade way better!

- Haylie King

6th grader

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.

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 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

March 15, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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 5th or 6th grader to experience Outdoor School.

As a parent who taught stream ecology at Outdoor School, I have seen firsthand 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.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Stout
1236 NE Jones RD
Bend, OR 97701

March 16, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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 6th grader. Here in Crook County this program has been an important part of the community for so many years. It doesn't just affect 6th 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 6th 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
Lori Meadows Co-director lori.meadows@crookcounty.k12.or.us
Crook County Outdoor School Program

Benno Lyon
5738 SW Brugger St.
Portland, OR 97219

Re: House Bill 2648 "Outdoor School for All"

March 10, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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

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 23rd, 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,

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

Dear Lawmakers,

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

March 12th, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

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

Dear Lawmakers,

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 6th 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

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

Dear Lawmakers,

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

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Gigi Meyer and I own Windflower Farm LLC, a 20-acre, sustainable, bio-diverse produce and livestock farm in Bend, OR

I am urging your support for HR 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to be able to experience Outdoor School. Our state has a proud and longstanding reputation for nurturing our natural resources and appreciating our spectacular, natural environment. Enabling our youth to partake in hands-on, outdoor learning will not only invigorate their individual minds and bodies but also hold promise that Oregon's environmental legacy will continue into the future.

As an elementary and high school student at Catlin Gabel School in Portland, I was fortunate to have many opportunities to explore and study my State's varied and landscapes and ecosystems. These early forays made a lasting impression on me and cemented my desire to create a life that was appreciative of and in tune with the natural world. My stints after college as a caretaker of farms in Puget Sound, WA and in Tuscany, Italy provided me with hands-on education and became critical stepping-stones towards my ultimately owning and managing a farm of my own.

At 56 years of age, I represent the typical age of the American farmer and feel a sense of urgency and concern that our youth be exposed, excited and encouraged to take up the plow and help feed the coming generations in our local communities. Windflower has hosted all ages of students for on-farm activities and learning. This year I've signed on with Rogue Farm Corps' internship program to provide intensive training to a future farmer.

In an era where young children are plugged in early and often to passive electronic devices and spend an increasing number of hours indoors in non-physical pursuits, I feel it is urgent that we provide an antidote to "nature deficit disorder". Funding for Outdoor School would provide young students, at a pivotal time in their development, amazing adventures and meaningful experiences to better connect them to their world and open their eyes to possibilities they might not otherwise know.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet L. (Gigi) Meyer
Windflower Farm
26285 Walker Rd.
Bend, OR 97701
541.318.1417

March 20, 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

I am an OSU Extension Service 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent in Baker County, Oregon. For the last 20 years Baker County has conducted a 6th Grade Outdoor School program and I have been a volunteer instructor and an evaluation analysis facilitator.

I encourage your support for HR 2648 to secure funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to experience an outdoor school event.

From my 20 years of outdoor school teaching experience, observation, and compiling evaluation data here is what I know:

- an average of 13 science classes are presented in one week, subjects include forestry, fire, entomology, ecology, botany, watershed, wildlife, archaeology, soils, geology, orienteering
- youth observe adults as instructors in a leadership role and interact with professionals living in their community
- parents have the opportunity to participate and interact with their children during classes
- youth are introduced to possible career paths available in the natural sciences
- youth learn how forestry, insects, ecology, fire, botany, etc. all tie together
- every year, evaluation results indicate a significant impact in knowledge and skills learned at the statistical level of $p < .05$. This means that the program makes a significant difference to their science skills and knowledge learned and we can prove it
- the program provides the opportunity for social skill development within groups. Classes are mixed so students must partner with others they don't know to accomplish a goal or skill
- the program introduces youth to high school science subjects, fulfills science Benchmark requirements, and expands the scope of science learning that the regular classroom curriculum doesn't provide and the teachers don't have time to include in their schedule

Thank you for your support.

Janice Cowan

environment. He increased his knowledge of science significantly in those five days, and overcame many fears related to his social anxiety. He gained the confidence to take on additional new situations after that time. But, we are blessed to have the money to pay for that experience for him. Other students, with needs like his, or other, similar needs, don't have the money. They would benefit so much from this experience, if only they could access it through their public school.

But beyond the emotional connection to this program, Outdoor School is a tremendous educational opportunity for students. So many individuals don't have the ability to learn just by reading a textbook, or listening to a lecture. So many are kinesthetic learners, who need that hands on opportunity. Outdoor School does this. The curriculum incorporates STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math core standards as well as Next Generation Science Standards; and uses hands-on science based applied teaching methods.

Again, I urge you to pass House Bill 2648, to allow every student in Oregon an opportunity to participate in this wonderful program. If you have any questions about the information I have shared with you today, please feel free to contact me by email (taramarieh@msn.com) or by phone (503-348-5660). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tara MH Martin

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Tara Martin, and I am an alum of Multnomah County's Outdoor School Program. I attended as a sixth grade student at Harriet Tubman Middle School, and participated for five sessions as a Student Leader (at the time called a Junior Counselor) while attending Jefferson High School. I returned to Outdoor School while attending Oregon State University to volunteer my time for a week as a Special Needs Student Leader, providing one-on-one services to a student identified with Severe Emotional/Behavioral Needs. I again returned after completing my Bachelor's degree, for two sessions as a staff member with Outdoor School.

As a student, I was shy and hesitant in new situations. The warmth and support I felt while at Outdoor School, and the ability to become a leader in small group situations helped build my self-esteem, as well as my communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills. In high school, my family went through significant stress as my parents divorced, and I suffered from my own struggles with depression and suicidal ideation. My time at Outdoor School helped keep me grounded and brought me a great deal of happiness. I formed friendships at Outdoor School that I still have now, over twenty years after graduating from high school.

My experiences at Outdoor School also helped me determine who and what I wanted to be when I grew up. I developed an appreciation for the forests of Oregon, and a desire to help sustain them through thoughtful practices. Initially, when I went to Oregon State University, I entered the Wildlife Biology Program. This love of the outdoors and science was fueled by my experiences at Outdoor School. When, by the end of my freshman year, I learned that academically, my brain was geared for a different type of learning than that required for a degree in Wildlife Biology, I turned toward another interest that I developed with Outdoor School--caring for kids. I majored in Human Development and minored in Psychology, and knew that I wanted to work with kids who were struggling, just as I had been, and give them the support and light that I was provided while at Outdoor School. I went on, after working on the staff at the Collins and Sandy River sites, to complete a Master of Social Work degree at Portland State University. For the past 15 years, I've been employed as a Child Welfare Social Worker with the State of Washington, where I have been a supervisor for the past two years. Outdoor School can do the same thing for so many other students, instilling self-confidence, social skills, leadership potential; as well as offering High School students experience in teaching, coaching, counseling and other career paths.

Now, as a parent of a first grader at Butler Creek Elementary School in the Centennial School District, I am saddened to know that he will not be able to attend Outdoor School. Our district cut the program because of the reduced budget the last several years. I am active in our school, and currently I am a Vice President on the board of our PTA. But I know that no matter how hard I hope, I cannot change these policies on my own, and I cannot secure the funding for Outdoor School on my own. That is why I am urging your support for HB 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to experience Outdoor School. Today, 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 report 100 % Outdoor School program participation. Four counties report no participation and eight counties report less than 20 percent student participation.

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Dear Lawmakers,

I am a former Outdoor school 6th grader, high school student leader, and staff member.

Outdoor School (ODS) was a pivotal part of my experience and is the reason I work in natural resource restoration and community development today.

Though ODS may seem like a low priority on the list, it provides a lot of what participants are lacking in their lives, providing critical insights for how to work together and collaborate, find joy in learning, teaches critical thinking skills and much needed science, and fundamentally makes our world a better place.

Please support full funding for Outdoor School with HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Sara Ennis

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Please support full funding for Outdoor School with HB 2648 and SB 439.

Sincerely,

Sara Ennis

by Isaiah


Dear future self,

I have written you a poem.

Roses are red, violets are blue, outdoor
school is fun, but sometimes your blue,
but you make it fun, you see the sun.
I have written this time, for you to
see, I hope you remember this memory
for a very long time...



Dear 6th grade students
go to outdoor school, it's fun and
you get beads for your wood cookie.
you also get to play capture the
flag and practice archery


Dear ~~Dear~~ 6th grade student,

Outdoor School is really fun but the only bad parts are that there is that there are a butt ton of rules, and you have to sing. ~~but~~

~~and they are good.~~ The best recreations are capture the flag, and

Alleyway. So get one of those. And if you are really having a bad time you can look forward to a good meal.

Steven

Dear 5th grade student Outdoor
school is fun some kids
are jerks its fun just go
its fun.

The food is good and field study
is fun to my favorite field study
was water you get to go
catch little bugs and stuff.

dear 5th grader don't listen
to what people tell you out
door school is so fun to
make it the best and get a lot
of beads do what they say
and listen to what they
say and find the good
things fun and if you want
when # beads follow perch (cool) find
out and ask what you can do to get
beads and some cool cutlery
are Rooster seeds want gear
and ooh those who some of
my favorites there more two
and all back in 4 years
SKY fuzzy bear you have fun

SKV

fuzzy

bear

El

Dear 6th grader

Out door school is awesome!!

If you want to get participation beads sing all the songs.

Capture the flag uber fun at out door school

The food is awesome if you eat meat, not as good

If your vegetarian, and it is kind of sucks

if you have food allergies

If you go to Adams Milk Creek then say

hi to Crush, Tempo, Doah, seaweed, ~~and~~ lynks,

~~and~~ set back, Cosmo, rooster, monkey pika,

~~and~~ leopard and aberdin.


Ty
Dear 6th grader's student

These last 

Cople day have

been good. here are

Some good tip's for

you today 

1 be good to other student's

2 if a student's are picking on you tell a teacher

3 do your best

4 have fun



5  be good for your teacher's & yourself

HAVE A GREAT TIME

dear, 6th Grader

you will PROBABLY have A GREAT Time AT Outdoor
School The food is great And The student
LEADERS Rock!!! ~~Rock~~ Well. AT least some
~~THE~~ I Went To CAMP AddAMS Milk
Creek I Wished i Could have Gone To
Namanu But i still had lots of fun if
you do go To milkcreek They have heated
CABBINS And Cool PEOPLE if you do go
look for Cherrio, Monkey, SEAweed, PIKA, ~~And~~ Golly
Theres More But ~~these~~ These Are My FAVORITE
YEP Thats Right i AM REALLY NICE ☺ Anyway
WHATEVER CAMP you go to AS long AS your
NOT Goth, EMO, preppy, PLASTIC, OR CLEAN FREAK.
you might ~~be~~ HAVE fun

Sincerely: AnonAmous

Regina

Dear 10th grade students here in out door school
I think u would really like the field study's
~~are~~ They are awesome u get to learn so much
about soil, plants, water, and animals. U will also like
all the student leaders.

Monkey
Pika
Golly
Scawweed
ooh
Cheseeio
comet
Snow Flake
Ninja
Lycs

Those are not all of them but those are my
favorite they are awesome and really funny.
I think the worst part of out door school
is that u have so many rules and a lot
of things has to be super perfect but
u will have lots of fun and learn a
lot. And follow Perch.

Petisafate
Enrise ment
RESPECT
Caroperate
have fun

to be out of school is a wonderful
place the food is some of the
best food I have had in
my time. I am a bit sad
about leaving because some of
my best friends stay here
I really like our student leader
Leopardo and also some of
my cabin mates are
a little crazy and we wake
up to early

0

Dear future ~~6th~~ gradets

Hi I am writing in a clearing on a log
surrounded in water. The campout was okay
the only thing is that I have to sleep in a
cabin with other Behads. It's okay here the
food is the best thing here. So don't
come unless you are a bottom less pit
like me ~~if~~, if you have foul stories
the stuff will gladly fill them up. I
~~will~~ yes I have foul
stories.

Hungry waiting next meal,
Darian P. D

Participation

Dear 6th Graders If you are
reading this than you must be
riding the bus to our school so
let the fun begin here are a few
tips,

1. Sing the songs and don't be embarrassed
2. Listen to the ~~field~~ ~~street~~ ~~teachers~~ it will serve you well

Here's a list of the awesome staff

Crusn, tempo, Odacide, Stanely, Gally, Monkey, Snowflake

Pika, seaweed, Boah, tortuga, Mo, Dave, Sherlock, Cosmo

Proostel, Leopardo, Abdeldeen.

If you see them say Hi.

Sincerely, Aubrey

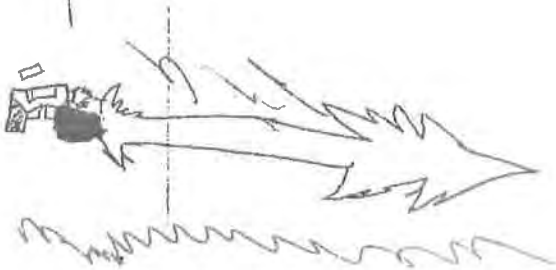
P.S. the Food and Rec.
is Great!!!

00x

Pew whoever,

the Food Amazing
Field Study Great
Other schools mean

Ben S. — Out —



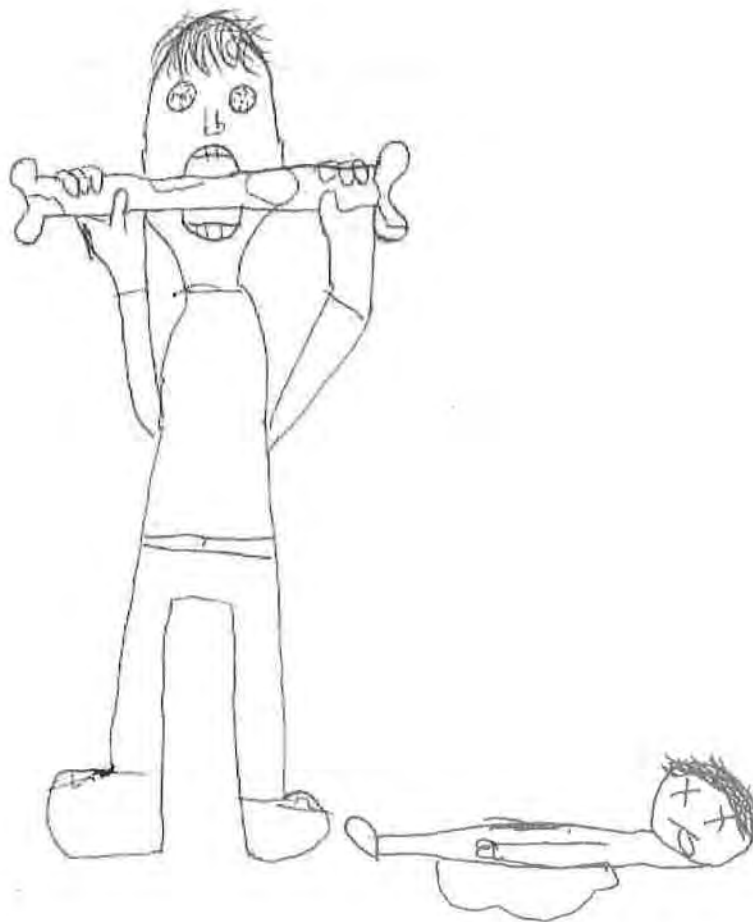
to Andan

hello Mr. Future! im from the Past.. do you
have any more beads yet? did you lose any? !!
did you tell anyone the.... "Secret" hat, and can
you tell me how to Play the stick game?
remember the weird Song tongue twister...



Gabe

hi I'm from the past whats up
dont think about your family or call
them it makes it worse. if you miss
them oh ya ~~hahaha~~ I quot from Joe
"dont get a crush on any of the girls"
they have great food so many cookie's
it's osom but you will cry when you
leave I did



Dear 6th grader,

Outdoor School is very Fun, the Food is very good and the activities are great. There are a few rules but if you follow them you should have Fun... Oh, and if they are there, say hi to Crash and Terra for me. They are some of the coolest people there.

Ben P.

Skyler B

Dear future self!!!

All of the student leaders names
Monkey, Pika, Comet, Snowflake,
Odacidae, Aberdeen, Gally, Iqua, Boah,
Seaweed, Cheerio.

I had so so so so so so much fun
and remember the purple stew ~~same~~
me regina and kira and mira monkey
and pika all had so much fun doing
the ya and a skit. all of the student
leaders were so so so so much fun
to hang out with we did so much
cool stuff together.

But most of all we

Had

Fun!

Samuel

Dear 6th grade student

If you are reading this you are probably wondering about If outdoor school will be fun or not well It will be **AWESOME!** I'm having tons of fun. If you go you will remember the outdoor school always. SO GO!!!

Sincerely Samuel

11/17/20

Dear 6th Grade students, Jackie T.
The student leaders that I like.
Oh and you mite like to...


- 1 Seaweed
- 2 Snowflake
- 3 Golly
- 4 Igouva
- 5 oobah
- 6 Comet
- 7 Cheerio
- 8 Monkey

Remember

Partisipation : PERCUT
Enviorment
Respect
Coaperation
HAVE FUN ∇

There not in order the way
I like them but I like all
of them ∇

It is so much fun here ∇ You
will have different classes/field study, like
water, Animals, Soil, and plants ∇ water
is soooo much fun and so are the
rest ∇ when your in soil you will get
to put this stuff on your face and you
will look sooo cool ∇ In water you
will get to say muiyahahaha ∇ but you
only say that if the teacher says
"Dangerous chemicals" lol ∇

Recreation is fun lo ∇ I really like
capture the flag ∇ I have also done
arturey ∇ that is with bows ∇ ~~AK~~ ∇ 
And you mite see deer ∇ The view
from the water is really great ∇ Oh
and the cabins are heated ∇ that's
fun ∇ You go to bed at 9:30 and
wake-up at 6:45 In the morning ∇
Hope you have fun peace ∇ Jackie →

Dear 6th grade students,

If you want to know about Outdoor School, you don't ~~get~~ get much free time at all whatsoever. They sing songs every chance ~~you~~ they get. You raise and take down the flag twice a day. You must participate in songs, flag and games if you don't want a gross look from either student leaders or other kids. Everyone learns at the same pace and so if you are intelligent then you'll probably not learn much at all whatsoever. If you want something more positive, some of the student leaders are pretty cool and the food is exceptional, and you do get to sleep on mattresses. But other than that don't give your hopes up. This place is like a mix between the military and a nut house. Enjoy!

signed,



Hazel

~~Dear~~

~~to~~

Dear 6th grader!

if you go to outdoor School here
are some tips:

- follow P.E.R.C.H.

Perch is:

P = participation

E = Eco-friendly

R = Respect

C = Cooperation

H = **HAVE FUN!**

- don't forget to ~~sing~~ sing along & the sing along song!
- make as many friends as you can (not from your school!!)

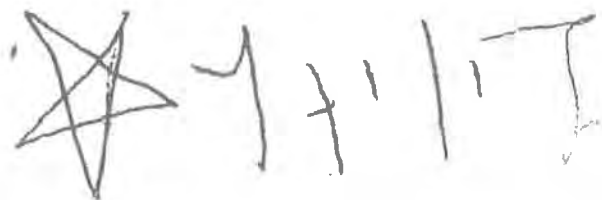
- follow your group leader!!

• Do the best you can to make
this fun for everyone around you
and yourself as well!

HAVE FUN! Love, Hazel y and Trillium
2009 6th graders

Dear fifth grader,

I apologize if your dear parents forced you to come.
This is a military camp with out the guns. ~~by the way~~
Asylum I say!



Dear 6th grader, here are some things to know
about Outdoors School::

the people have a song for about EVERYTHING!
So don't take it as a joke when people tell you
that.

try and make "friends" so that way if you
don't get with all your friends you can have
some connections=)

make stuff FUN, I know that sounds weird.
but Really if you try just TRY making stuff be
fun, it will go much smoother=x

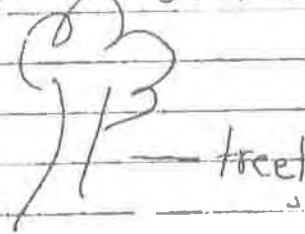
Don't Eat flies! :-> Haha, that made me laugh:P

HOPE STUFF WORKS OUT=)

(and you don't get stuck with

MEAN people::)

Haha~ SierraSunshine!



To Representative Mike McLane –

My name is Gigi Meyer and I own Windflower Farm LLC, a 20-acre, sustainable, bio-diverse produce and livestock farm in Bend, OR

I am urging your support for HR 2648 to secure lasting funding for every Oregon 5th or 6th grader to be able to experience Outdoor School. Our state has a proud and longstanding reputation for nurturing our natural resources and appreciating our spectacular, natural environment. Enabling our youth to partake in hands-on, outdoor learning will not only invigorate their individual minds and bodies but also hold promise that Oregon's environmental legacy will continue into the future.

As an elementary and high school student at Catlin Gabel School in Portland, I was fortunate to have many opportunities to explore and study my State's varied and landscapes and ecosystems. These early forays made a lasting impression on me and cemented my desire to create a life that was appreciative of and in tune with the natural world. My stints after college as a caretaker of farms in Puget Sound, WA and in Tuscany, Italy provided me with hands-on education and became critical stepping-stones towards my ultimately owning and managing a farm of my own.

At 56 years of age, I represent the typical age of the American farmer and feel a sense of urgency and concern that our youth be exposed, excited and encouraged to take up the plow and help feed the coming generations in our local communities. Windflower has hosted all ages of students for on-farm activities and learning. This year I've signed on with Rogue Farm Corps' internship program to provide intensive training to a future farmer.

In an era where young children are plugged in early and often to passive electronic devices and spend an increasing number of hours indoors in non-physical pursuits, I feel it is urgent that we provide an antidote to "nature deficit disorder". Funding for Outdoor School would provide young students, at a pivotal time in their development, amazing adventures and meaningful experiences to better connect them to their world and open their eyes to possibilities they might not otherwise know.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet L. (Gigi) Meyer
Windflower Farm
26285 Walker Rd.
Bend, OR 97701
541.318.1417

April 2015

Dear Lawmakers,

I am a retired teacher with most of my experience at the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade levels. My husband is retired from the National Park Service as a Resource Management Specialist. Together we have been involved in Outdoor Education Programs in Florida, Oklahoma, and most recently in the Outdoor School Program in the Baker 5J School District in Oregon.

Many students in Oregon are not exposed to contact with the outdoor world around them. We urge your support for HR 2648.

- Passage of this bill will allow all 5th or 6th grade students to experience the hands-on learning needed to understand the environmental relationships that exist within their local communities and in the world at large, as well as the necessity of maintaining these healthy relationships.

- In programs such as those established by the passage of this bill, students learn collaborative skills, self-confidence, and social skills in working with other students to meet the goals of an assigned activity.

Here in Northeast Oregon, we have many opportunities to interact with our surroundings. As instructors in Baker 5J District's Outdoor School for ten years, we have seen students grow in their understanding of forest lands, wetlands, conservation, wildlife habitat, recreational and survival skills.

Please support this worthwhile HR 2648,
Thomas M. and Barbara E. Taylor
40049 Rhody Road
Baker City, OR 97814
541-894-2473
ghosttrail@msn.com

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April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

When I was in 6th grade, my class got the opportunity to go to Outdoor School. I remember hearing seventh graders talk about their experiences and hearing them talk all about the amazing time they had. I have to admit, the idea of leaving my family for a week and spending it with people I had never met before was scary. However, by the end of the week I had many new friends and from different schools all over Oregon. Not only was Outdoor School educational, but it gave me a chance to be more outgoing and step outside of the box to meet new people. I remember that the last night at outdoor school was full of tears. My entire cabin could not stop crying because we had become so connected over the course of the few days. Before departing, I remember crying as I waved goodbye to all of the awesome counselors and my new friends. I hope that other kids will be able to say they had an experience like this because I know that I will never forget spending nights by the campfire talking with my newfound friends about the salmon migration process and comparing the beads and badges we had earned over the course of the day.

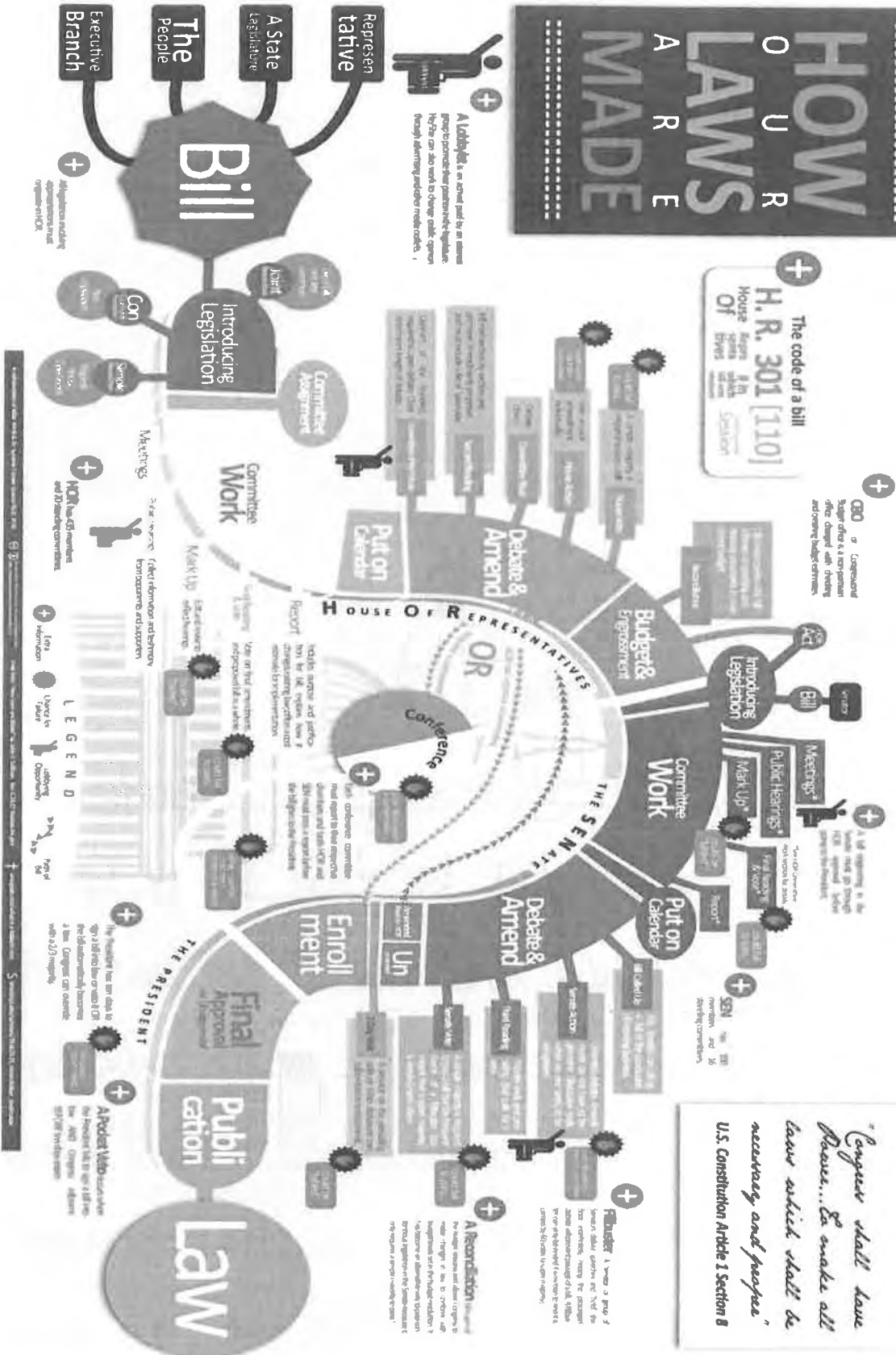
Skylar

Age 13

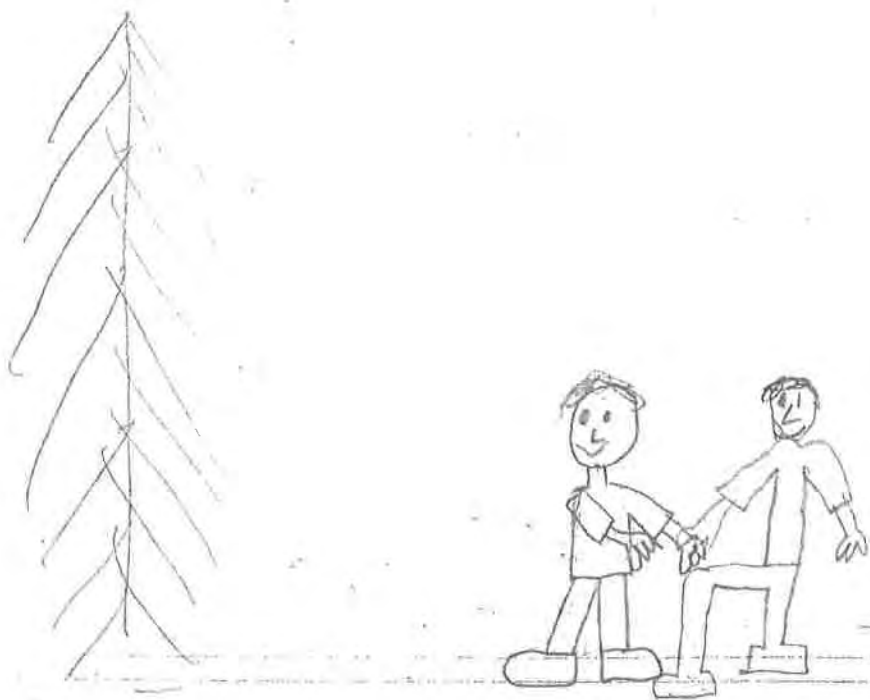
Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE



Wyatt fourth grade



Crook Co.

I think every kid in the world should be able to go outside and learn. I bet most of the kids in the world wants to go outside and be able to play and learn about plants, wildlife and rocks and water the main thing you need for survival. Thank you for reading.

My Letter from: Wyatt 4th grade Powell Butte Community Charter School.

W.E.B.

6th Grade
Scot E
3/19/2015

I enjoy outdoor learning because we can learn about our watershed. Learning about our water shed is important because we can learn if it is healthy or not. It is also important because we get a chance to see the outside world. It is also important because we can learn about different environments than just our school environment.

sincerely,

Scot E. Brown




Ellen Corwin
3-18-15
L.A

To our Representatives,

I greatly value outdoor learning. It is extremely important because you remember the social experience while out there. A better reason is, you are not as stressed out plus you get a break from sitting all day. Another reason is, we love it a lot more. Now, here at PBCS we go outdoors almost once a month. We go out to local creeks and rivers to learn about our local watersheds. Here we cherish our education and hope others do/will too. All in all, I am grateful for the amount of learning time we get outdoors, and hope that others will be given the same blessing as us.

Sincerely,
Ellen Corwin

Mikiyas
3/19/2015

Hi my name is Mikiyas I am from
ethiopia. I enjoy outdoor learning because
It gives use a new way of studying and a
break from siteing in class and makes
us joine our learning. so I hope you do
this it will halpe a lot of schools and
kids. 

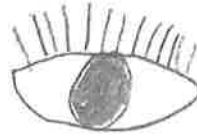
Thank you for listening

from Mikiyas Brenes

smell



tast



Dear Oregon Law makers, please support outdoor
Education for all students in Oregon when I am outside I
Love the fresh air and studying plants and animals.

Sincerely, Jaycee Villastrigo

3rd grade
Powell Butte Community
Chauser school

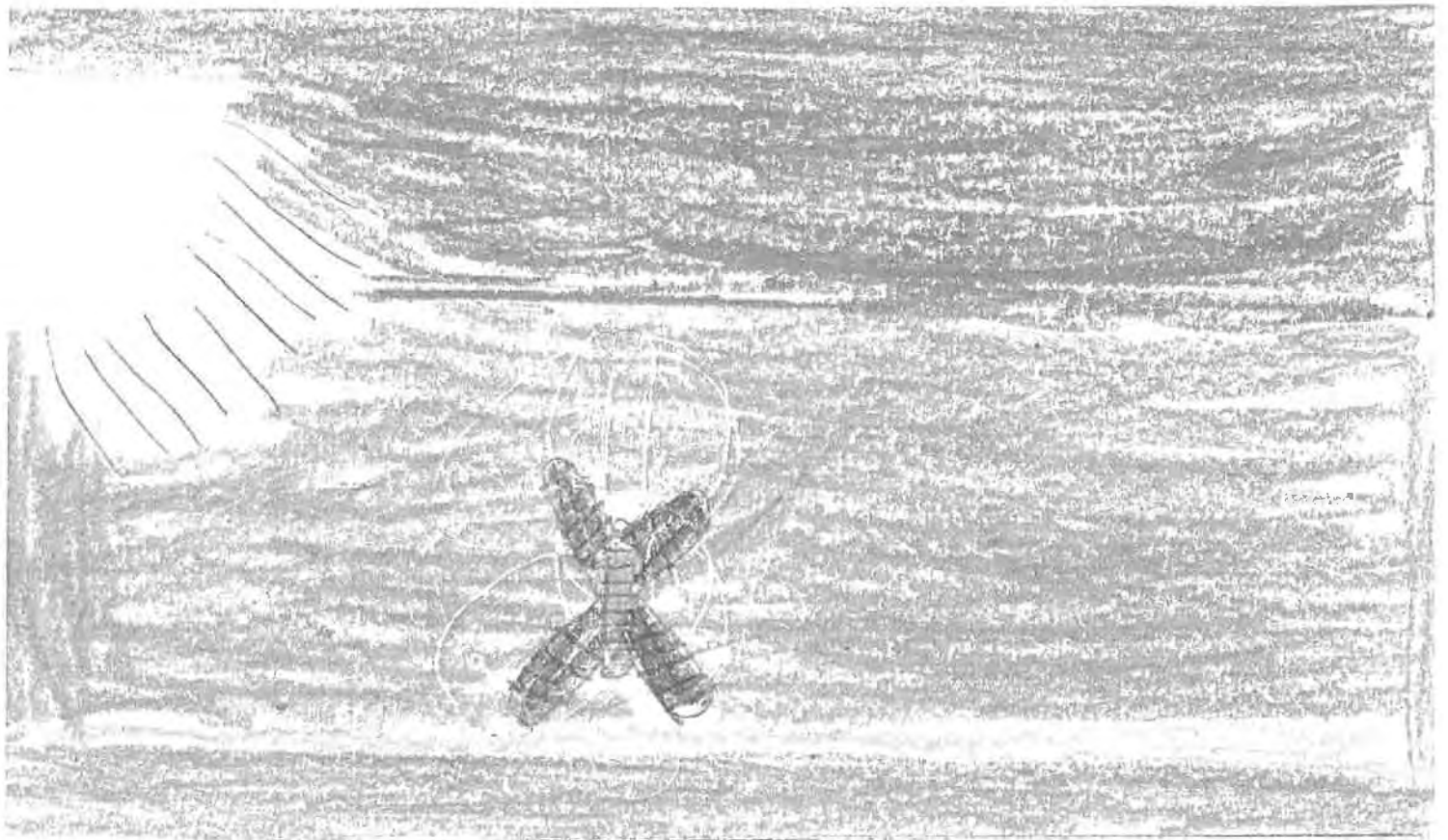


Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

Please support Outdoor Education
for all students in Oregon.

The best part of learning
outside is tracking foot
prints of animals.

Sincerely, Noah Felton



Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

Please support Outdoor Education
for all students in Oregon.

The best part of learning
outside is learning to

build stuff like a little stick
haws

2nd gr. PBWS

Sincerely, Logan



Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

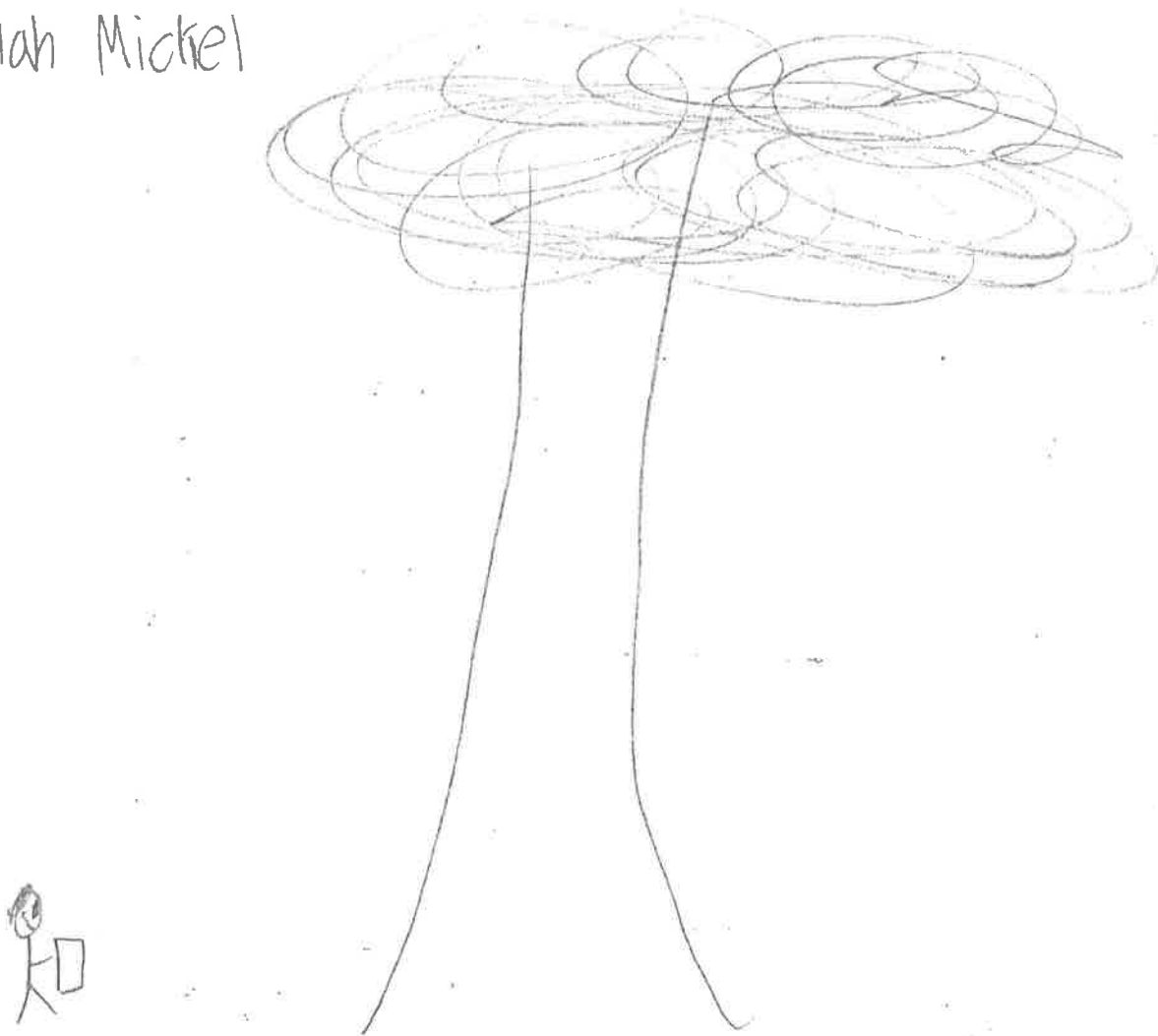
Please support Outdoor Education
for all students in Oregon.

The best part of learning
outside is learning about

Nature.

Ind gr. PECS Sincerely, Cortley

Josiah Mickel



The best part of learning outside is that you get involved with what is going on in the outside world and not just sitting in a room and writing words on paper.

Kenfall

May 1st



Outdoor education is important for all students
because you can't believe it until you

see it. It's also important for outdoor education

to go outside and see

for. So please kids, have a good

So go and see it!

By Kenfall

Out door education gives kids a chance to learn about things that we not what we see in the classroom. I personally think that out door school gives me a break from my in class work, I get to learn more about the surroundings. So I think that you should give more money to outdoor fieldwork please.

The one and only
AJ Robinson

Zach
3/19/12

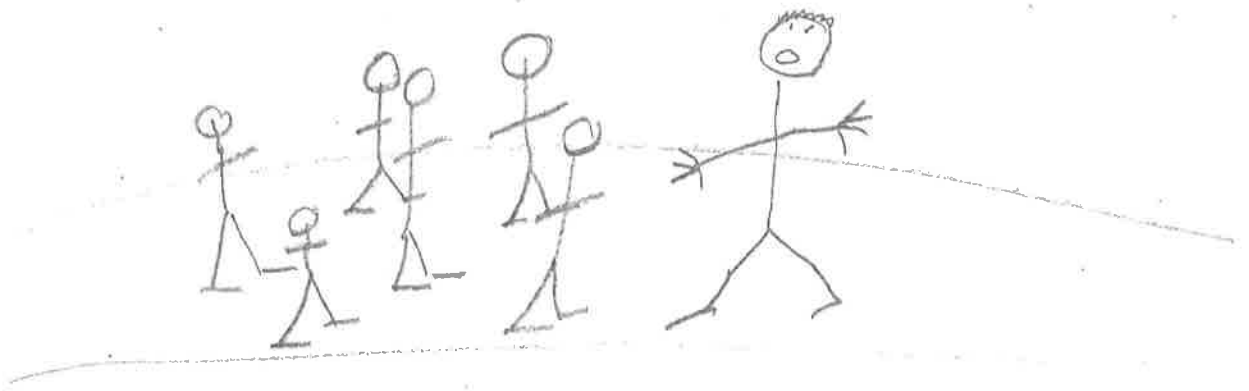
I enjoy outdoor learning because It's fun. I enjoy it and It's our time to do school and stay outside. When we're outside you can collect data to help the environment and make it better. During outdoor school you can increase your knowledge and have fun while doing it. When you're outside you can see what lives outdoors and what's in the environment. I think it's important to go outside to outdoor school because kids love it and really like to learn about the environment.

Sincerely



Miranda
Irwin
2/10/19

Outdoor education is the only time I learn the most. The reason I am writing this is because I care about my education and other middle schoolers' education. Here, at Powell Butte Charter School, we go out and do field work. I value outdoor education because when I get out of the classroom I learn more or just understand more because I'm not sitting in a dark classroom for 70 minutes. Getting a break from classroom work and just doing work outside, it helps me when I come back to doing classroom work. When I come back I am more focused and not as tired of sitting in a dark hopeless classroom. I think other middle schoolers should have this experience. Thank you for reading.

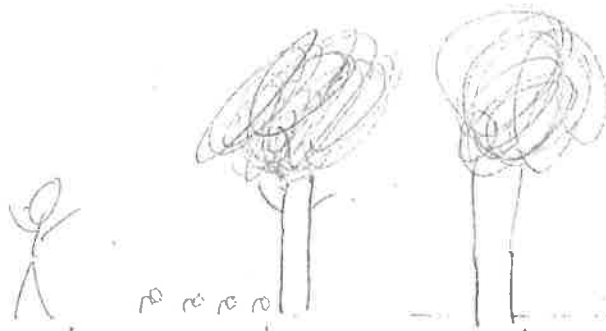
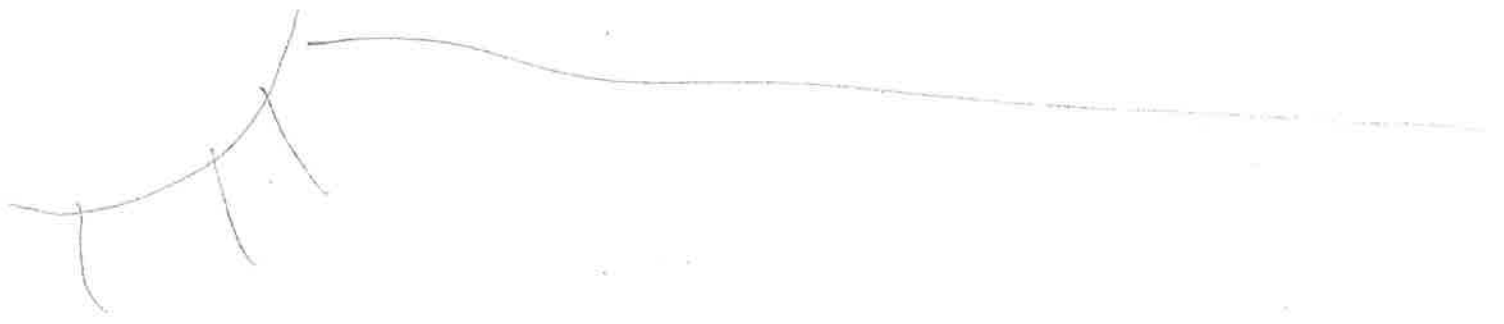


Dear Oregon Law makers,

When I am outside I love to play sports and games. I love to study outside when my class goes on fieldtrips and learn new stuff. I love to have fun and do fun things. I love to make up games when I am at recess. So if you please support outdoor education for all students in Oregon.

Sincerely, Emily

3rd Grade PBCCS Crook Co.



Dear Oregon Law Makers

Please support outdoor Education
for all students in Oregon. Because
you can learn about plants
and trees. I Love playing out-
side in the grass.

PBCCS
3rd grade
Crockett Co.

Sincerely Marshall



Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

Please support Outdoor Education
for all students in Oregon.

The best part of learning
outside is that we can
learn about science outside.

We love Going outside. ☺

Crook Co. Sincerely, Isabelle

2nd Grade Powell Butte Community Charter

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

When I went to Outdoor School in 6th grade, I had a really fun time. I got to meet new people and make new friendships, I got to learn new things that I wouldn't have learned in normal school, and I got to try new skills that I didn't know I had. Outdoor School is a great way for children to connect with the environment and other schools that they wouldn't have been able to without this program. I believe that every kid should be able to go to Outdoor School and should be able to connect in this way.

Thank you,

Rhea Mehta

Age 13

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor school may seem like a minor experience that costs money and is slowly becoming an old tradition fading away. When it is actually an amazing experience that teaches kids valuable information about the world around them. Here in Oregon we are known for being "green" with lots of natural forests and wildlife. What would be the point of our future generations not knowing the importance of what Oregon is so proud of.

I was lucky enough to go to Kiwanilong, Hancock, and Arrah Wanna for outdoor school. I had an amazing time and wouldn't hesitate to go back. I cannot imagine Oregon without outdoor school.

Rebecca Walters

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Beaverton, OR

Monday, April 13

Dear Lawmakers,

Outdoor Education brings students together and teaches them how to appreciate the natural world. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend Outdoor School and have since been a changed person. I became more open to nature and to my peers and learned in a complimentary but different way from my classroom experience during the trip. I feel that everyone, no matter what background they come from, should be able to experience Outdoor School. Please support Oregon's youth.

Raja

Age 14

Oregon Episcopal School

Portland, OR

Dear lawmaker,

This letter is in support of Outdoor School, and I am hoping you will support the continuance of this invaluable program. I have attended many outdoor schools, throughout Ca. and Or., and I have also been a teacher at the Portland based outdoor schools.

I feel the experience the students get from this program is incredibly important in the shaping of their lives in regards to the out of doors and their appreciation of nature and their natural surroundings.

With technology being more and more 'on the front burner', and kids not getting outside as much, Outdoor School is even more important now than it was many years ago.

Please support these programs throughout Oregon.

Thank you,
Vicki Bugbee-Reed
Sisters, Oregon 97759

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 day of
out door school some other kid can
have fun and enjoy the activities
that the people give me I also
got to hold a snake and I
hope other kids get to hold a snake
to so save out door school.

April, 17, 2015

Dear, Lawmakers

My name is Deontean Johnson.

I never went to out door school
but I need it (22)
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 5 months

Sincerely

Deontean Johnson, Anguilla, Bonaire,
Port Kaituma

Dear Lawmakers,

I am Raina Serene Potter,
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, turn
Outdoor school to 6 days and
5 nights long?!?

Sincerely,
Raina Serene Potter
7th 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 7th grade
is gym, math and language Arts
because in gym i like to exercise
and in math i learn something new
in language Arts i like to read
and do works after I am really
enjoying 7th grade it's the best
year.

Dear Lawmaker my name is Edgar
mendez i'm a 7th grader at Kent School
in Portland OR. My teacher Mr. Campbell
is making me do this and outdoor school
is a responsibility of it. Fe. outdoor school
is important to me because it allows me
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 water.

Sincerely, Edgar, 7th grade, Kent 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, 7th 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 ^{our} Oliver Elementary School / ^{Portland} ^{Oregon} /
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 alot
of things but at the same time
you have alot 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 enviroment. I want you guys
to save outdoor school / outdoor
school would make a Really
different in our enviroment.

Sincerely

Lorena Delgado Portland oregon.
7th 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, 7th grade
Lent School, Portland

4/17/15

Dear Lawmakers,

My name Roserina Chipen and I'm a 7th 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 

7th 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 6th
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 6th graders.
Sincerely,
dasia, 7th 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 ~~pls~~ please save outdoor school.

Sincerely Dennishea, 7th gr. Lents, 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, 7th grade, Ient school,
Portland Oregon

P.S. 6 dollars for 6 days.

Dear Lawmakers

My name is Demonic 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 outdoor school for future so they can enjoy the pleasure of it.

Sincerely

Demonic, 7th 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 7th 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, 7th 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, 7th grade, Lent Elementary, Portland,
Oregon

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 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, 7th grade, Lent Elementary,
Portland, OR.

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 fun 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 im 12 years old in the 7th 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, 7th, lent school, Portland

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 Outdoor school. My name is Alejandro I'm 12 and from Lent school. I need to explain to you why Outdoor 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 delicious food. Can YOU GUYS PLEASE SAVE Outdoor School and Make us stay the LONGER at ~~least~~ least 5 days.

Sincerely,

Alejandro 7th grade Lent School Portland.

Dear Lawmakers

I'm, Andre 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 up
longer so all the
activities are done. Everyone
that is, most kids at
first they don't want to
leave but when they
go to outdoor school they
enjoy it and when they
leave they miss it.

Thank you, Andre, FH, Lott, Portland

To the Oregon Legislature -


My name is Kyle Crandall 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 5th grade to 6th 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 find Outdoor School.

Sincerely, Kyle Crandall - Madison HS

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, 7th, Lent School, Portland



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

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 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 built confidence and gave the best he could in a completely new environment.

I will not forget the names of the eight boys in my cabin who gave me more than a rough 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 may 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 health. 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~~^{forests} and allow sixth graders to have an experience of a lifetime. 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 5th 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 Macko water bugs, swimming through the river learning about winter quality. This experience set me up to be very interested and engaged even ~~all~~ 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 rewriting 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 garter 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 6th 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 crabs 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 full of 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 from 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 2648 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 downs it sets
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 ~~Lavelle~~
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 HB2048 & SB439

To the Queen's College

My name is A. I really like
you and the nurse
I would be glad to be with
you and the nurse. I
remember I was happy for the first time only
before I was born. I was
born for the first time as well. I
than fast and my. I learned that
you really love me to be with me. I will
just need to go and see you. I will
you and the nurse. Please save the Queen's College.

P.S. - Fully fund the Queen's College - A. 2648
- SB 459

Sincerely yours - A. Queen's College

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 shell and explore.

Thankyou,
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



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 "horrid" 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 to Outdoor School 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. ↗

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 Madison High School

To the One -
My Name -
Site that outdoor
important experience for young children
To go camp with a group of peers, as
a sixth grader there's nothing more fun. Top 1% 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 have. Outdoor school 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 future generations of students to be independent
and self-sustaining.

Sincerely,
Max Tuttle
James Madison 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 truly 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 city & 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 6th 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 memories is very impactful. 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 Crain
from Madison High School
April 20th, 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 counsellors "Cricket" and "Banana" 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