

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 06/24/15

Action: Do Pass.

Meeting Dates: 06/24

Vote:

House

Yeas: 11 - Buckley, Gomberg, Huffman, Komp, McLane, Nathanson, Read, Smith, Whisnant, Whitsett, Williamson

Exc: 1 - Rayfield

Senate

Yeas: 12 - Burdick, Devlin, Girod, Hansell, Johnson, Monroe, Roblan, Shields, Steiner Hayward, Thomsen, Whitsett, Winters

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes an Outdoor Education Account in the State Treasury for the purpose of funding a six-day, residential, hands-on outdoor school program or equivalent for fifth and sixth grade students across the state.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Value of a full six days of outdoor school rather than three days
- Outdoor school results in increased graduation rates and renewed student interest in their education
- Possibility of federal funding for outdoor school

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 2544 (2009) established the Oregon Environmental Literacy Task Force for the purpose of developing the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan. The task force was to create a plan to identify and encourage programs that allow students to directly experience the outdoors by providing environmental education experiences and that incorporate field-based learning, place-based learning, service learning, outdoor learning or experiential learning. The plan was released in 2010.

According to the Oregon Outdoor Education Coalition, participation in outdoor school programs by county is currently estimated as follows: eight counties have greater than 80 percent of students participating in programs; eight counties have participation ranging between 41 and 80 percent; eight counties have participation ranging from 21 to 40 percent; eight counties have participation that is under 20 percent; and four counties have no participation.