

Dear Chair Hudson, Vice-chair McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maggie Frassetto Cline and I am writing to urge you to support **Representative Zach Hudson's legislation** to restore **\$6 million** in funding for Outdoor School in 2026.

Last year's 20% cut has already shortened camp experiences for our students. Outdoor School is a critical Oregon tradition that teaches science, leadership, and community in a way no classroom can. Voters were clear when they passed Measure 99—they want lottery dollars to support this program.

I serve as the Outdoor School Coordinator for Eugene School District 4J and we are deeply committed to equity and access. This year, as one of Oregon's largest school districts in the state, we were able to offer for the first time a 3 day/2 night experience to over 1,100 students. These students come from all 22 elementary schools—including three charter schools.

However, this year's state budget cuts to the Outdoor School (ODS) program have hit us hard, threatening the program's viability and an equitable experience across the district. With all our schools already attending the minimum three-day experience and operating on a deficit budget, there is simply nothing left to cut.

We recognize the difficult budget environment facing our state. However, even further cuts to Outdoor School will result in serious and inequitable consequences for our students. Since the 20% reduction in funding, our schools have been forced to shorten programs, reduce staffing, and eliminate key learning experiences. We simply do not have the funds to continue overnights next year if monies are not returned. For many of our students, particularly those from low-income, and historically marginalized communities and schools, Outdoor School provides their first, and sometimes **only**, opportunity to engage deeply with science and the natural world.

In my role, I have seen firsthand how critical this funding is to ensuring access for **every** student. By providing similar camp experiences and additional support for students with needs, proper funding makes Outdoor School possible for **ALL** our students - regardless of their ability, background, school or need - to participate fully. When funding is cut, these experiences and supports will have to be the first to go and most of our

students will miss out on an immersive overnight Outdoor School experience as meant to be. **Without returned funds, Outdoor School will return to Outdoor School for *SOME*, instead of Outdoor School for *ALL*.**

Our district cares deeply about ensuring all students can experience high-quality ODS programs no matter what school they attend or neighborhood they live in; however, without restored funding in the near future, we will lose this life-changing experience as it is truly intended for our students.

Please protect the 5th graders in our community by restoring this funding and rejecting further cuts in the February session.

Thank you,

Maggie Frassetto Cline, Outdoor School Coordinator, Eugene School District 4J