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TO: The House Education Committee

FR: Chad Marriott

DA: February 11, 2026

RE: Support for HB 4112—restoration of Outdoor School Lottery Funding

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair McIntire and Members of the Committee on Education, I wish to submit the following testimony in support of HB 4112 to restore Outdoor School Funding.

As a former high school teacher and instructor for Outward Bound USA, I see Outdoor School as a critical component of Oregon's Public Education system for many reasons. Learning about the natural world in which we live - in person, getting dirty - in our increasingly digitized environment has never been more important. Outdoor School enhances students' connection to nature, promotes physical activity and provides hands-on experiential learning.

My son, Toby, is currently a 7th grader at Lakeridge Middle School and attended Outdoor School last year. My daughter is currently in 4th grade at Westridge and is looking forward to the time she'll be able to go. The Outdoor School experience impacted Toby's life in important ways. In addition to all the science, nature and outdoor learning, it emphasized critical thinking, creativity and social skills for a group of 6th graders just starting out in their middle school adventure. The programming fosters leadership development for youth and the independence of going away to a residential site for a week. This type of experience helps develop self-reliance and other skills that serve youth well in many settings.

Outdoor School is a Lottery Funded program that was approved by Oregon Voters via ballot measure. Outdoor School is something that voters from every corner of Oregon, and from all walks of life support. I understand that Oregon faces big revenue reductions to the General Fund and appreciate that lawmakers face daunting choices. HB 4112 restores \$6M in Lottery Funds (half of what was cut in 2025) so that the state can stabilize Outdoor School programming in the second half of the biennium. M99 enjoyed majority support in 34 of Oregon's 36 counties demonstrating the common values and deep unity around the tradition of sending Oregon youth to Outdoor School. Outdoor School is one of the things that makes Oregon, Oregon.

Again, thank you for your service to the State of Oregon and I strongly urge you to pass HB 4112 to support restoration of Oregon Outdoor School Lottery funding.