

Submitter: Michelle Palmer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4112

RE: Outdoor School Is Essential Education — Support HB 4112

Dear Legislator,

I am writing to urge you to reject further cuts to Outdoor School and support HB 4112 to restore \$6 million in funding.

Outdoor School is not just enrichment or a “nice to have” benefit. It is essential education that delivers outcomes Oregon students need, particularly at a time when our K–12 system is under immense strain.

Why Outdoor School Matters to Me:

Why Outdoor School matters to you

What impact you’ve seen on students

Why it should remain fully funded for all students

Outdoor School:

Builds science literacy through hands-on, standards-aligned learning

Strengthens social-emotional competence, confidence, and belonging

Improves learning behaviors, especially for students who struggle in traditional classroom settings

Provides immersive, high-impact learning experiences that prepare students to thrive in ways that are difficult or impossible to replicate indoors

Lays critical groundwork for post-secondary readiness, and introduces students to career pathways

In 2016, Oregonians made a clear decision when 67% of voters approved Measure 99, establishing Outdoor School as a statewide educational commitment funded through the State School Fund. Oregon has since become a national leader in outdoor education, a distinction that reflects both voter intent and bipartisan legislative support.

Last year, Outdoor School funding was cut by 20%. Programs across the state are still absorbing those losses. Additional proposed cuts of 2.5–5% would further undermine access, equity, and program quality, particularly for students and schools that rely on Outdoor School the most.

The Legislature has the opportunity to uphold the will of Oregon voters by holding Outdoor School harmless from further cuts and restoring \$6 million.

I urge you to support HB 4112 and ensure Outdoor School remains a core component of public education in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Michelle Palmer

Parent at Whole Earth Nature School

Eugene, OR