

RE: 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.

Outdoor School is beneficial and essential for so many reasons, including but not limited to:

- 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

Many children will not have this type of opportunity if not for outdoor school. It is something that Oregon children are eager to participate in and it creates core memories and positive associations with school.

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 can uphold the will of Oregon voters and doing what is right 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,
Lisa Romano
Parent of a child at Adams Elementary School
Eugene, Oregon