

# Outdoor School for Everyone



## Coalition Partners

### Lead Partners:

Gray Family Foundation  
No Oregon Child Left Inside Initiative  
Friends of Outdoor School

### Supporting Partners:

Ecology in Classrooms & Outdoors  
Environmental Education  
Association of Oregon  
Portland Metro STEM Partnership



[grayff.org](http://grayff.org)

503-552-3500

## House Bill 2516

Since 1957, Outdoor School programs throughout Oregon have taken hundreds of thousands of diverse middle and high school students into the field to learn, experience, and discover natural science, their community, and themselves. Currently, 45% of Oregon's middle school children have the opportunity to participate in this transformative program, but every Oregon child should have the opportunity to participate. Now is the time to secure this program for our children today, and leave a legacy of Outdoor School for the future. This investment will benefit not just the children, but our entire state by increasing children's access to math and science, improving school retention, and fostering a generation of civic-minded citizens who have a greater appreciation for Oregon's natural treasures.

## Ten Reasons to Fund Outdoor School

### Outdoor School...

1. Engages students, outdoors, in real-world science.
2. Prepares high school students to become college and career ready with affordable and effective leadership opportunities.
3. Is currently only available to 45% of Oregon's students, but when funded is an equitable and accessible experience that all students deserve.
4. Builds deep connections to Oregon and local communities, inspiring students to connect to where they live.
5. Builds the next generation of teachers, scientists, farmers, and citizens who understand conservation.
6. Outdoor School reinforces the federal "No child left inside" initiative and the Oregon initiative created by the Legislature and signed by the Governor: "No Oregon Child Left Inside."
7. Is supported by communities of parents, educators, nonprofits, funders, agencies, and businesses throughout the state.
8. Creates an engaging educational experience that improves student test scores, increases retention, and leads to a desire for higher education.
9. Began in 1958 and is part of Oregon's heritage.
10. Changes kids' lives for the better!

## **Parents, Teachers, and Students Love Outdoor School**

*Outdoor School is the finest program to have come out of education in my [32 year] professional career. The program and its delivery are so well conceived that, it is unmatched by any other program in any area of our curriculum. We strive in education to truly have a lifelong impact on our students and their families. Outdoor School does a better job of this than probably anything else. -6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher*

*We are a city with great environmental, science, and natural resource education programs and opportunities. Many, many of these educators, like myself, are Outdoor School trained. The nation looks to us when they want to know how to run a phenomenal science education program. And, while we all believe very strongly in the programs we run, I think I can speak for most of my colleagues in saying that **THERE IS SIMPLY NO REPLACEMENT FOR OUTDOOR SCHOOL. Period.** -parent and City of Portland staff member*

*My [high school volunteer] Student Leader made lessons fun and easy to learn. She made me excited about soil and rocks! -6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

*on my AP environmental test, I actually used a lot of what I had learned from Outdoor School to answer questions. It felt good to be able to connect school work, a good experience and the outdoors. -high school student volunteer*

*At the end of the day, you start to think it is okay to be yourself. -6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

*I feel so connected to the natural world because the knowledge that I've learned at Outdoor School has reminded me that we are all a part of the same environment and community, so we need to respect each other and nature. -high school student volunteer*

*[Outdoor School] is just the vehicle for so many other life skills that this program addresses: leadership, community, and a sense of wonder and respect for this world we have been given! - 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher*

*I am stunned by what I saw at Outdoor School. The students were connecting to knowledge, each other, and the world around them. This comes about as close to perfection as anything I have seen in the Oregon school system. -parent*

*I have been so impressed with the growth of my students, but even more impressed by what I have seen in the leadership, service, and devotion of the high school students who make great personal sacrifices to take on the role of parenting a cabin of kids from very diverse backgrounds. -6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher*

*I learned things about myself, like the fact that if you're confident in yourself enough, you can do anything. I will remember [Outdoor School] for the rest of my life. -6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

*I feel more confident in myself and am more honest about my feelings on things. Outdoor School changed my life. -high school student volunteer*