

**PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Joint Committee On Ways and Means**

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact

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**Action Date:**

**Action:**

**Meeting Dates:**

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Establishes an Outdoor Education Account in the State Treasury for the purpose of funding a six-day, residential, hands-on outdoor school program or equivalent for fifth and sixth grade students across the state.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Value of a full six days of outdoor school rather than three days
- Outdoor school results in increased graduation rates and renewed student interest in their education
- Possibility of federal funding for outdoor school

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

Removes the appropriation clause and relieves Oregon State University Extension Service from any duties or obligations unless funding is provided for expenses incurred.

**BACKGROUND:**

House Bill 2544 (2009) established the Oregon Environmental Literacy Task Force for the purpose of developing the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan. The task force was to create a plan to identify and encourage programs that allow students to directly experience the outdoors by providing environmental education experiences and that incorporate field-based learning, place-based learning, service learning, outdoor learning or experiential learning. The plan was released in 2010.

According to the Oregon Outdoor Education Coalition, participation in outdoor school programs by county is currently estimated as follows: eight counties have greater than 80 percent of students participating in programs; eight counties have participation ranging between 41 and 80 percent; eight counties have participation ranging from 21 to 40 percent; eight counties have participation that is under 20 percent; and four counties have no participation.