In Your Own Words...

“I was having a really hard week and you helped to brighten it up just a little bit.”
- 6th Grade Student

“I had incredibly formative experiences that gave me confidence, brought out my true self, and was darn tootin’ fun!”
- Former Student Leader

“I now teach 5th grade... all because of one amazing week at ODS.”
- ODS Advocate

A New Way to Look at Outdoor School

A Collaboration Story from Kim Silva, Executive Director

I recently had the pleasure of speaking with Lauren Rosenstein, Program Director with Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors (ECO). Lauren shared her story of the recent non-residential Outdoor School program ECO hosted for Pioneer Special School Program at Youngson Elementary School, a program in Portland Public Schools that helps students with social/emotional needs, fragile mental health, developmental disabilities, life skills, GED preparation, or vocational training and community transition services.

Last March, as she warmed her hands next to a campfire at a leadership institute, Lauren was discussing the problem that, despite state funding, many students still don’t get the opportunity to attend Outdoor School. Lauren sympathized, “What a loss for the students. I understand how beneficial Outdoor School is for learning. But, it is also vital for social-emotional growth and connection to nature and peers.” She wondered how she might try to help with this problem.

A few weeks later, Laurel learned that the students at Pioneer School had never attended Outdoor School because the residential portion of the program was complicated for their student population. Lauren saw an opportunity.

Once she was back home, Lauren met with the Pioneer teachers. She learned that many Pioneer students have individual needs and the staff creates a system of support through classroom which provide the structure daily social skills and lessons in the classroom which provide the structure and framework by which they address social skills. She also learned that many of the students had not had the opportunity to take their learning opportunity.

Lauren knew that students with such high levels of need could benefit deeply from a positive outdoor learning experience, one they could share with one another, a once-in-a-lifetime, keystone experience...an adapted Outdoor School!

Lauren created a tightly scheduled framework. The idea was to take students on three consecutive days to three different locations, slowly moving further away from school into a wild space. Students would be chaperoned by adults they already knew and trusted. The teachers were thrilled.

Outdoor School for Pioneer students was a reality!

At the classroom meeting, Lauren started with easy ice-breakers eventually opening the conversation to questions:

“Will there be wild animals?”, “What do I have to bring?”, “What if it rains?”, “What will we eat?”, “Will there be bees?”, “Who else will be there?”, “Where will we go to the bathroom?”, “Who is going with us?”

Continued on inside, under “INFORM”...

Thank you to Outdoor School supporters and advocates! Your dedication and action assured that schools have the funding to send their students to a week of Outdoor School for the next two school years. Great work, Outdoor School community!

FUNDING UPDATE

Full State Funding for Outdoor School! Fantastic news! HB 5024, the budget bill that included Outdoor School funding passed the Oregon Legislature. With the Governor’s signature, Outdoor School will be officially fully funded at the full $46.8 M amount for the 2019-21 biennium!

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For more information, visit: friendsofoutdoorschool.org

A New Way to Look at Outdoor School
On the Road with Prince
Dan Prince, Associate Director

This spring has given me a great opportunity to get back on the road to visit Outdoor School programs and sites! The beauty and energy of the warming days, flowers and pollinators, and busy students is inspiring. I loved seeing students investigating nature everywhere from the Sandy River in the north to Klamath Lake in the south. While the programs and ecology are remarkably diverse, the incredible engagement that Outdoor School education provides for students is consistent everywhere I go.

Thank you to the following Outdoor School providers for taking the time to show me your work & share how Friends of Outdoor School can support their efforts:

• Camp Fire Wilani and Havenroot
• Arrah Wanna Outdoor School
• Canby Grove Outdoor School
• The Crest at Willow-Witt
• Kellogg Springs Camp
• Triangle Lake Center
• Delphian School
• Mazamas

Networking with Lindberg
Andy Lindberg, Legislative Session Organizer

On June 9, 40 Outdoor School lovers gathered at McMenamin’s Kennedy School for the first-ever Portland Metro Region Outdoor School Common Ground Network. Participants from many generations brought with them curiosity and passion for the future of Outdoor School. In small groups, we explored the current challenges to improving access and participation in Outdoor School for Portland Metro youth. The group decided to focus workgroups around three areas of need:

High School Participation
What is the best way to engage high school students & high schools?

Advocacy
Making sure that state funding is secured and kept long-term.

5th & 6th Grade Attendance
Why are students not attending ODS and how can we help?

We want to create ODS networks around the state. Contact Andy to start a network in your region! andy@friendsofoutdoorschool.org

Networking Continued from “A New Way to Look at Outdoor School” on front...

To her delight, the students were immediately engaged and asked the same questions any student asks before going to Outdoor School. They were ready. Off to Outdoor School!

DAY 1, Dahl Beach:
• Invasive plant removal
• Macroinvertebrate survey
• River edge walk

DAY 2, Milo McIver State Park:
• River edge walk
• Journaling & scientific drawing
• Nature scavenger hunt

DAY 3, Guy Talbot State Park:
• Waterfall hike
• Native plant scavenger hunt
• Nature sculpture

Throughout the experience, the Pioneer chaperons were as invested and engaged as the students were. The group challenged each other, took calculated risks, and discovered a sense of fun and freedom with each other. Pioneer’s first Outdoor School experience was so successful that the teachers are working with Lauren to send their students to Outdoor School again next year! Way to go Lauren!

Thank You Metro
10 years of investment in Portland ODS

This year we celebrate a decade of millions of dollars in support from Metro with a celebratory video. To watch, visit https://youtu.be/QfiAhZvzAL5

Goodbye, Michelle!

After five years working part-time with Friends of Outdoor School in donor stewardship and communications, I am moving on to a full-time development role at La Salle High School. I have a great deal of respect for the work Friends of Outdoor School and its supporters are doing in Oregon to make sure that each and every child has access to place-based, outdoor education; it’s critical for our shared future! I will miss this passionate, dedicated and inspiring community with whom I have had the privilege to connect and collaborate. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this important effort. I will miss you all!

Scholarships to Deserving High School Students

In June, Multnomah ESD Outdoor School awarded $1,000 scholarships to 10 outstanding high school volunteer Student Leaders for their commitment and service to Outdoor School.

Michael Ann Scardino Moore:
For her resiliency and commitment to Outdoor School.

Rebekah McClean:
For her continuing commitment to educating others.

Abigail Austgin Paz:
For her commitment to being a role model.

Alex Hussey:
For her dedication to supporting others.

Elena Volchkov:
For finding joy in helping make every student a success at Outdoor School.

Levi Profit - Winner of the Friends of Outdoor School Scholarship:
For his ethics, morality, and shift in consciousness because of ODS.

Tighe Hause - Winner of the Heather “Woodstock” Schoeck Scholarship:
For his commitment to biking to his Outdoor School site instead of driving and for mentoring others to do the same.

Moria Burkart - Winner of the Suzie “Daisy” Sendelback Scholarship:
For her wonder and curiosity in the outdoors.

Andrew Harker - Winner of the Dan “Teal” Prince Heart of Gold Scholarship:
For his honesty and heartfelt commitment to Outdoor School.

Jaime Diep - Winner of the Margaret “Lorax” Eng Scholarship:
For her love of teaching and ensuring that all students are included.

Congratulations MESD Outdoor School Student Leaders!

If you would like to feature your Outdoor School’s high school award program, let us know! We’d love to share your good news! If your Outdoor School program is interested in starting an award program for your high school volunteers, connect with us. We’d be happy to help you create one.

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