HB 2516: Outdoor School for Everyone

The biggest news of our year has undoubtedly been the announcement of the House Bill 2516: Outdoor School for Everyone. With The Gray Family Foundation taking the lead (www.grayff.org), the Friends of Outdoor School team has been working hard to spread the word.

The Outdoor School for Everyone bill is set to provide funding for every Oregon student to attend an Outdoor School program for a full week. The strategy team on the bill worked very hard to get the bill into the right hands and committees.

At a hearing by the House Energy and Environment Committee in the Spring many other environmental and education groups spoke about their support for the Outdoor School program.

Unfortunately, the bill did not pass the Joint Ways & Means Education committee, but we aren’t giving up! This means your designated legislator should be hearing from YOU about this bill. Tell your Legislators your Outdoor School story and encourage them to find funding for a full week of Outdoor School for all students.

We can do this. We can!

Find your Legislator:
www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/

“Outdoor School was the only place I felt comfortable and the only time I was really, really good at something with such consequence and importance.”
—Former Parkrose Student Leader

We’ve started planning for the 12th annual Photo of the Year contest! Last year’s successful contest and event saw more youth entries and more Outdoor School involvement than ever before!

We need YOUR help to make sure we continue to engage our audience while also investigating new and exciting growth opportunities! Help Kate reach out to Portland influencers and create a vision for the 2013 contest—email her at kate@friendsofoutdoorschool to get involved!

photo@photooftheyear.net
www.facebook.com/pdxphotooftheyear
@photoof_theyear
HUGE THANK YOU to the Friends of Outdoor School community, YOU!, for making sure that students got the Outdoor School experience during the 2012-2013 school year. Special thanks to our key investors: Metro, Gray Family Foundation, City of Portland, East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, Portlanders for Outdoor School, Organically Grown, and each and every generous individual donor that loves Outdoor School.

And, additional thanks to the Community 101 students at Roosevelt High School for contributing $4,000 to support Outdoor School Student Leader Scholarships. THANK YOU!

You are all making a difference in the lives of kids. THANK YOU!

Friends of Outdoor School Board

Kelly Wilson, President: Kelly’s background with ODS began at Camp Howard as a 6th grader and her lifelong commitment was cemented when she began volunteering as a Student Leader. Kelly has a Bachelors degree in Environmental Science and Masters in Public Administration and works at the Wildlife Conservation Network in San Francisco.

Liz Fouts, Secretary: Liz has a long background in law, obtaining her J.D. from the University of San Francisco School of Law and previously working for several law firms in the San Francisco Bay Area. Liz currently works for The Standard here in Portland and spends her free time with her family, husband & son (who will soon attend Outdoor School as a 6th grader)!

Jennifer Satalino, Treasurer: A new addition to the Friends of Outdoor School board, but not a new face—Jennifer sat on the E2 Foundation Board for several years. Jennifer’s career has been aimed towards making education accessible to all; and her background work at local colleges as well as her current job at Oregon College Access Network, reflect that goal.

Rex Burkholder: Trained as a biologist, Rex worked as a science teacher for several years before co-founding the Coalition for a Livable Future, bringing together over 100 diverse non-governmental organizations in the greater Portland region. Most recently, Rex retired from his day job at Metro Regional Government, acting as a Metro Councilor for 12 years.

Dave Eshbaugh: After receiving a Bachelor’s and Master’s in Anthropology, Dave began his career by consulting for environmental education groups as a zooarchaeologist in Arizona and Montana. He currently acts as the Individual Partnership Officer at Virginia Garcia Memorial Foundation. His background of environment and nonprofit make him a perfect addition to our board.

Alex Horsey, Youth Representative: A recent grad from Wilson High School here in Portland, Alex, or “Panache” as he’s known at Outdoor School, plans to attend Portland State this Fall to study Civic Leadership and Community Development. He founded “Project Believe in Me,” Portland’s only youth-founded, youth-led anti-bullying organization.

Katie Newcomb: Currently, Katie works for the U.S. Forest Service as a Sustainable Operations Coordinator, and has been with the Forest Service ever since she received her Masters and Bachelor degrees in Environmental Science. Katie is a native Oregonian who credits attending Outdoor School with providing her motivation to pursue a career in science.
“We’re not just fans of a sweet, cute singsongy camp experience. This is as life-saving as any kind of counseling program you could pay for. This is intervention, one-on-one care, and personalized work, for every child.”

— Portland Public School District Parent
It All Started With a Sticky Bun—
Outdoor School Testimonial by Rex “Canoe” Burkholder

It all started with a sticky bun. But, of course, it started much earlier with the first Outdoor School in southern Oregon in the 1950s and the story got complicated by Measure 5 and all that, but with me, it did start with a sticky bun.

The year was 2000, and the Portland Public Schools was buffeted by another year of reduced funding. Oregon reeled economically with the dotcom bust. Outdoor School was to be a casualty. My son was in 7th grade, attending the Environmental Middle School in Portland. Fresh off a great experience the year before at Outdoor School, his classmates sprang into action, somehow connecting with the owner of the Great Harvest Bakery and getting him to donate the proceeds from sales for a few days. The kids invited all their families and friends to the Bakery and worked the counters ringing up sales of loaves, cookies and… delicious, whole wheat, sticky buns, my favorite. I was hooked. Grassroots fundraising and pressure on the PPS School Board succeeding in saving Outdoor School that year but the threat returned year after year and many school districts are still struggling or have given up.

That year I was elected to the Metro Council, the regional government in Portland chartered by the voters to “preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment for ourselves and future generations” through planning and providing regional services like the Oregon Zoo, parks and natural areas and recycling and solid waste management.

What’s less well known is how deeply Metro is involved in conservation education. Metro reaches tens of thousands through programs at the Oregon Zoo and in regional parks like Oxbow but also with workshops and consultations like Recycle at Work and Transportation Options. Always being one to wonder how we can do what we do even better, I took on improving how Metro itself was delivering its messages about conservation. As might be expected of any large agency, a lot was going on but not in a very coordinated fashion. In addition, there was a big disconnect between what Metro was doing and what was going on in the community with major players like Portland Audubon, OMSI and of course, Outdoor School.

In 2006, I convened conservation educators from throughout the region, over 60 people came to OMSI full of ideas of how we could get better by working more closely together. Lots of good came out of that first and subsequent meetings. But I heard a major warning signal, too. When I asked the assembly of experienced educators what their #1 priority would be in enhancing conservation education in the region, they unanimously chorused “Saving Outdoor School is priority number one!”

They valued Outdoor School for the same reasons the Metro Council would eventually dedicate almost a million dollars a year to supporting Outdoor School for every child in the Portland metro region: it works. With its blend of rigorous, science-based education and challenging young people to examine their role in their communities and in the world, Outdoor School is effective at engaging kids’ imaginations, their hearts and their heads. They really understand the challenges we face around natural resource use and conservation. Some become teachers, many will volunteer as student counselors, some will go into science as a career. But almost to a kid, they all leave their time at Outdoor School inspired and empowered as citizens.

That’s why I am still committed to make Outdoor School for Everyone a reality. I am part of the coalition that pushing the State of Oregon to step up and fund Outdoor School again statewide. Representative Jules Bailey sponsored HB2516 to do just that. Support is strong in the Legislature for Outdoor School because legislators recognize how important it is for all Oregonians to know about the natural resources we depend on and treasure. Getting money is always a struggle but I am hopeful that with Oregon’s spirit of innovation and a little pluck, we will once again see kids from Ontario to Gold Beach, Astoria to Joseph out in the woods learning about science and life.
Help us Win a Portion of $25,000

Save time, reduce bill clutter and cut paper waste by signing up for paperless billing with NW Natural! If you enroll by July 31st, you can vote for Friends of Outdoor School to receive a portion of $25,000!

Sign up at www.nwnatural.com/paperless and cast your vote!
(Those already enrolled can vote as well, please visit the site for more information.)

How Can I help Outdoor School?
People are always asking us how they can help Outdoor School, so we thought we’d share the easiest and most common ways to get involved. Feel free to use any of these tips and share them as much as you like:

- Make a donation yourself and ask everyone you know to make a one (both via www.friendsofoutdoorschool.org or contact Kim directly at (503) 257-1774).
- Include ODS in your estate plans; then ask others to do the same, so we can break out of this cycle of need. (Find more info at www.friendsofoutdoorschool.org/Leave-a-Legacy.html.)
- Vote in a way that supports education and outdoor experiences for children.
- Talk to your school board - if they don’t hear from parents and students, they don’t know you care.
- Talk to your elected officials about the importance of Outdoor School and environmental education and ask them to make decisions that support Outdoor School, education, and environmental education: School, City, County, Metro, State, and Federal (http://www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/).
- Attend an ODS event and bring friends. (Visit www.friendsofoutdoorschool.org & www.facebook.com/friendsofods for details.)
- Volunteer for fundraising and outreach events. WE NEED YOUR HELP!
- Buy ODS gear and ask friends to do the same. (Visit www.friendsofoutdoorschool.org/Shop or call ODS at 503-257-1600.)
- Purchase through CafeGive so that your online purchases benefit ODS. (Visit www.cafegive.com/causes/friends-outdoor-school.)
- Register your credit cards via eScrip so that ODS will get a donation every time you use them. (Visit www.friendsofoutdoorschool.org/Shop for a link.)

Everyone can make a difference! THANK YOU!

Adapted WILD

The second summer of Adventure WILD Summer Day Camp, a benefit for Friends of Outdoor School, is off and running at four awesome locations for kids Pre-K-5th grade! Keep up with the kiddos by following Adventure WILD on social media:

www.facebook.com/AdventureWILDdaycamp
@AdvWILDdaycamp
www.adventurewild.org

The past year the staff of the Friends of Outdoor School team have been engaged and in attendance at many local events and fundraisers. Let’s take a look back...

- World Environment Day
- Sustainable Schools—Sustainable Communities Conference
- The Intertwine Conservation Education Summit
- PTA/PTO meetings
- All Hands Raised, Communities Supporting Youth Collaborative
- Burgerville’s Summer Reading Kickoff party
- Portland Metro STEM collective impact partnership
- Children’s Clean Water Festival
- The Circuit Gym’s “The Network” premier
- Urban Farm Apple Cider Press Fundraiser
- Willamette Week GiveGuide
- The Standard Volunteer Fair
- Rotary and Lions Club meetings
- Hoyt Arboretum events
- Base Camp Brewing Grand Opening! …and more!

THANK YOU to all our community partners who have included us!
**Outdoor School Research**

With a grant from the Goodman Family Foundation and the Gray Family Foundation, Outdoor School is partnering with Portland State University to study student achievement related to the Outdoor School experience. Jennifer “Pheff” Basham will perform the research with support from Sybil Kelly and the research team at PSU’s Center for Science Education. Contact jennifer@friendsofoutdoorschool.org for info.

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**Farm to tAble—Save the Date!**

Join us at Able Farms on **August 24th** for a very special Farm to tAble event! Students will be helping Megan Denton and her team at Able Farms to harvest and serve food for the meal! Proceeds from the event will help those same students who work at the event to attend Outdoor School! Put the date on your calendar — you won’t want to miss it!

www.ablefarms.org

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For more information, contact Kim Silva at Kim@FriendsOfOutdoorSchool.org or 503-257-1774