



NW Outdoor Science School

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**Northwest Regional
Education Service District**

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

Your student has the opportunity to participate in an overnight Outdoor Science School program. Northwest Outdoor Science School has been serving Oregon schools since 1969. Your students' class and teacher will attend one of our Outdoor School sites. About 80-140 students attend our programs for four days. This opportunity is provided to schools and is a program of the Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRES D).

The Outdoor School experience is an educational program where students attend school 24-hours a day in a beautiful outdoor setting. Outdoor School is an extension of the classroom, offering a hands-on, engaging approach to learning. Best of all, it supplies an enjoyable learning experience in which students show a genuine enthusiasm for their studies.

The Outdoor School program has taken precautions to ensure your students' comfort, health, and safety while at an Outdoor School site. Students will be transported to Outdoor School in a regular school district bus with a fully qualified driver. Students are housed in winterized, heated cabins, and adequate rain shelters and dry rooms are available for wet-weather days. The Outdoor School program has secured accident insurance coverage for all participating students.

A registered nurse will manage health concerns and oversee medications and treatments necessary to students on site. Transportation is always ready to take any student to the hospital should an emergency arise. Generally, if students are sick enough to be in bed, they should go home; parents/guardians will be notified to come and pick up their student.

PRIOR TO OUTDOOR SCHOOL: Your school will provide important dates and other information regarding your students' Outdoor School experience. The teacher(s) have been given firm dates to have all paperwork turned in, and we appreciate your effort to get all forms returned in a timely manner.

HOMESICKNESS: Students sometimes experience homesickness while attending Outdoor School. We have found that a positive talk at home prior to attending helps to alleviate many students' concerns. When preparing for your students' Outdoor School experience, please use encouraging, uplifting language during your talk. In the event that your student becomes homesick at Outdoor School, our staff is experienced in assisting students in overcoming their homesickness.

COST: With the passage of Measure 99 in the 2016 election, state funding is now available to help schools pay some or all of the cost of attending Outdoor School. If your school or school district charges a fee for Outdoor School, you will receive separate instructions from the school about any cost and how to submit payment.

HEALTH HISTORY/PERMISSION FORM: We require a **completed** Health History/Permission Form for every student. Information shared will remain confidential. Especially any health, emotional, or physical problems that might require special staff planning. If you have a student with a chronic medical condition such as diabetes or epilepsy, or if your student has life-threatening allergies, please contact the Outdoor School office at 503-614-1402 as soon as possible.

Any prescribed medications being taken by the student must be supplied from home for the entire stay, and must be in an **original prescription bottle** (available at your pharmacy), labeled with your students' name, doctor's name, medication, prescribed dosage, and the condition for which the drug is given. These will be kept by the Outdoor School nurse, who will see to their prescribed administration.

Please note, there are special instructions for *dietary supplements* on the Health History/Permission Form.

Please sign this form where indicated to grant permission for a physician to treat your student in case of medical emergency. Any other restrictions should be similarly noted. The completed Health History/Permission Form should be returned to the teacher at least three weeks before your student is scheduled to go to Outdoor School.

ALLERGIES: Please indicate allergies on the Health History/Permission Form. Our kitchen staff can accommodate nearly all dietary needs and allergies, including gluten-free, dairy-free, vegetarian & vegan diets, nut allergies, and most other dietary concerns. However, our kitchen staff are not able to accommodate kosher & halal diets; if your student needs such a diet, please call our main office (503-614-1402), as we will need your assistance.

CONDUCT: Just as at their home school, students at Outdoor School will be provided a learning climate supported by positive behavior expectations and, when necessary, discipline for inappropriate or unacceptable conduct. We ask teachers to talk with their classes before attending Outdoor School about the expectations for behavior and our “three step” discipline process. Information about our discipline process is available in the **Parents/Guardian** section of our website.

INCLUSION POLICY FOR STUDENTS: NW Regional ESD and Outdoor School are committed to creating a learning environment conducive to the overall development and social-emotional health and well-being of students. Students in the BIPOC, LGBTQ+ communities and students with disabilities, often experience discrimination, harassment and implicit bias at school and in their lives. These experiences can send students the message that they do not belong. We make it clear: All students do belong and are welcome.

CABINS & BATHROOMS: Students stay in cabins with typically 8 to 12 other students, and a Student Leader. Teachers make cabin groupings prior to arriving at Outdoor School. Bathrooms are equipped with single stall toilets and showers.

CLOTHING & BEDDING: Please refer to the **CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST FOR STUDENTS** prior to packing for Outdoor School. This list gives specific details on what to bring and what not to bring. The NWRES D is not responsible for loss or theft of personal belongings, so please avoid sending expensive clothing, footwear and other items. If an item is missing upon your students’ return from Outdoor School, please contact the Outdoor School Office at 503-614-1402 or ODSOfficeAdmin@nwresd.k12.or.us and we will try to locate the lost item.

Please make sure to label every item with your student’s name and school.

WEBSITE: www.nwoutdoorschool.org. Our website offers program information, photos and more. The **Parents/Guardians** section includes an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), information on mailing letters to your student at Outdoor School, the Student Guidebook, and all forms sent home by your students’ teacher, in case you need fresh copies.

Our experienced Outdoor School staff works diligently to provide your student with an outstanding program full of learning. If, however, you have concerns about your student’s attendance, you are encouraged to talk with your students’ teacher/school about your concerns. If, after doing so, you still have concerns, please contact our main office at (503) 614-1402 or ODSOfficeAdmin@nwresd.k12.or.us. Overall, we are confident that your student will have a successful experience that they will long remember.

Sincerely,

The Outdoor School Team