



NW Outdoor Science School

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**Northwest Regional
Education Service District**

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

We are thrilled to invite your student to participate in a four-day, three-night Outdoor Science School program. Northwest Outdoor Science School has been serving Oregon schools since 1969. Your student's class and staff members from their school will attend one of five Outdoor School sites across Northwest Oregon and will be supervised by our highly qualified staff from 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.

A nurse will manage health concerns and oversee medications and treatments necessary to students on site. Should an emergency arise, students will either be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital, or a legal guardian will need to transport them off-site. Additionally, we follow OHA "Too Sick for School" guidelines. If your student has any symptoms listed, we will contact you to pick them up as soon as possible.

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.

HEALTH HISTORY/PERMISSION FORM: We require a **completed** Health History/Permission Form for every student. Information you share will only be shared with staff members who need to know of any needs your student has. If you have a student with a chronic medical condition such as diabetes or epilepsy, or if your student has life-threatening allergies, please make sure to note this on your health form in as much detail as possible so that we can prepare our staff.

Please make sure to read ALL of the directions on medications your student will need administered - failure to follow these instructions may result in our Registered Nurses being unable to administer the medication/dietary supplements you send.

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.

FOOD: All meals and snacks are provided by Northwest Outdoor Science School while your student is with us. 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. Please be sure that you note these needs on the health history form, and our office will contact you if we are unable to accommodate your student's needs.

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, consequences 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: Northwest Outdoor Science School is 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 here.

CABINS & BATHROOMS: Students stay in cabins with typically 8 to 12 other students, and one-two High School Student Leaders. 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.

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.

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. We believe that **every** student can be successful at Outdoor Science School!

Sincerely,

The Outdoor School Team