



Outdoor Education Advisory Working Group

Presented by: Nevada Division of
Outdoor Recreation

October 11, 2024

Opening

Roll Call

Public Comment

Approve Minutes

Chair Opening Remarks & Agenda review

Survey Results

Responsive Management

Mark Damian Duda, Executive Director

Attitudes Toward and Knowledge of Environmental Issues

Research to Inform Nevada's
Outdoor Education Efforts



Conducted for
Nevada Outdoor Education Advisory Working Group
Nevada Department of Conservation and
Natural Resources, Division of Outdoor Recreation
Together We Can

2024



Focus Group Results

Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation

Kendal Scott, Outdoor Education Lead

Thank you to those who organized, hosted, and contributed to focus groups!

Julie Bless, Sean Thornton, Todd Hess, Melanie Erquiaga, Erica Mosca,
Shelly Kopinski

Focus Groups

5 focus groups with 45 participants:

- Teachers
- School administrators
- Nature education providers
- High school students
- UNR students and professors

There is an overall desire to address nature-deficit disorder, which describes the accelerating distance of humans from the natural world and the health and wellbeing issues associated with that disengagement. This was identified by focus group participants as a problem for Nevada students, rural and urban alike. Students expressed a desire for increased comfort in and knowledge of the outdoors, indicating that they feel that distance themselves.

Common Themes

- Barriers
- Funding
- Administrative, logistical, and partner support
- Nearby nature
- Field Trips
- Class management
- Health
- Academic Success
- Place-based learning
- Stewardship and conservation



Barriers

- Funding
- Transportation
- Unsupportive admin
- Logistical considerations
- Standards alignment
- Understanding of importance
- Reliance on grants
- Lack of local content

Funding

Needs

- Addressing barriers beyond financial
- Adding capacity
- Outside partner support
- Field trip funding

Opportunities

- Budget line items for outdoor learning
- Agriculture programs

Administrative, Logistical, and Partner Support

- Administrators wield a large influence
- Office support makes a difference
- Increased partnership with outside entities
- Teacher training and ongoing professional development

Nearby Nature

On campus desirables

- Green space in schoolyards
- Sheltered areas
- Suitable space for outdoor learning
- Walkable nature nearby
- Sophisticated agricultural programs



Field Trips



Wonderful, new and exciting, happy, memorable, enjoyable, engaging, interesting, empowering

- Build relationships amongst students to improve classroom dynamics
- Many advocated for field trips being built into budgets and curriculum
- Supportive administration is key

Class Management

The outdoors benefit student behavior

- Improve responsibility and discipline
 - Improve relationships
 - Increase attendance
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- Restricting recess and breaks is unhelpful
 - Cutting recess time increases behavioral problems
 - Outdoor detention may have restorative effects



Health



Physical Health

- Appetite for outdoor skills learning in PE
- Teach basic first aid, survival

Mental Health

- A focus of the Nevada Department of Education
- Aids brain development
- Improves regulation
- Restores focus

Academic Success

Hard and soft skills

- Observation skills
- Critical thinking
- Pattern identification

- Confidence
- Autonomy
- Perseverance
- Leadership



Place-based Learning

- Relevancy
- Purpose
- Increased engagement
- Connection to learning

“It levels the playing field - everyone has a shared story of their home/environment. You don't have to have an accommodation for kids to tell their story, everyone can be active and engaged.”



Stewardship

Big Ideas

When students miss out on knowledge of the outdoors, they miss out on the values associated with that knowledge. On the other hand, when we understand our local environment, we can make better decisions about it.

Students expressed a desire to understand issues to a greater extent before jumping into stewardship activities. They desire ownership over conservation efforts and autonomy for directing their own stewardship projects.

Gallery Walk

Directions

- In person: get up! *Virtually: use document will send in chat*
 - Read subcommittee recommendations
 - Think about your experience & the last 2 presentations: Add commentary by checkmarking items you agree with or writing questions and/or additional thoughts on post-its
- Small group discussion: themes, thoughts & wonderings
- 1 rep from every subcommittee summarize poster w/check marks & additional thoughts – take any thoughts from the group
- ***Over lunch: think about how to actualize these items for the legislative report and potential bill draft requests***

RECESS

Returning at 12:45 PM

Decision Points

Consensus items: most agreement on post-its



Decision Points

What else do we agree on?

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Decision Points

- Legislative report inclusions
- Bill draft requests

Next Steps

Closing

- Public comment
- THANK YOU