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BHSD Voices - Outdoor School

(Dec. 25, 2018)

Hello, this is Sean Gallagher — Superintendent of Brookings-Harbor School District with some exciting news about a new opportunity for our sixth grade students.

Azalea Middle School Principal Nicole Medrano recently shared that, starting in the Spring of 2019, sixth graders in our district will participate in Outdoor School thanks to new funding and a hardworking planning committee that has been leading the charge to bring this opportunity back to our local students.

What is Outdoor School? It's time-tested, hands-on time of effective science education in the field, with a more than 60-year history in Oregon.

For many children, Outdoor School is their first experience hiking in a forest, getting their feet wet in a stream or exploring sea life along a sandy beach. For others, Outdoor School gives them new understandings and perspectives about the natural world they thought they already knew. These experiences expand young minds and can transform lives.

This is an exciting time for Oregon and for Oregon's 5th and 6th grade students as OSU Extension works in collaboration with schools, partners, and communities to launch the statewide Outdoor School program, building on that legacy. In July 2017, the Oregon Legislature

formally approved \$24 million for the statewide Outdoor School program over the next two years. This followed Oregon voters' approval of Ballot Measure 99 in November 2016 to provide a statewide Outdoor School program.

In our school district, Azalea Middle School created a committee to relaunch our local program. Committee members did site visits during Spring 2018 to look at potential sites across the region before applying for a grant for funds through Oregon State University Extension. Our district was approved for a three night trip or three days of day trips for sixth grade students and will share the plans for Spring 2019 with students and families in the near future.