Outdoor School

Despite rain, wind, and a snow flurry or two, smiles marked the faces of sixth-graders at this year’s Outdoor School held at Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort. Due to the large number of students — 180 between South Baker, Haines and Keating — the week was split into two groups. The first 90 went up Monday and came home Wednesday morning. The second group arrived Wednesday and stayed through Friday.

Stations were set up at Anthony Lake, Mud Lake, Hoffer Lakes, and the summit above the lodge. Topics covered trail building, wildlife habitat, insects, water safety, fish, soils, Leave No Trace, watershed, and geology. On their day back at school, students learned about wildland firefighting, skulls, noxious weeds, and orienteering.

Riley Hurliman, left, and Reese Roys work on trail building skills during a station at Anthony Lakes.

Sierra Bond, left, and Mary Schwartz inspect a bug collection at the insect station of Outdoor School.

One station taught students about fish habitat.
Thanks, Baker City!

Shout Out to Baker City Street Department for painting all the crosswalks around Brooklyn Primary prior to the start of school. Thanks for keeping our students and staff safe! You are the best!

Brooklyn paraprofessional staff and Angela Lattin

Thank you, print shop

I would like to thank Julie Homan and the Printshop staff and students that help out. They are always on top of everything when I need them. Quick and consistent. It’s so nice to have reliable people when you need an extra hand!

Erin Justus

Awesome cups

I would like to thank Brooklyn PTO and administration for the awesome insulated individualized cups. I'm looking forward to having some hot tea all winter long, right after I finish my ice water from this hot beginning to school.

Erin Justus

Doing an amazing job

Sending a shout out to Jessica Mul-stop, our new Special Education teacher at South Baker. She is jumping right in and doing an amazing job! Great to have you on our team!

Lisa Davis

Books for Kids

A huge THANK YOU to all the families, friends, and community members who have donated to teachers at Brooklyn for our Books for Kids campaign. Many teachers are ordering books monthly for students to take home to build their home libraries and to help foster a love of reading. We appreciate you all!

Jill Welter

To Outdoor School staff and volunteers:

I would like to shout out for Skye Flanagan. As an administrator he never gets enough credit! He is here at 6 a.m. and probably doesn’t leave till 6 p.m. or later. If you ask for anything from classroom support, extra ideas, or a shoulder to cry on he is there! He has so much energy it takes the whole building staff to keep up with him! THANK YOU SKYE FOR SETTING THE BAR!

Brianna Peppers

Ellen's a superstar!

I really appreciate Ellen Dentinger’s assistance whenever we have a technology issue that needs to be troubleshooted. She is quick and always willing to help in any way she can. She is a real team player. Most people don’t know this, but she frequently covers for the front desk willingly which is a big help for the rest of the District Office as well as the public. Thank you Ellen! We appreciate you!

Cathy Martin

Tracie is wonderful

Tracie Smith is wonderful. The support and care she gives to students is key to their success, and they thrive in her positive growth atmosphere!

Darcie Kirkwood, SBI

To Allison Mitchell:

I’d like to give a HUGE shout-out to Mrs. Allison Mitchell, our local voice teacher, along with Ginger Savage and Crossroads Carnegie Art Center. Their partnership has brought private vocal instruction to a level of quality never before seen in this community to a great number of students who would otherwise not have access to them.

In fact, Jordan Remien, one of her students and a senior in the BHS Choral Program, was just accepted to the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, a well-known performing arts conservatory. His work with Allison was a huge part of his success. Furthermore, Allison volunteers countless hours helping choral students with choreography and conducting free choral clinics before performances. She will also be helping with the upcoming production of "The Addams Family" by coaching our vocal leads. She is a huge asset to the 5J Performing Arts program and to this community!

Hannah Violette, director of choral and keyboard studies at Baker Middle and High schools

Help in a time crunch

Thank you to Sandy Harper and Fred Dobbs for their amazing work handling all our summer work orders at BMS. We tend to have a heavy workload prior to the beginning of the year, and the two of them never fail to give us their best efforts — even when we are rushed or in a time crunch.

Skye Flanagan, BMS principal

He believes in students

Tom Joseph’s esteem and enthusiasm for the success of his students is simply amazing! He is an inspiration to them, and his belief in each student drives them forward to achieve their goals.

Darcie Kirkwood, SBI

Vital substitutes

 Huge shout out to Mrs. Haley Hester and Mr. Brian Watt, both of whom have been working as short-term substitutes due to staff emergencies. Both of them have been extremely vital to starting our school year off on the right track.

Skye Flanagan, BMS principal

A great-looking field

Thank you to the maintenance department for all the hard work that went into putting in our new underground sprinkler system at BMS. It was definitely a labor of love, and now that it is up and running, our field looks much better and our maintenance team has a lot more time to dedicate to the building rather than dragging hoses.

Skye Flanagan, BMS principal

School Coordinator. Your dedication and energy made for an incredible experience in the outdoors for our students!
News from the athletic department at Baker High School

Sports teams are giving back

This year, and from now on, every sports team will decide on a community service project to complete during the regular season.
"The idea is that you can make a positive impact every day," said Buell Gonzales Jr., the district athletic director.

Students and coaches on each team collaboratively select a challenging project.
This fall the cross country team volunteered at a mud obstacle run held in memory of Wes Gibbons, who died in a sledding accident in December 2018. The soccer teams gleaned potatoes to give to local families, and the cheer squad painted over graffiti at the city-owned skate park.
"Each team is required to do a community service project," Gonzales said. "What that looks like is up to them."

BHS cross country runners helped with the Messy Wessy, an obstacle mud run held September 7 in honor of Wes Gibbons, who died in a sledding accident in December 2018.

Captain's Club

District athletic director Buell Gonzales Jr. will work with representatives from each sports team as part of "Captain's Club."
The group will meet on a couple Fridays each month for about 45 minutes and work through the book "7 Ways to Lead Your Team" by Bruce E. Brown.
"We'll intentionally teach leadership — 'let's talk about how we lead teams,'" Gonzales said.
He said the focus will revolve around the question of what it means to be a good leader. The book covers topics such as leading by example, communication, and encouraging others.
Three to four athletes from each sport will be invited to participate upon recommendation from his or her coach. Captain's Club members will change each sports season.
"These are skills and tools the kids will take with them," Gonzales said.
Part of this new program will include the book "Raise Your Game" by Alan Stein Jr., who is scheduled to talk to the BHS student body, coaches and Baker community in March.

Honoring senior citizens

Student athletes at Baker High School are handing out senior citizen passes to local community members, who will in turn be recognized at games during this school year.
"The purpose is to connect and show appreciation for those who have given so much to our community," said Buell Gonzales Jr., district athletic director.
The district has always offered this free pass, but this year reduced the eligible age to 60. The pass gives free entrance to regular season games for football, volleyball, soccer, basketball, baseball and softball. Passholders will also receive a sports schedule. Passes are also available at the front office of Baker High School, 2500 E St., and at the gate of any game.
The senior citizen passes do not apply to playoff games.
Two unique programs are meeting student needs at Eagle Cap Innovative High School.

One is geared toward self-directed students who prefer to work at a different pace than traditional classrooms, completing courses through an online platform.

"They can accelerate by focusing on one course at a time," said Dr. Thomas Joseph, director of specific secondary programs at Eagle Cap.

The students have access to a teacher if they need help, and can design their day with a flexible schedule.

"Some like to put in their time and then go to work," Joseph said.

He said Eagle Cap has a modified daily schedule, which allows some students to arrive as early as 7 a.m. There can be as many as 10 different schedules among the students.

"Another way to be innovative is to be flexible on the schedule," he said.

The second program at Eagle Cap is designed for students who need a different approach for their education.

Eighteen students are enrolled, and each has a personalized education plan.

This course of study is a student driven, project-based approach with hands-on applications.

"We're tapping into their interest," Joseph said. "Everybody gets an individualized plan based on where they're at developmentally."

Once an interest or passion is identified, Joseph and teacher Annetta Evans craft an individual course of study that wraps core subjects around that topic.

"We're trying to engage the student in something they enjoy," Joseph said.

In Evans' words, "We are trying to make school fit the kid, not make the kid fit school."

She is starting her 27th year of teaching.

"I am absolutely excited about the possibilities of this program," she said. "I love project-based learning because of the integration and real-world application of ideas and concepts. There are so many opportunities for students to ask and answer the questions that are relevant to them, their community, and the world."

Each student is encouraged to select his or her own subject to study as a project. While focusing on a particular interest, the student completes tasks related to core subjects such as language arts, math, or science.

"We're creating a unit that earns as many credits as possible," Joseph said. "The expectations are the same — they have to meet the same requirements (as at Baker High School)."

The goal, however, isn't simply to finish the project.

"In true project-based learning, you have to value process as much, if not more than, the product," Joseph said.

"This approach provides freedom to fail and the chance to look at the process and try again."

"You are rewarding risk — so you have to be prepared to fail," he said.

Right now the program has students from grades 9 to 12, plus one eighth-grader. Joseph said it could expand down to seventh-grade as well.

Students work in a multi-grade classroom and create a contract with Joseph and their family that determines their instructional minutes and progress for each day.

In addition to Joseph and Evans, the staff at Eagle Cap includes Tracie Smith, program facilitator, paraprofessional Liz Smock (who is retired from a career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), and Mike Popa, who tutors in math every day from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Diplomas

Eagle Cap students can take courses at Baker High School, and BHS students have access to classes at Eagle Cap.

If a student's schedule includes four courses at Eagle Cap, he or she earns a high school diploma from Eagle Cap Innovative High School.

If the majority of classes are completed at Baker High School, a student earns a diploma from BHS.
Scot Violette has scrimped and saved four years' worth of play admissions so he could put on a musical of grand scale.

"The Addams Family" will hit the stage at Baker High School on Oct. 25, 26 and 27. Showtimes are 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 3 p.m. Sunday.

"One hundred percent full-blown Broadway musical with singing and dancing," Violette said.

Admission is $12 adults, $8 students.

This performance is billed as "not so" live musical theater.

"Ninety percent of the cast are dead people," Violette said.

Not literally, of course — this musical features the Addams family along with a full roster of their ancestors who show up on stage as ghosts.

The cast of 48 all completed singing auditions last spring and received scripts. Actors studied lines over the summer and came together in September to begin rehearsals as a full cast.

The cast is 48 all completed singing auditions last spring and received scripts. Actors studied lines over the summer and came together in September to begin rehearsals as a full cast.

The musical is a coordinated project between drama, choir, and band. In fact, the performances count as the fall concerts for the choirs of Hannah Violette and bands of Matt Powers.

This is Scot Violette's fifth year as drama coach. For the past four school years he chose shows that didn't require sets and used plays written by a friend who didn't charge royalties.

"For four years I've been squirreling away money we've made," he said.

This musical, he said, celebrates the performing arts students who have been part of the programs since the beginning.

"They're seniors now," he said. "I wanted them to do a big show as a last hurrah."

Royalties to perform "The Addams Family" cost $2,300. The set, once constructed as a two-story house with grand staircases and rotating scenes, will total about $1,000.

"We're doing a lot of special effects," Violette said.

To prepare for the musical numbers, Allison Mitchell worked on vocals with the actors. Elisabeth Munsell handled costume designs.

The main cast includes Jordan Remien, Marie Taylor, Emily VanGaasbeck, Savannah Brown, Joy Murphy, Bekka Schmit, Grady Lay, John Hurley, Melissa Titus, and Auston Lemmon.

Upcoming shows

After "The Addams Family," the performing arts departments will begin working on "A Christmas Carol," which will be part of the Vespers concerts in December.

Next spring will bring a performance of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" on April 17-19.

To stay updated on theater news in the district, visit the Facebook page for BHS Drama Club or to online to www.bakerhighdrama.com.
Miguel Canul and Joe Chastain work on multiplication tables during the first days back at South Baker Intermediate School.

Students at Keating Elementary designed the best way to make apple slices fly during a science activity the first week back to school.

The first day back featured an alien theme at Baker High School. Each year, a group of students attend a program called Renaissance that focuses on improving school culture and the inclusion of all students. Day one featured class competitions and a dress up day for students and staff.
Central update

A committee comprised of community members formed in the spring of 2019 to assess the Central Building and formulate recommendations for its future. "They've given us really good direction," said Superintendent Mark Witty.

The building's hazardous materials have been identified as lead and asbestos, which must be abated before any projects move forward. Baker School District has transferred ownership of the building to Baker Technical Institute where it will become a project for the brownfield class. That class, which finds grants to clean up contaminated buildings and lots, will seek funding from the Department of Environmental Quality.

"It opens up great funding possibilities," Witty said of the transfer.

The next steps include an RFP to identify what is necessary to fix the structure, and an RFP for a roof design.

"The goal is to leverage grants to upgrade the Central property thereby lowering the risk to investors who might be considering the property in a way that could benefit the community," Witty said.

Baker School District continues to make improvements to facilities. Below is a graph detailing the district's investments since 2007.

Did you know?

Every winter and spring, seniors at Baker High School begin applying for scholarships to help fund education and training beyond high school.

The class of 2019 earned a total of $515,825 in scholarship money. Of that amount, $140,315 were local scholarship; $215,610 were college-awarded scholarships; $159,900 were from the Leo Adler Foundation.
Career advice from pros

Reps from Trail Blazers and Moda share insight

It wasn't all about playing professional basketball.
In fact, none of the panel of speakers dribble a basketball in the Moda Center but each contributes to the success of the Portland Trail Blazers and Moda Health.

The group was in town for the Rip City Rally on September 9, a community party held in towns across Oregon to kick off this year's Trail Blazer season.

A panel of six gathered at Baker High School to talk to students about careers related to sports and health care.

But first, they talked about the path to their current jobs.
"I thought I was going to be a rockstar, but went to college anyway," said Duane Hankins, chief marketing officer for the Blazers.

He started in journalism and mass communication, then moved to sports PR. He's worked with teams around the country. His advice was to "take risks and go out of your comfort zone."

"If you want to move up, you can't always do that with the team in your backyard," he said. "I never thought I'd live in the Northwest. Get uncomfortable, and be okay with being uncomfortable."

Brooke Olzendam, the courtside reporter who interviews coaches and players, talked about challenges of being female in a male-dominated industry.

"I like to be as prepared as possible, as knowledgeable as possible," she said. "A lot of eyeballs are watching for me to mess up."

However, she knows her opinion is valued by colleagues.

"We're at a day and age that it's becoming a level playing field," she said.

On the health care side Erin O'Brien, director of marketing and brand for Moda, talked about her career path — from investigative journalism to advertising to the health field in 2012. This all came after she gave up on broadcast journalism.

"When I got in front of the camera, it was a disaster," she said.

Everyone on the panel talked about having tenacity. Olzendam reported on college campus, then the sidelines, then in the world of professional sports.

"The goal is to love going to work," she said. "It's the best job I've ever had."

Amara Baptist is the digital content manager for the Blazers. A question posed to her was how she handles the negative posts — "the haters" — on the various social media platforms she monitors.

"A lot of people don't think of the human behind the account," she said. "I've learned to not take it personal."

The panel included, from left, Hillary Gorlin, Duane Hankins, Amara Baptist, Brooke Olzendam, Erin O'Brien and Andrew Knister.