

## WAYS AND MEANS ROADSHOW TALKING POINTS FOR OUTDOOR SCHOOL FOR ALL

**Introduce** yourself and say thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I am very excited that Measure 99 passed in November with 67 percent of the vote and passed in 34 of 36 counties.

- The lottery funding dedicated by Measure 99 funds a week of Outdoor School for every middle school student in Oregon.
- I understand that the Legislature has to make excruciating choices in the upcoming budget. In making those hard choices, I urge you to fully fund every 6<sup>th</sup> grader that wants to attend Outdoor School.
- I believe that this investment will pay dividends both in the lives of 6<sup>th</sup> graders but also in the health of Oregon.

**[Insert your personal story about Outdoor School and/or your reason for supporting the funding]**

**Potential Closing Themes (Pick One):**

**Opportunity for every Child:** Whether a student lives in Portland or in rural Oregon, every child deserves this opportunity, regardless of their zip code or family income. Outdoor School increases academic performance, it builds important life skills, it provides the kind of hands on learning students can't get in the classroom, it exposes students to life sciences and importantly, it gives kids a break from technology. You have the opportunity, with the voter's strong direction, to ensure that all Oregon six-graders have the opportunity to participate in Outdoor School.

**Unity:** Outdoor School unites our state in a way that no other state investment can. Every student will have the experience of learning about our natural resources in the outdoors, while meeting and interacting with students from different schools and different backgrounds. Outdoor School not only teaches life skills, it is the one place where students can get a larger sense of what it means to be an Oregonian. I urge you to allocate the funding directed by the voters so that all six-graders in Oregon can attend Outdoor School.

## **Background Information**

**(Do Not Read these – Pick and Choose to enhance your comments.)**

### **Reasons to Support to Outdoor School**

- Students today are spending less time outside than ever before. The average teen spends an average seven hours a day in front of a screen. Outdoor School gives middle schoolers a chance to unplug from video games, iPhones.
- Outdoor School helps to combat obesity and depression, and it re-connects young people with the wonders of science and nature.
- Outdoor School provides students with the hands-on-learning they simply cannot get in the classroom, learning in the outdoors with field studies (Water, Plants, Fire, Soil, Animals).
- Research shows that kids who go to Outdoor School do better in class, testing scores rise, attendance improves, and they become more motivated to learn.
- It teaches kids important life skills while putting our lottery dollars to good use.
- Research shows kids who go to Outdoor School actually do better in school, attendance goes up and when kids stay in school they do better at life. Our state has the 4th worst graduation rates in the country - almost 12,000 students will not graduate this year.

### **Economic Development Benefits:**

- By dedicating \$22 Million in lottery funds every year, Outdoor School programs will create 600 FTE jobs, and many of those jobs will be located in rural Oregon. A fully funded Outdoor School Program will put \$27 Million back into local economies across the state each year.
- The mission of the Oregon Lottery is to support education, economic development and conservation. Outdoor School benefits all three of the lottery's mission areas (education, natural resources/parks/watersheds, and economic development) by allocating a small amount, 22 million, provides stable funding to send 50,000 middle school students and 3,000 high school leaders (interns) to a week of outdoor school, every year.

### **Why State Funding is Needed**

- At its peak 85% of Oregon 5th and 6th graders went to a week of Outdoor School during the school year.
- Programs have traditionally been locally funded by school districts and families.
- Now only about half of all 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> graders go, and most programs are shortened.
- The students who benefit the most, now have the least chance of going because their districts and parents can't afford to send them.