



Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Outdoor Education Task Force

Agenda

#1/20

January 20, 2020

7:00 P.M.

HEAD OFFICE, 101 EXCHANGE AVENUE, VAUGHAN

Members:

Melinda Chartrand

Cynthia Cordova

Will Davies

Frank Di Cosola

Rowena Santos

Anu Sriskandarajah

Morgan Ste. Marie

Garry Tanuan

Jennifer Wigston

Pages

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS TERRITORY
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING #1/19, HELD ON OCTOBER 7, 2019
[Meeting Minutes Link](#)
3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF
4. DELEGATIONS
5. PRESENTATIONS
6. CORRESPONDENCE

7.	ITEMS FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION TASK FORCE ACTION	
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9.	NEW BUSINESS	
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	NEXT MEETING OF THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION TASK FORCE #2/20, TO BE HELD ON MARCH 17, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M., LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED	

Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

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Items for the Action of the Outdoor Education Task Force

TO: Chair and Members of the Outdoor Education Task Force
Meeting #1/20, Monday, January 20, 2020

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

RE: **STUDENT TRUSTEE REPRESENTATION ON OUTDOOR EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

KEY ISSUE

Inclusion of student representation and perspectives in the work of the Outdoor Education Task Force.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS at Authority Meeting #6/18 held on July 20, 2018, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) approved the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Outdoor Education Task Force comprised of elected officials from local school boards and the TRCA Board of Directors;

AND WHEREAS the Outdoor Education Task Force has been convened to study, develop and recommend strategic future directions related to out-of-classroom learning within the areas of jurisdiction of TRCA and participating school boards;

AND WHEREAS, recognizing the important role that student perspective play in the governance of school boards, the *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Ontario Regulation 7/07 Student Trustees (Section 3)* indicates that each Ontario school board shall have at least one but not more than three students elected as Trustees;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOVED THAT one student trustee from each of the participating Outdoor Education Task Force School Boards be invited to participate in one of the three Outdoor Education Task Force Working Groups (Principals, Values and Destination; Models and Mechanisms; Recommendations and Policy Statements).

BACKGROUND

The important contribution of students to school board governance is acknowledged through the *Education Act, R.S.O., 1990*, which formalizes the inclusion of the student voice in school board decision making through Section 3 of Ontario Regulation 7/07, Student Trustees: "...*the board shall have at least one but not more than three student trustees.*" Through this Regulation, student trustees are elected by their peers and participate in board activities such as attending school board meetings.

During a discussion held at the October 7, 2019 meeting #1/19, of the Outdoor Education Task Force, members of the Outdoor Education Task Force identified an interest in including the student voice in the work of the Outdoor Education Task Force to ensure that youth perspectives related to learning in the out-of-doors were included and considered in any potential recommendations brought forward by the Outdoor Education Task Force.

RATIONALE

Convened to provide recommendations and strategic directions related to the long-term

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provision of out-of-classroom learning related to the environment, conservation and natural-science, the Outdoor Education Task Force is currently comprised of Trustees from eight participating school boards. During the first meeting of the Outdoor Education Task Force held October 7, 2019 meeting #1/19 members requested an investigation into opportunities to include the student voice in the work of the Outdoor Education Task Force. The inclusion of Student Trustees in the work of the Outdoor Education Task Force will provide for an enhanced youth perspective related to the learning and experiential needs of students currently enrolled in the education system.

It is recommended that one student trustee from each of the participating Outdoor Education Task Force School Boards be invited to participate in one of three working groups of the Outdoor Education Task Force.

At Meeting #1/19 of the Outdoor Education Task Force, held on October 7, 2019, Resolution #OETF4/19 outlined three working groups:

- **Principals, Values and Destinations:** working group to be formed January, 2020; presentation to the Outdoor Education Task Force February, 2020
- **Models and Mechanisms:** working group to be formed February, 2020; presentation to the Outdoor Education Task Force, May 2020
- **Recommendations and Policy Statements:** working group to be formed May, 2020; presentation to the Outdoor Education Task Force, October 2020

Each of the working groups will have the opportunity to determine how best to include Student Trustees in the working group, including accommodating participation through various means, such as attending meetings in person or virtually or provide information or feedback to the working group electronically.

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following strategy set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

Participating school boards of the Outdoor Education Task Force will be provided the opportunity to invite one student trustee of their respective school boards to participate in one of the three working groups of the Outdoor Education Task Force.

TRCA staff will work with Student Trustees that have accepted the invitation to determine an appropriate working group and strategy for participation.

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Date: January 3, 2020

Items for the Information of the Outdoor Education Task Force

TO: Chair and Members of the Outdoor Education Task Force
Meeting #1/20, Monday, January 20, 2020

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

RE: **CURRENT STATE OF OUT-OF-CLASSROOM LEARNING RELATED TO
NATURAL SCIENCE, CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

KEY ISSUE

Summary of responses received from Outdoor Education Task Force member school boards regarding out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS the Outdoor Education Task Force has been convened to study, develop and recommend strategic future directions related to out-of-classroom learning within the areas of jurisdiction of TRCA and participating school boards;

AND WHEREAS on November 19, 2019, Trustee Garry Tanuan, Chair, Outdoor Education Task Force issued a questionnaire to receive feedback from member school boards regarding the current state of programs and policies at their school boards with respect to out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment;

THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Outdoor Education Task Force members receive the attached summary of the questionnaire prepared by TRCA staff.

BACKGROUND

At Task Force Meeting #1/19 held on October 7, 2019, the Outdoor Education Task Force approved Resolution #OETF5/19, in part, as follows:

... THAT the following Mandate, Objectives and Timelines of the Outdoor Education Task Force be endorsed;

AND THAT the Outdoor Education Task Force Work Plan and Timelines as outlined in this report be approved.

An initial deliverable of the Outdoor Education Task Force (OETF) workplan consisted of the inventory and assessment of the current state of out-of-classroom learning policies and programs related to natural science, conservation and the environment at area and participating school boards. To facilitate this research, a questionnaire was developed to gain contextual information and useful background details to guide recommendations and/or further research. The questionnaire was circulated to OETF members by email on November 19, 2019. Completed questionnaires have been received from three school boards to date. The responses have been summarized in Attachment 1, appended to this report.

Key findings from the responses received so far indicate that school boards generally have similar values, principles and policies to guide out-of-classroom learning and that they seek

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appropriate ways to support and integrate the Indigenous voice into out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment. School boards are partnering with various organizations with respect to natural science, conservation and environmental education and have programs in place to provide students with equitable access to outdoor education programming.

The Ontario Ministry of Education provides funding to school boards to directly support outdoor education experiences for elementary and secondary students through the Learning Opportunities Grant. Use of this funding by school boards is varied, which is reflective of the inherent flexibility provided by the government for the allocation of these funds. In addition, one of three responding school boards stated that they operate a number of outdoor education centres and that supplementary funding beyond the Learning Opportunities Grant for the operation of these facilities is required, and is allocated from other school board operating budgets.

It is anticipated that additional responses from the remaining OETF member school boards will be received in January 2020 at which time they will be incorporated into the summary report and the report will be recirculated to members.

RATIONALE

The OETF has been convened in order to establish a strategic planning framework for the long-term provision of out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment that serve students of the Toronto region while maximizing the use and value of public assets and infrastructure.

The current state summary report will provide the groundwork for which the OETF can undertake its mandate through the formation of working groups.

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following strategies set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 3 – Rethink greenspace to maximize its value

Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship

Strategy 6 – Tell the story of the Toronto region

Strategy 7 – Build partnerships and new business models

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

TRCA staff will incorporate additional responses into the summary report as they are received and will circulate to OETF members as required.

Report prepared by: Amy Thurston, extension 5878

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Date: January 7, 2020

Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: Current State of Out-of-classroom Learning Related to Natural Science, Conservation and the Environment. Summary Report.

Current State of Out-of-classroom Learning Related to Natural Science, Conservation and the Environment Summary Report

As of January 3, 2020

The following report is based on feedback and information collected through an 11-question survey that was circulated to Outdoor Education Task Force members in November 2019. School Boards included in the summary report include:

- Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir (CSC MonAvenir)
- Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB)
- York Region District School Board (YRDSB)

Values and/or principles that guide policies related to natural science, conservation and environmental out-of-classroom learning

Similar general statements were provided by responding school boards with respect to the overarching values and principles that guide their school boards out-of-classroom learning (defined by all school boards generally as an educational excursion or activity has students leaving property). These include:

- Educational purpose/curriculum related
- Safe
- Inclusive
- Diverse (to include activities related to language, culture, faith, sports and the arts)
- Accessible (regardless of socio-economic status, special needs)
- Student focused and appropriate (age, maturity, experience, health, skill physical abilities and exceptionalities, cultural, faith)
- Respectful of values
- Considerate of funding, training, supervision, risk management, contingency planning and evaluation.

YRDSB provided an example that was specific to natural science, conservation and environmental out-of-classroom learning that is captured in their Outdoor Education Policy and Procedure (#350.0 currently undergoing revision):

The York Region District School Board is committed to providing students with multiple opportunities to learn in, of and about the natural world through outdoor education. The Board believes that the ultimate goal of outdoor education is to empower participants to contribute towards a sustainable community. The Board is dedicated to promoting outdoor education learning opportunities that allow all participants to experience the restorative benefits of being immersed in nature. The Board is committed to enhancing the lives of all learners through experientially profound outdoor education experiences that are connected to the curriculum and delivered at Outdoor Education Centres, schools and within the community.

In our 2018 Outdoor Education Review, the following priorities were identified. These align quite clearly with our Director's Action Plan and the YRDSB Multi-Year Plan.

- a) *Nature Deficit Disorder in children is a serious current issue (Well-Being)*
- b) *Students & teachers in YRDSB want to be teaching/learning outdoors more often (Indigenous Education and Equity)*
- c) *The inquiry learning model and integrated studies make learning meaningful (Modern Learning)*
- d) *Strong system leadership and support can bring significant change- (Leadership)*

School board policies and procedures

An inventory of school board policies and procedures related to natural science, conservation and environmental out-of-classroom learning can be found in **Appendix A** (this include policies related to day trips, overnight trips, off school property walking excursions, low/high risk activities, supervision and ratios and equity).

All school boards indicated that excursions including outdoor education activities are guided by Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) guidelines.

Inventory of current partners, organizations and locations

The following is an inventory of vendors, organizations and locations that responding school boards are currently partnering with for natural science, conservation and environmental out-of-classroom learning:

- Adventureworks
- Bird Studies Canada
- Blue Mountain
- Camp Robin Hood
- Camp Tournesol
- Centre Notre Dame de la Rouge
- City of Toronto outdoor play spaces, swimming pools etc.
- Earth Tracks
- EcoSchools Canada (formerly Ontario Eco-Schools)
- Education Leadership Centre (OELC)
- Envirothon
- Evergreen
- Georgina Island First Nation
- Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (Scanlon Creek, Outreach)
- Learning for Sustainable Futures
- Monarch Teacher Network
- Municipal Community Centres (Town of Newmarket, Town of Aurora, City of Markham, City of Richmond Hill, City of Vaughan)
- Natural Curiosity
- Ontario Provincial Parks (Secondary Outdoor Credit Course trips)
- OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning)
- Outdoor Council of Canada
- Region of York (Bill Fisch Education Centre)
- Sibbald Point Provincial Park

- Staff from Lakehead University- Orillia Campus
- St-Louis / Moonstone
- Teen Ranch
- The McMichael Art Gallery
- Toronto Orienteering and Ontario Orienteering
- Toronto Region Conservation Authority (Albion Hills Field Centre, Kortright Centre For Conservation, Lake St. George Field Centre, Outreach, Swan Lake Partnership, Burlington Outdoor Resource Centre Partnership)
- TRAILS Youth Initiatives
- Tree Bee

Ministry of Education Learning Opportunities Grant – Summary of allocation of funds by school boards

The Ontario Ministry of Education provides funding to school boards through a number of grants. The Learning Opportunities Grant provides funding to help students who are at greater risk of lower academic achievement and is made up of several allocations. Provision for funding to directly support outdoor education experiences for both elementary and secondary students is included under the Student Achievement Envelope.

Responses received by school boards varied which is reflective of the inherent flexibility provided by the government on how boards may use and allocate this funding.

- Fees related to participation in outdoor education activities (day and overnight excursions) provided by school boards or other third-party organizations (development of learning experiences for both students and educators in a broad range of inquiry areas).

Example: The Outdoor Education Department at TCDSB organizes and supports overnight school trips to board subsidized outdoor education sites. Schools are offered trips on a rotating basis. Each elementary school within the TCDSB will be offered a trip approximately every 2 years. TCDSB partners with TRCA field centres (Lake St. George Field Centre) and have partnerships with Teen Ranch and Mansfield Outdoor Education Centre. Fees are used to cover the cost of overnight accommodations, meals/snacks, and programming/activities.

- Fees for safety-related training and/or certification for students and/or teachers, including professional development opportunities for teachers

Example: Outdoor Council of Canada field leader program (YRDSB)

- Fees to enlist expertise and/or facilities/resources of community agencies in outdoor learning activities

Examples: Summer Institute, Residential Program, Georgina Island (YRDSB)

- Transportation costs

Examples: Busing to outdoor education centres, inquiry learning and secondary outdoor learning, credit courses, overnight trip subsidy.

- Teacher release time

Examples: Professional learning, supporting student learning, safety training

Summary of other outdoor education funding sources

Currently, the TCDSB participates in TRCA's Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program which provides a subsidized experience for high priority students that pairs in class learning with an overnight outdoor education experience.

In addition, YRDSB operate five outdoor education centres. Costs to operate these facilities are funded through separate school board budgets.

Policies/programs to ensure equitable access to outdoor education facilities

All responding school boards have policies to guide equity and inclusion of students and schools within the school board.

Specific to outdoor education facility access, the following examples were provided:

- All grade 2, 4 and 7 YRDSB students participate in outdoor learning opportunities at school board run Outdoor Education Centres.
- Specific transportation requirements for YRDSB students are covered by the board including the provision of funding to subsidize transportation and program costs for credit course outdoor education programming.
- At YRDSB run facilities, decisions around program design and facility renewal are guided by AODA principles.
- At TCDSB, schools are selected to participate in the Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program (a highly subsidized overnight outdoor education experience hosted at TRCA operated outdoor education facilities) based on the financial need of students.

Practice of obtaining feedback from students and/or teachers about their outdoor education trips and experiences and vision

While both the TCDSB and YCDSB indicated that they currently obtain feedback from educators after participating in a field trip or professional development activity, the surveys they fill out are general in nature and are not specific to outdoor education activities.

Specific to outdoor education, YRDSB indicated that their professional learning communities (including Grade 2 and 4 teachers, Eco School teams, secondary Outdoor Education course teachers, Secondary Geography and Science Heads) have engaged in visioning activities to support the direction of professional learning as well as the identification of specific opportunities for student learning.

Practices that support or integrate the Indigenous voice into out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment.

All three school boards indicated that they currently have practices that support or integrate the Indigenous voice into out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment. Examples are provided below.

- Through the Indigenous Education Department at the Toronto Catholic District School Board, students can apply to participate at no charge in the Gathering of Nations Summer Camp for Indigenous Students, a high school credit course that includes a trip to a camp in Muskoka as part of the course. The mission of this program is: to provide Indigenous students and those Indigenous students who are considered at-risk with Secondary School credit courses in a safe and caring environment based on the philosophies, aesthetics, and worldviews of Indigenous peoples in Canada.
- YRDSB collaborate directly with members of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) team at Inclusive Schools and Community Services in the design of learning opportunities for staff and students. One example is the four part “Natural Curiosity” professional learning community with OISE, the FNMI team, partners on Georgina Island and YRDSB educators.
- YRDSB have engaged directly with the Chippawas of Georgina Island to support learning opportunities for staff and students in these areas through professional learning opportunities (including visits to Georgina Island and facilitated learning sessions provided by the community for students and educators) and student activities (such as SHSM ICE challenges, with “empathy sessions” supported by Indigenous facilitators).

Appendix A**Inventory of school board policies, procedures and supporting documents**

School Board	Language	Title	Type	Link	Year *	Primary Focus Area
CSC MonAvenir	French	SORTIES ÉDUCATIVES ET ACTIVITÉS SCOLAIRES (PSE.11.0)	Policy	https://www.cscmonavenir.ca/publications/politiques/PSE.11.0.pdf	2019	Out of classroom educational field trips and activities
CSC MonAvenir	French	PLANIFICATION DE LA MATERNELLE À LA 12E ANNÉE (PSE.6.3)	Policy	https://www.cscmonavenir.ca/publications/politiques/PSE.6.3.pdf	2016	Planning student programs and activities
CSC MonAvenir	French	INCLUSION DES ÉLÈVES AYANT DES BESOINS PARTICULIERS (PSE.2.1)	Policy	https://www.cscmonavenir.ca/publications/politiques/PSE.2.1.pdf	2016	Provision of equitable and inclusive education
CSC MonAvenir	French	ÉDUCATION ENVIRONNEMENTALE (PSE.5)	Policy	https://www.cscmonavenir.ca/publications/politiques/PSE.5.pdf	2010	Environmental education and sustainable facility management
CSC MonAvenir	French	INCLUSION DES ÉLÈVES AYANT DES BESOINS PARTICULIERS	Policy	https://www.cscmonavenir.ca/publications/politiques/PSE.2.pdf	2016	Support and respect of all student needs

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		RS (PSE.2.0)				
TCDSB	English	School Excursions (S.E.01)	Policy	https://www.tcdsb.org/Boards/Policies/Documents/SE01.pdf	2019	School sanctioned excursions
TCDSB	English	Excursions Handbook	Procedure	http://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SchoolProgramsK12/HealthOutdoorPhysicalEd/ExcursionHandbook/Pages/default.aspx	2015	Operational procedures to support the School Excursions policy
TCDSB	English	Equity Action Plan 2018- 2021	Action Plan	https://www.tcdsb.org/Boards/EIE/Documents/TCDSB_Equity_Action_Plan_Web_2019.pdf	2018	Diversity, equity and inclusive education
YRDSB	English	Field Trips (#642.0)	Policy	https://yrdsb.civicweb.net/document/37407	2013	Out of classroom field trips and educational activities
YRDSB	English	Field Trips: One Day (#642.1)	Procedure	https://yrdsb.civicweb.net/document/37407	2013	Field trips that are no more than one day
YRDSB	English	Field Trips: Two to Five Days (#642.2)	Procedure	https://yrdsb.civicweb.net/document/37407	2013	Field trips that exceed one day and are completed within five days and five nights.
YRDSB	English	Field Trips: Beyond Five Days (#642.3)	Procedure	https://yrdsb.civicweb.net/document/37407	2013	Field trips that are five or more nights
YRDSB	English	Outdoor Education (#350.0)	Policy & Procedure	http://www.yrdsb.ca/board/docs/Documents/PP-outdoored-350.pdf	2014	Outlines the Outdoor Education opportunities that are available including school visits to Outdoor Education Day Centres, stays at residential facilities and the loan of outdoor education equipment (Currently undergoing revision).

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YRDSB	English	Environmental Responsibility (#235.0)	Policy & Procedure	http://www.yrdsb.ca/board/docs/Documents/POL-environment-235.pdf	2016	Support the stewardship of Board resources and the Board's commitment to environmentally responsible practices (Currently undergoing revision).
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*Year the document was created/reviewed or updated

Items for the Information of the Outdoor Education Task Force

TO: Chair and Members of the Outdoor Education Task Force
Meeting #1/20, Monday, January 20, 2020

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

RE: **OVERVIEW OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN JURISDICTIONS OUTSIDE OF ONTARIO**

KEY ISSUE

Summary of research regarding Outdoor Education (OE) practices and opportunities outside of Ontario.

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following research summary on outdoor education in jurisdictions outside of Ontario be received.

BACKGROUND

At OETF Meeting #1/19 of the Outdoor Education Task Force, held on October 7, 2019, Res. #OETF4/19 outlined three working groups:

- **Principals, Values and Destinations:** working group to be formed January, 2020; presentation to the Outdoor Education Task Force February, 2020
- **Models and Mechanisms:** working group to be formed February, 2020; presentation to the Outdoor Education Task Force, May 2020
- **Recommendations and Policy Statements:** working group to be formed May, 2020; presentation to the Outdoor Education Task Force, October 2020

This report regarding the Outdoor Education (OE) activities and programs outside of the GTA school boards is intended to inform Outdoor Education Task Force members of potential OE practices and/or opportunities they may wish to consider as part of the strategic planning framework for the long-term provision of out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation or the environment in the Toronto region.

RATIONALE

In assessing outdoor education systems and programs in other jurisdictions outside of Ontario, multiple variables were taken into consideration, including:

- Country and/or Region - Finland, Australia, Denmark, Singapore, New Zealand, Italy, Scotland, United States (specifically California) and Canada (specifically British Columbia);
- Type of OE Interventions – in-school (and school yard), day excursions (off school property activities but within the regular school day), overnight excursions, trips abroad;
- Curriculum Focus – mandated through curriculum, teacher-choice, offered by partners or outside agencies;
- Audiences – grade level and/or age of students;
- Funding Sources – publicly funded (through school systems), fee for service, grant/sponsored;

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- Additional Information;
- Reference(s).

For each country or jurisdiction evaluated, there exist a range of unique programs and/or pedagogy being employed which demonstrates the spectrum of approaches and frameworks being employed:

- In Finland, OE resides within the not only the need but the *responsibility* we have for the environment, one's personal well-being, and a sustainable future. Outdoor education resides within the core curriculum, and the majority of the costs associated with in-school programming, excursions, as well as nature and camp schools is included as part of the school system budget. Curriculum for primary, junior, and intermediate age students focuses on environmental education and responsibility for the environment while senior grades shift to sustainable development education.
- In Australia, students are also offered curriculum mandated OE, particularly in the subject areas of Health and Physical Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Geography and Science. Curriculum experiences may include in-school, day, and/or overnight excursions. The Australian OE approach is based in building a *positive relationship with the natural world* for the sake of wildlife but also as an extension of human health;
- Denmark is home to *Udeskole*, which translates to "outdoor school". Children between the ages of 7-16 have weekly or bi-weekly outdoor school days. Udeskole is practiced in approximately 14% of all schools in Denmark;
- In Singapore, an "*Outward Bound School*" offers learners up to college-aged the opportunity to build a connection with nature while they build *tenacity and resiliency* for themselves;
- New Zealand, like Australia, has explicit curriculum linked OE with strong roots in physical education. OE focuses on creating opportunities for personal and social development, while protecting and caring for the environment. It also promotes adventurousness, cultural awareness, values development, and honouring tradition.
- Italy has strong OE roots in *social inclusivity*. The *Reggio Emilia Approach* to education sees children as powerful, capable, and inquisitive beings. It fosters following the children's interests versus a predetermined curriculum and student achievement is measured via pedagogical documentation versus testing. This approach is available to children in pre-school to 6 years of age;
- The *Curriculum of Excellence* in Scotland makes it every school employee's responsibility to foster OE for their students and extends this approach to volunteers and partners. It uses multiple funding sources to ensure multiple and ongoing OE learning experiences for students throughout the education system;
- In British Columbia, there are multiple parallels to the offerings in Ontario. British Columbia offers curriculum-linked OE programming within the Physical Education and Environmental Learning subject areas, as well as having it embedded with other subjects and teacher resources. This approach values OE for its capacity to not only develop outdoor skills, but also self-awareness, safe practices, nature appreciation, and leadership;
- California's *Blueprint for Environmental Literacy: Educating Every Student In, About, and For the Environment* also parallels the Ontario OE framework. The purpose of California's approach is to increase not only access to healthy natural environments but also integrate formal and informal education systems/providers, utilizing community

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resources to their full potential and maximizing the strength of the messaging.

While each jurisdiction offers unique approaches to the application of OE frameworks, the programs also share many primary elements. Analysis of the collective data suggests the following:

- Most systems considered used varied and multiple OE interventions throughout the grade school experience to be imperative to their OE framework;
- Early years experiences tended to focus on play, nature appreciation, and building confidence and resiliency, while older students would experience more knowledge building, critical thinking, independence and self-reliance;
- Funding to support OE often included multiple sources, with in-school activities most often being available to the students at no additional cost and some excursions funded with school system funding and some requiring additional funding sources such as student fee or grant/private support;
- Ethos and impetus for OE varied significantly, with rationale including physical and mental health benefits, social responsibility, leadership, science curriculum, geography curriculum, play theory, understanding of the nature/geophysical world, safety, nature appreciation, self-reliance and challenge, clearer cultural understanding, social interaction, academic excellence, well rounded citizenry, equitable relationships, and inclusiveness.

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following strategies set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 4 – Create complete communities that integrate nature and the built environment

Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship

Strategy 12 – Facilitate a region-wide approach to sustainability

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

TRCA staff will continue to monitor and evaluate other jurisdictions for changes and advancements in policies, practices and models related to the delivery of out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment.

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Date: January 7, 2020

Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: Summary of Selected Outdoor Education (OE) Systems/Programs Offered Outside of Ontario

Table 1: Summary of Selected Outdoor Education (OE) Systems/Programs Outside of Ontario

Country and/or Region	Types of OE Intervention(s)	Curriculum Focus and Audience	Funding	Additional Information	Reference
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In school lesson plans Excursions, camp schools, nature schools 	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Leadership/ Personal development focus <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently 7-16 YOA Anticipating 16-18 YOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on idea of ‘responsibility for environment, well-being and a sustainable future Mental health benefits At Finnish schools, the term “outdoor education” represents teaching and learning that takes place outside the classroom with the aim to achieve goals in the National core curriculum for basic education (NCC, 2004, 39) and in the National core curriculum for upper secondary schools (NCC, 2003, 28–29). National Strategy for Environmental Education (EE) Strategy for Sustainable Development Education (SDE) (Loukola et al., 2002). EE, SDE and OE take place in a variety of formats in schools and universities as well as informal educational institutions in youth work and social services in the public and private sectors. 	<p>Forest Schools in Finland https://theculturetrip.com/europe/finland/articles/what-we-can-learn-from-finlands-forest-schools/ Outdoor Education in Finland https://ioern.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/finland_1.pdf Guardian Article https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/sep/20/grammar-schools-play-europe-top-education-system-finland-daycare</p>
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In school, overnight, and day experiences 	<p>Focus: Content from the Australian Curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Physical Education Humanities and Social Sciences Geography, Science <p>General capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities can be organized and delivered through learning in the outdoors (K–6) and outdoor education (7–10)</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> K-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded Fee for service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They develop skills and understandings while valuing a positive relationship with natural environments and promoting the sustainable use of these environments. The teaching and learning of self-reliance, interdependence and leadership The development of an adventurous spirit Managing personal risks Experiencing safe journeys in nature Learning the value of lifelong outdoor recreation for enjoyment, health and wellbeing Understanding nature through direct experience; and the development of deeper human–nature relationships. 	<p>Curriculum for Learning https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/curriculum-connections/portfolios/outdoor-learning/ Outdoor Education Australia https://outdooreducationaustralia.org.au/education/curriculum-guidelines/</p>

Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Udeskole (outdoor school) ages 7-16. Weekly or bi-weekly day experiences (approx. 14% of schools practicing Uderskole) 	<p>Focus: Teacher initiated (not mandatory for all) but there is mention of OE in various subject curricula</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ages 7-16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly Funded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Udeskole theory – uses outdoor environment to make links to topics/subjects of study Designed to enhance cultural learning and work experience Encourages social interaction among the class Numbers of teachers using uderskole principles increasing in Danish schools 	<p>Udeskole Theory</p> <p>https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254238856_The_nature_of_udeskole_Outdoor_learning_theory_and_practice_in_Danish_schools</p>
Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camping trips Trips abroad to study other cultures and climates Visits to ‘adventure centres’ 	<p>Focus: Dr. Goh Ken Suee’s “Outward Bound School”</p> <p>Audiences: Ranging from younger students to college level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded Fee for service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designed to build tenacity and with a focus on inclusiveness – to allow every child to thrive in a globalized environment Feeling connected to nature is linked to students holistic and creative thinking Objective is to provide important need for human minds to connect with sources of stimulation from nature – for children living in cosmopolitan areas 	<p>https://www.edu-quip.co.uk/blog/4-countries-who-are-championing-outdoor-learning-and-why-we-should-be-doing-the-same</p> <p>https://www.straitstimes.com/forum/letters-in-print/outdoor-education-develops-students-in-ways-classrooms-cant</p>
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day Excursion based In-school 	<p>Focus: Mandatory in curricula with strong physical education roots</p> <p>Audiences: Primary and secondary schools (note: compulsory to be part of lesson plans for PE up to 14 years of age)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funding Fee for service (centres) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The specific aims of the outdoor education learning area were to “provide students with opportunities to develop personal and social skills, to become active, safe, and skilled in the outdoors, and to protect and care for the environment Adventure activities and outdoor pursuits that focus on physical skill development, fun, and enjoyment Adventure activities and outdoor pursuits that focus on the development of personal and interpersonal skills Learning about the traditions, values, and heritages of their own and other cultural groups 	<p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>https://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Health-and-PE-in-the-NZC/Health-and-PE-in-the-NZC-1999/Key-areas-of-learning/Outdoor-Education</p> <p>https://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Curriculum-in-action/In-the-Outdoors</p> <p>Nature and Scope of OE in NZ</p> <p>https://www.academia.edu/24470100/The_nature_and_scope_of_outdoor_education_in_New_Zealand_schools</p> <p>Article: Outdoor School</p> <p>https://gazette.education.govt.nz/articles/learning-and-growing-through-outdoor-education/</p>
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-school Community excursions 	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not mandatory Reggio Emilia Approach <p>Audiences: Pre-school to 6 YOA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded Fee for service (private) 	<p>The Reggio Emilia Approach values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s <i>relationships</i> with other children, teachers, parents and their classroom environment; <i>Documentation</i> of the children’s learning as a way to make their thinking and theorizing visible - and convey a strong image of an intelligent child; <i>Project work</i>, where children are engaged in explorations of their world, making choices about what they will investigate, and then together with their teachers and peers making meaning; 	<p>Reggio Emilia</p> <p>https://theconversation.com/reggio-emilia-how-a-city-in-italy-started-an-education-trend-25809</p> <p>CNN News Report: Reggio Emilia (video)</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVv5ZL9nIgsReggion</p> <p>Reggio Emilia Approach – La Scuola</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The many ways children express themselves, called the “100 Languages” with a strong emphasis on the visual arts; and <i>Active listening</i>, where children’s voices, thoughts and opinions are valued (as much as the teachers’). 	https://www.lascuolasf.org/education/reggio-emilia-approach
Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-school Day centres Overnight centres Community exploration Field trips/excursions 	<p>Focus: All staff at every level of involvement with the education of children and young people have a responsibility to make the most of the outdoor environment to support the delivery of the experiences and outcomes of <i>Curriculum for Excellence</i>.</p> <p>Audiences: Primary and Secondary ages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded Private Funding Fee for service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning is designed to help teachers, educators, Community Learning and Development (CLD) and their partners, including the voluntary sector, plan opportunities for a series of planned, quality outdoor learning experiences to ensure that progressive and sustainable outdoor learning opportunities are embedded in the new curriculum. Looking at opportunities in the delivery of regular, low-cost, cross-curricular outdoor learning and learning for sustainability. Various involving teachers, children, local authorities and government policymakers 	Curriculum for Excellence https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf University of Edinburgh https://www.ed.ac.uk/education/rke/making-a-difference/outdoor-learning-and-policy-development-scotland
British Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-school Outdoor learning centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day Overnight 	<p>Focus: Built into new provincial curriculum Outdoor education as part of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PE curriculum Environmental Learning curriculum in schools/resources for teachers <p>Audiences: Primary and Secondary Ages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded Fee for service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in outdoor activities allows for the development of skills in a complex and dynamic environment Spending time outdoors allows us to develop an understanding of the natural environment, ourselves, and others Participating safely in outdoor activities requires communication, teamwork, and collaboration Participation in outdoor activities allows for the development of leadership skills that can be applied in a variety of contexts and environments. 	BC’s New Curriculum https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/physical-health-education/11/outdoor-education https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/physical-health-education/11/outdoor-education Gov’t of BC – environmental learning resources for teachers https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/teaching-tools/environmental-learning CBC article https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/outdoor-school-salmon-arm-1.4824850
California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-school/school grounds in the local community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential outdoor science programs Museums Aquariums 	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal to integrate environmental literacy into academic standards, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly funded Fee for service Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing that critical environmental concerns face California, the California Environmental Literacy Task Force was created to think deeply about how to build a future for an environment that is sustainable, healthy, prosperous, and equitable. 	California Department of Education – Environmental Education and Environmental Literacy https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/oeintrod.asp Blueprint for Environmental Literacy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Science centers○ Etc.	<p>curriculum, textbooks, professional learning, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental literacy embedded into formal instruction for History-Social Science standards. <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• K-12• Post secondary• Professional		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The resulting report, <i>A Blueprint for Environmental Literacy: Educating Every Student In, About, and For the Environment</i> provides guiding strategies and recommendations to realize the ambitious goal of achieving environmental literacy for all California students.• Purpose of the <i>Blueprint</i> is to expand access to environmental literacy and healthy, green learning environments, ensuring availability of high-quality instructional materials, ensuring integration between formal and informal education systems, defining environmental literacy learning outcomes and assessment, cultivating sustainable funding sources, ensuring availability of high-quality educator professional learning, and increasing access to environmental literacy experiences for California's diverse populations	<p>https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/documents/envronliteracyblueprint.pdf</p>
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