

## Outdoor Classroom Grant Application

### Acadia National Park & Friends of Acadia



#### What is an outdoor classroom?

An outdoor classroom is an educational space outside that provides an opportunity to integrate nature into your school grounds. These spaces engage all the senses while learning, leading to improved academic outcomes of students, as well as increasing environmental stewardship values and the well-being of all who use the space. Outdoor classrooms become an all-season gathering place for schools. To get started, you need a great plan and plenty of school commitment. Elements of an outdoor classroom can include:

- Natural features (trees, fields, wetlands)
- Trails
- Gardens (vegetable, butterfly)
- Creative space
- Greenhouses
- Outdoor chalkboard and seating
- Study space
- Fitness and balance elements



Images: *The Outdoor Classroom Project, Boston Schoolyard Initiative, & Nature Explore*

#### Grant Funding

Funding is provided through Friends of Acadia to support more youth engagement with Acadia National Park. Outdoor Classroom grants are available for early learning centers through grade 12 schools to build on their school property. Grants are currently awarded on a first come, first serve basis.

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### Grant Requirements

1. Schools applying for funding must have their campus located within the State of Maine.
2. Outdoor classrooms must be on the school campus. The outdoor learning space should be within a short-walking distance from the school building and not require transportation, except in the cases of mobility issues for users. The property that the outdoor classroom is built on must be owned by the educational institute and/or the town in the case of a public school.
3. Early learning centers serving infants through pre-k and private schools must be:
  - Licensed or on the Approved School List by the State of Maine.
  - Serving students full-time.
  - In operation for 5 years or more.
  - Not require a fiscal agent to receive funding.
4. Schools must submit a complete application, accepted on a rolling basis.
5. Curriculum link to Acadia National Park. Students must study three lessons throughout the school year, using the outdoor classroom, which connects to current issues in Acadia: natural processes, cultural history, environmental issues, arts in the park, etc.
6. **Grant reports are due July 1<sup>st</sup> or December 1<sup>st</sup>, one year following your grant award.** Provide documentation that students are learning outdoors ~18 school days (10%) through photos, written summaries of student and teacher experiences, Acadia-linked lessons, etc.

### Funds available per school campus *(not per school district)*

New grants: are for first time recipients to implement or expand outdoor classrooms.

- 5 grants of \$7,500 per year will be given to public schools. 3 of these grants will be awarded to public schools in Hancock, Penobscot, and/or Washington County. If grants are still available by November 15<sup>th</sup>, then remaining grants will be opened to all Maine public schools.
- 2 grants of \$5,000 per year are reserved for private educational institutions until November 15<sup>th</sup>. If grants are available by this date, then the remaining funds will be opened to all Maine public schools. *(Private school grants are awarded for 2024.)*

Continuing grants: 5 grants of \$2,500 each are available for returning public school grant recipients, located in Hancock, Penobscot, or Washington County, to continue outdoor classroom expansion. If grants are available by November 15<sup>th</sup>, then remaining grants will be opened to all Maine public schools.

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### Application Materials

1. Letter of administrative support
2. Outdoor Classroom objectives and timeline
3. Fund amount request if different than full amount
4. Map of design plan, if applicable
5. Estimated number of participants
6. State of Maine license or approved school documentation for early learning centers/private schools
7. Contact information

**Please fill out the following sections or attach to the application:**

### Curriculum Goals

Please share your curriculum goals for creating or improving an outdoor classroom.

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### Outdoor Classroom Objectives and Timeline

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
1. Design Plan	
2. Construction	
3. Landscape Materials	
4. Educational Resources	
5. Initial Staff Training	
6. Student Use of Outdoor Classroom	
7. Site Maintenance	
8. Long-term Staff Support	

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### Estimated Outdoor Classroom Fund Request

Funds can be used for the expense categories listed on page 4.

Any other funding sources? \_\_\_\_\_

### Estimated Number of Participants

# Students \_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (Staff, Parents) \_\_\_\_\_ # TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Expense</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cost</i>
1. Design Plan (including site consultation if needed)		
2. Construction		
3. Landscaping Materials		
4. Educational Resources		
<i>Additional Comments:</i>		<i>Total Cost:</i>

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#### Contact Information

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School District: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Official's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If approved, to whom and where should the check be sent to? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Please submit applications and questions to:

Paige Steele  
Conservation Projects Manager  
Friends of Acadia  
Email: [paige@friendsofacadia.org](mailto:paige@friendsofacadia.org)  
Phone: (207) 370-7995, Fax: (207) 288-8938  
Address: PO Box 45, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

#### For Acadia National Park field trip inquiries and transportation grants via the Yellow Bus Fund:

Kate Petrie  
Education Coordinator  
Acadia National Park  
Email: [kate\\_petrie@nps.gov](mailto:kate_petrie@nps.gov)  
Phone: (207) 288-8812