Outdoor Education Council

3- and 5-year implementation plan

Vision: To collaborate with schools, community leaders, and stakeholders to grow sustainable PreK-12 outdoor learning policies, programs, access, and spaces for the benefit of all Nevada students.

Guiding Priorities: The Outdoor Education Council will focus implementation efforts in four key areas identified by the Advisory Working Group:

1. Capacity Building for Outdoor Programs
2. Content Integration
3. Outdoor Learning Infrastructure
4. Policy & Sustainable Funding

The Council will prioritize equal opportunity, climate resilience, educator support, and statewide access for urban, rural, and tribal communities.

Year 1: Foundation and Statewide Coordination

Goal: Establish the Outdoor Education Council as a functioning statewide leadership body with clear objectives, partnerships, and pilot programs.

Priority Outcomes:

- Establish council subcommittees, hierarchy, and confirmed membership
- Build statewide partnerships
- Develop pilot outdoor school designation framework which includes living and green schoolyards
- Create and award a Nevada Outdoor Teacher of the Year
- Begin educator technical assistance
- Explore educator training opportunities

Objective 1: Establish Council Operational Structure

Actions

- Elect chair and co-chair
- Get all seats on council filled
- Establish subcommittees
- Define metrics for success

Objective 2: Develop Outdoor School Designation Framework

Actions

- Create draft designation rubric including:
    - Curriculum integration
    - Living schoolyard elements
    - Community partnerships
    - Outdoor skill development
    - Student wellness factors
    - Teacher professional development
- Conduct school review process
- Identify recognition and incentive structure

Deliverables

- Draft Outdoor School Designation rubric
- Pilot designation application process

Objective 3: Create and Award Nevada Outdoor Teacher Award

Actions

- Create nomination packet
- Solicit nominations
- Create judge and judging criteria

Deliverables

- Nomination packet
- Judging panel creation
- Award given

Objective 4: Begin Educator Technical Assistance

Actions

- Inventory existing resources
- Compile resources and explore best hosting
- Work with training subcommittee
- Create resource library for schools

Deliverables

- Compiled resources hosted as 'Toolkit'
- Initial cohort of schools and teachers to get feedback on resources

Objective 5: Explore and Develop Educator Training Opportunities

Actions

- Inventory existing educator training opportunities
- Develop professional learning partnerships

Deliverables

- Statewide educator training calendar
- Outdoor education professional development modules

Success Metrics by End of Year 1

- Council fully operational
- Technical assistance available
- Outdoor School Designation draft completed
- Initial educator training opportunities available statewide
- Nevada Outdoor Teacher of the Year honored

Year 2: Expansion and System Integration

Goal: Scale outdoor education opportunities statewide focusing on schoolyards, curriculum, and opportunity.

Priority Outcomes:

- Expand participation statewide
- Embed outdoor education into curriculum systems
- Increase schoolyard transformation projects
- Strengthen funding pipelines

Objective 1: Expand Outdoor School Designation Program

Actions

- Launch full statewide designation program
- Create tiered designation levels
- Provide mini-grants and incentive funding
- Publicly recognize participating schools annually

Deliverables

- 25–50 participating schools statewide
- Annual Outdoor Schools Summit
- Public-facing outdoor school's map

Objective 2: Increase Outdoor Learning Infrastructure

Actions

- Support climate-resilient living schoolyard projects
- Prioritize shade, trees, and outdoor learning spaces
- Coordinate with local governments and nonprofits
- Develop design standards for Nevada climates

Deliverables

- Model living schoolyard standards
- Outdoor classroom demonstration sites
- Infrastructure improvement grants distributed

Objective 3: Integrate Outdoor Learning into Curriculum

Actions

- Align outdoor learning resources with Nevada Academic Content Standards
- Develop interdisciplinary lesson banks
- Increase field-based and place-based learning opportunities
- Support outdoor early childhood education efforts

Deliverables

- State-supported outdoor curriculum repository
- Cross-curricular outdoor learning resources
- Increased teacher implementation rates

Objective 4: Build Sustainable Funding & Partnerships

Actions

- Pursue federal, philanthropic, and private-sector funding
- Expand Youth Outdoors Growth and Innovation Grant Program (YOGI)
- Establish statewide partner coalition

Deliverables

- Multi-source funding strategy
- Increased annual grant distribution for the YOGI program
- Formalized statewide partnership network

Success Metrics by End of Year 3

- Outdoor School Designation fully operational
- 25–50 schools participating in Outdoor School Designation statewide
- Outdoor learning infrastructure projects completed in priority communities
- Outdoor education integrated into multiple curriculum areas
- Measurable increases in educator participation
- Demonstrated improvements in student engagement and wellness indicators

Year 5: Statewide Culture Shift and Long-Term Sustainability

Goal: Institutionalize outdoor education as a permanent and fair component of Nevada's public education system

Priority Outcomes:

- Establish Nevada as a National leader in outdoor education
- Ensure long-term sustainability of outdoor education programming and support for that programming
- Expand fair student access to outdoor education statewide
- Continue to demonstrate measurable educational and wellness impacts

Objective 1: Institutionalize Outdoor Education Statewide

Actions:

- Embed outdoor education into statewide education priorities
- Integrate outdoor learning into school improvement planning
- Establish recurring legislative reporting and accountability measures

Deliverables:

- Statewide outdoor education implementation standards
- Long-term strategic funding plan
- Annual legislative impacts reports
- Department of Education Outdoor Education Content Specialist created and filled

Objective 2: Expand Access

Actions:

- Ensure all Nevada students have access to meaningful outdoor learning experiences
- Expand support for rural, tribal, and underserved communities
- Increase transportation and access funding

Deliverables:

- Statewide equity benchmarks
- Increased participation among historically underserved communities
- Outdoor access partnerships statewide

Objective 3: Demonstrate Measurable Outcomes

Actions:

- Conduct statewide program evaluation
- Track student wellness, engagement, and attendance indicators
- Evaluate educator retention and school climate impacts

Deliverables:

- Statewide impact report
- Data dashboard and public reporting system
- Case studies and success stories from participating schools shared

Objective 4: Position Nevada as a National Leader

Actions:

- Share Nevada model nationally
- Host statewide and regional outdoor education conferences
- Pursue national grants and innovation partnerships

Deliverables:

- National recognition and partnerships
- Expanded funding opportunities
- Replication Nevada outdoor education model

Success Metrics by End of Year 5

- Outdoor education embedded in statewide educational systems
- 100+ schools participating in designation program
- Significant increases in fair student outdoor education access
- Sustainable funding established
- Documented improvements in student wellness, engagement, and learning outcomes
- Nevada recognized as a national model for outdoor education implementation

Recommended Immediate Legislative Priorities

1. Confirm selections for Council members
2. Create and fund the Nevada Department of Education Outdoor Education Content Specialist
3. Increase Outdoor Education and Recreation Grant funding to at least $500,000 annually
4. Support pilot Outdoor School Designation implementation in conjunction with AB 501 initiatives
5. Acknowledge Nevada Outdoor Teacher of the Year winner

Long-Term Vision

Nevada's Outdoor Education Council can foster a statewide culture where outdoor learning is not viewed as an "extra", but as a core strategy for improving student wellness, engagement, academic achievement, and connection to community and environment.