

HOW TO VOLUNTEER AT MESD OUTDOOR SCHOOL

A SNEED'S GUIDE

1. Email or call Kitty!

She needs to know your name, your email, your phone number, and an address where you can receive mail. Include "Specific Needs Volunteer" and the week you're interested in doing. It is best if she is contacted before the session starts, however she usually has spots open most weeks, so contact her any time during the session. Her phone number is 503-257-1607 or email her at kboryer@mesd.k12.or.us

2. Check the forecast for your week!

You want to be as prepared as possible for what the week will bring, so make sure you know what to prepare for. Rain coat, extra warm layers, a flashlight, and a sleeping bag are all necessities that a surprising amount of volunteers forget. Also helpful are rain boots, hiking boots, and sandals in case you find time for a shower.

3. Confirm your week the week before!

Kitty will send you a confirmation letter in the mail with bus schedule and map in case you drive. This confirmation will have dates and times to arrive and the site phone number. It's a real let down when staff build a plan around a volunteer and that volunteer is a no-show. Please let staff know at least a day ahead of time if you need to cancel.

4. Bonus round: Read books about child management/Do some research!

The reason you're coming out for a week is a student needs extra support in some way. Kitty or another MESD staff member will reach out to you and give you any necessary information about the student you'll be working with, but her debrief is not a full training course. The best way to prepare yourself for a student is to do research on their specific needs and make no assumptions about how you and that student will interact. As a volunteer expect to spend all week working one-on-one with a student or possibly two with specific needs, you will most likely live in a cabin and help facilitate the students involvement in all aspects of the program.

5. Arrive on time and have fun!

We really appreciate the time you are taking out of your city life to be here at Outdoor School. Remember that while you are here to support a student, the staff are here to support you. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it and take any opportunity you have for self-care. ODS is a place where community comes first and you are now a part of our community!