



Director's Corner

PEI celebrated two retirements this fall. Both gatherings brought together people from across the state who have been working together for twenty or more years to ensure that students, all students, have opportunities to get outdoors and apply their learning in real-world contexts. I was surrounded by people who committed their careers to building the infrastructure to ensure that Washington State students develop science literacy and learn to listen to the diverse perspectives in their communities, so they can effectively participate in community dialogue and decision making. At one event, I spoke with a middle school FieldSTEM teacher who works with 135 students each day. Multiply that by a 30-year teaching career, and that teacher has reached over 4,000 students. One teacher makes a difference. In contrast, the teacher that taught next door was not comfortable taking his classroom outdoors so, for that reason, another 4,000 students missed the opportunity to develop skills for environmental, economic and social sustainability decision making and problem-solving. PEI want to increase the odds that all students will get good STEM education by reaching all teachers.



Kathryn Kurtz
Executive Director

Our mission is to empower educators, to equip them with the skills and confidence they need to transition their classroom to an active learning environment where kids help find answers to real community-based questions and engineer solutions to local problems or issues. As we move into our Year-End Campaign season, I ask each of you to consider how you can help make it possible for all students to learn outdoors. A financial donation to PEI means your contribution will work to empower teachers - a critical need to ensure a future generation of problem solvers ready to address the complex issues of an increasing population living on a finite land base.

Kathryn

What's New?



Chad Mullen

Lower Columbia FieldSTEM Coordinator

We are thrilled to announce our newest member of our PEI family, Chad Mullen. With his start date in October, he has already reached out to teachers in his region and started dialogue with community partners. Chad's diverse background includes teaching eight grade levels over 14 years in public and private schools in Washington State and partnering with classroom teachers to improve their inquiry-based science instruction. Chad said, *"As a classroom teacher, I was passionate about using the natural spaces near my schools for meaningful learning for all of my students, and PEI's focus on empowering practicing educators to take the learning outdoors is a great fit for me."* Chad lives in northeast Portland with his husband and their dog, Doug Fir.

[Connect with Chad](#)

FieldSTEM in Action



Two 7th graders have just tossed their pears into Johns Creek and are jogging downstream to see which one will cross the finish line first. Maneuvering around a large maple tree and jagged rocks on the stream's bank, a handful of their classmates jog with them, including two "timers" who hold stopwatches in front of their chests, ready to hit the stop button when their designated pear reaches the finish line. The pears bob up and down for a moment, then drift into the creek's swiftly flowing current and float...[READ MORE](#)

Program: 2018 Sneak Peek



Workshops



Events



Institutes



[Calendar of Events](#)

Sponsor Spotlight

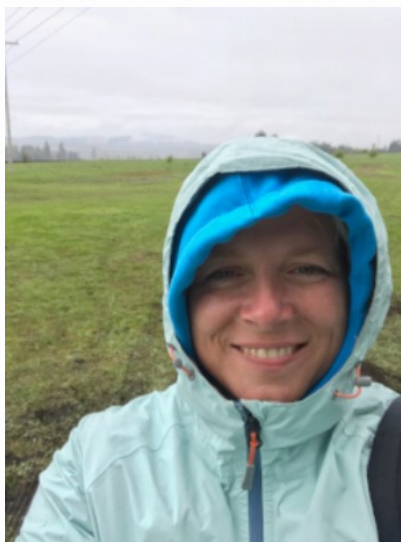


THANK you

A big THANK YOU to Washington Friends of Farms and Forests, a sponsor of FieldSTEM and an organization representing Washington's field-based industries of food and fiber production. Their support helps us deliver Washington-based outdoor science curriculum to our K-12 classrooms, so students are engaged in locally-relevant education. Thank you WFFF for being an invaluable FieldSTEM ally!

Support Comes Full Circle

This is Heather, Elementary Instructional Specialist for the North Thurston School District and classroom teacher of 18 years. She is a champion for more science in elementary schools—science that is integrated across subjects and science that is hands-on, outdoor-based and focused on celebrating the learning process as much as the end result. She has seen this kind of science education do wonders for students by creating an equitable and engaging platform for learning and development, in ways that help students discover their sense of place and their value in the world.



Heather has attended PEI workshops over the years, and for the last year, she and her husband Ron, a former long-time school principal and now a director with the Association of Washington School Principals, have also been donating monthly to PEI.

Why does someone who receives support from PEI also donate? Heather's story is the focus of our Year-End Campaign launching at the end of this month!

Donate early to PEI's Year-End Campaign



"I just wanted to share how impressed I am by all of the hard work being done at PEI. You really are amazing. I have not seen anything so comprehensive and in depth. It is truly made my position as a STEM teacher AMAZING!!!! I am so grateful for PEI. It seems like it truly is evolving and really, in my opinion, the most cutting-edge instruction in STEM, NGSS, and CCSS.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!"

- Formal educator & workshop participant 2017



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