



## Coming Together

### A Joint Statement from Culver School District & Camp Tamarack

Since 2013, Camp Tamarack has been working with teachers and students from Central Oregon to provide a 3 day 2-night Outdoor School experience. Over the years, we at Camp Tamarack have worked tirelessly to establish strong and lasting bonds with schools throughout the region. With regard to last month's Outdoor School visit by Culver Middle School, we view it as a missed opportunity for a meaningful discussion around issues of respect, inclusion, compassion, belonging, and, ultimately, mutual understanding. Instead, what could have been a great Outdoor School experience suddenly turned into an unfavorable experience for many.

It is important for us all to live into our values every day, so we've taken this time to reassess last month's events in order to see if we could all work together to gain an understanding of this unfortunate experience. As such, Camp Tamarack Executive Director, Charlie Anderson, Culver School District Superintendent Stefanie Garber, and Culver Middle School Principal, Brad Kudlac, met to try to understand, grow, and improve for everyone in and beyond the camp and school communities. Increased attention to unintended consequences and collaboration are both values for Camp Tamarack and the Culver School District. We all value and respect one another, the care and dedication to all learners, and the important ongoing dialogue around respect, inclusion, compassion, and belonging.

To help all parties come to a better understanding of the Camp Tamarack experience, we'd like to highlight our tenets for Outdoor School:

- It is a time to provide hands-on learning experiences that are integrated with local schools' curriculum while also promoting learning about and gaining an appreciation for the natural world.
- It is a chance to promote self-esteem, leadership, and independence.
- It is an opportunity to participate in a variety of planned activities that provide opportunities for participation in cooperative living experiences, performing arts and recreation.
- It is a place for each and every student to feel loved, safe, and supported.

To clear up some misinformation that has been out there, students do not shower at Camp Tamarack during the Outdoor School experience and private changing areas are available for everyone.

We will all work to respect the values and identities of the people who participate in Outdoor School. We will all work to make sure we are communicating with families before their students leave for camp so that they can make an informed decision about their child's participation in Outdoor School. Additionally, we will continue to work to recruit more high school student leaders from Culver High School - how great would that be?! We will all work to show that we can come together, even when we have differences, in a way that is respectful, attentive, and willing to be sensitive and solution-oriented.

Importantly, we believe in the inspirational power of the outdoors to break down barriers, foster connections, and create spaces where we can learn from each other and grow as individuals and a community.

Respectfully,

Charlie Anderson  
Executive Director, Camp Tamarack

Stefanie Garber  
Superintendent, Culver School District