



EDUCATION FOR LIFE

The North Carolina Outward Bound School's Educators Initiative (EI) is a yearlong professional development program for classroom teachers. It combines the transformational experience of an Outward Bound wilderness expedition with ongoing follow-up activities, all designed to increase teachers' understanding and integration of experiential education in their classrooms. The program emphasizes classroom community, curriculum development, and professional leadership, while building a collaborative network of educators committed to innovative experiential teaching and learning.

"Routinely, the teachers who are most charged up, the ones who bring the most back to their classrooms, the ones who are most eager to try something new, are the teachers who attend the Educators Initiative. I cannot wait to send you more of our teachers and continually shift the culture of our school."

-L. Hamilton Clark, Jr., Former Head of School, The Episcopal Academy

Program Components

- Weeklong wilderness expedition in the North Carolina mountains, including backpacking, rock climbing, ropes course, and a one-day transference workshop
- Yearlong coaching utilizes a "blended" instructional model that includes both one-on-one video conferences and online collaboration
- Two weekend retreats (December and April) where EI participants reconvene with NCOBS staff and other experts in the field of experiential education
- Readings on current educational topics that spark reflection, discussion, and innovation
- Regular meetings between EI participants at each school, providing opportunities for collaboration, support, and curriculum development
- Continuing Education Credits will be documented for wilderness course workshops and weekend retreats. It is the responsibility of each participant to submit the requisite paperwork to their local or state district

Goals and Objectives

- Develop and reinforce teachers' understanding and appreciation of experiential education philosophy and methodology
- Support teachers as they seek to integrate both the process and content of experiential education in their classrooms
- Provide teachers with tools and strategies to promote intentional community development among students
- Encourage teachers to focus on reflective and student-centered practice, empowering student responsibility for classroom leadership
- Develop community among participating teachers at each school as well as with colleagues at other schools
- Promote accountability for teachers and sustainability of the program through ongoing collaboration among participants and North Carolina Outward Bound School staff



Requirements to participate

- Minimum of one year full-time teaching experience
- Must be classroom teacher or an administrator working with students during the upcoming school year
- Minimum of two participating teachers from each school
- Must have the support of school administration, including time off for two weekend retreats
- Ability to balance school and program requirements



Outcomes

According to a formal evaluation of the Educators Initiative by the Evaluation, Assessment, and Policy Connections (EvAP) team from the School of Education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the EI program has demonstrated a consistently positive impact on teachers and their students. Among other demonstrated outcomes:

Teachers...

- Teach experientially, incorporating more project-based learning and authentic assessments;
- Experience and exhibit more tolerance and compassion;
- Conceptualize and promote intentional community development in their classrooms;
- Exhibit greater classroom skills, confidence, and job satisfaction;
- Take initiative and assume leadership roles in their larger school community.

Students...

- Are more active participants in the learning process and take more risks in a safer classroom environment;
- Are more willing to accept challenge and take initiative;
- Hold themselves and each other accountable;
- Take responsibility for classroom leadership and peer support;
- Experience and express greater trust with teachers and classmates;
- Better understand and follow behavioral parameters.

The 2015-2016 Educators Initiative

Cost: \$3,950 per participant. This covers the cost of the wilderness course, monthly coaching, and all meals and lodging for two weekend retreats. Transportation expenses are not included. The 2016-2017 EI program commences with an 8-day wilderness expedition in the Blue Ridge Mountains of NC, either June 18-25 or August 2-9, 2016

EI Partner Schools

Agnes Irwin School (PA)
Alexander Graham Middle School (NC)
Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School (MD)
Boys' Latin Charter School of Philadelphia (PA)
Charles D. Owen High School (NC)
Clyde A. Erwin High School (NC)
Community Academy of Philadelphia (PA)
Episcopal Academy (PA)
Evergreen Community Charter School (NC)
Franklin School of Innovation (NC)
The Field School (DC)
Freire Charter School (PA)
Georgetown Day School (DC)
Gilbert High School (SC)
Haverford School (PA)
Independence High School (NC)
Inman Middle School (GA)
Lawrenceville School (MJ)
Meadow Glen Middle School (SC)
Norfolk Academy (VA)
Pyle Middle School (MD)
River Bluff High School (SC)
Riverdale Country School (NY)
Saint Mary's School (NC)
Springside Chestnut Hill Academy (PA)
Tandem Friends School (VA)
Vance High School (NC)

CONTACT US

Susan Drakeford
North Carolina Outward Bound School
Educators Initiative Program Manager

(828) 239-2147

sdrakeford@ncobs.org

www.ncobs.org/educators-program

