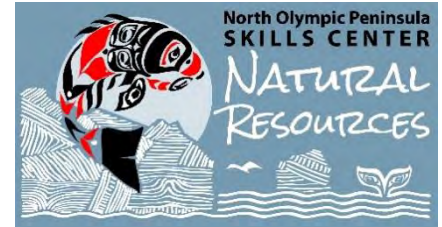




North Olympic Peninsula Skills Center
905 West 9th Street, Port Angeles, WA 98363
Phone: 360-565-1533 Fax:360-417-9068



April 27, 2015

Dear Dr. Luke Robins and Dr. Mia Boster,

At Peggy Templeton's invitation, I am providing you with this information to help clarify and further inform your decision on the future of the NOPSC Natural Resources (NR) program.

Employment on the Olympic Peninsula will always be largely natural resource-based. Having opportunities for students to gain real skills, become deeply engaged, and make connections with natural resource professionals will ensure the viability of our communities. In addition to its natural science courses, Peninsula College hosts two very successful natural resource-related Bachelor's degrees through Huxley College of the Environment. This local degree program has produced many of the natural resource professionals currently employed in our communities.

The relationship between the NOPSC NR program and Peninsula College is multi-faceted. We have had dozens if not hundreds of students move from the NOPSC NR program directly to Peninsula College. Many of these students have subsequently transferred to Bachelor's degree programs related to natural resources. A handful of Peninsula College and Huxley students have done their required internships directly with the NOPSC NR program. In these internships, the college students have mentored high school aged-students and created lasting products for the community while always fulfilling their college requirements. Two Peninsula College professors, Jack Ganzhorn and Dwight Barry, served as NOPSC NR advisory board members and were instrumental in planning and helping the program evolve to meet student and community needs. The NOPSC NR program is an essential stepping stone motivating high school aged students to move on to study natural sciences at Peninsula College. The NOPSC NR program, after experiencing some years of losses as it has grown and evolved, is now educationally and economically viable as it serves students across the entire Olympic Peninsula.

At stake when you vote on the future of the NR program is the prospect of losing an essential step on the pathway that leads students through Peninsula College and into natural resource careers. Please be in contact with any questions.

Sincerely,

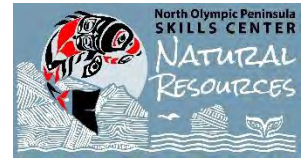
Dan Lieberman, Natural Resources Teacher
North Olympic Peninsula Skills Center

Phone: 360-565-1892, dlieberman@portangelesschools.org, nopsc.org/naturalresources

NOPSC Natural Resources Program Report for 2014-15



Educational and Financial Success



Students Served:

Meeting Student Needs First

- >100 students served from 3 districts (PA=~7.5 FTE, QVSD=~10 FTE, Sequim=~2.5 FTE)
- 33 credits (10.5 sci, 6 Eng, 0.5 soc stud, 16 CTE) awarded 1st semester (75% success)
- Students high-risk and demographically diverse (40% IEP, 30% Native, 15% Hispanic)

Program Finances:

Cost-Effective and Profitable

- Average annual student enrollment will be ~20 FTE. Revenue will be over \$115,000.
- Salary and benefits for 1.2 teachers and 25% overhead is less than \$97,000.
- Grants cover all other expenses and include general program funding of \$9,800.
- The 2014-15 profit will be ~\$20,000 without grants and ~\$30,000 with grants.

Delivery Method:

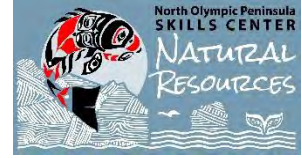
Compliant with State Rules

- OSPI's CTE and ALE directors confirmed that ALE is allowed as CTE at Skills Centers.
- The NR program successfully went through a state ALE audit and internal ALE review.
- Community members working with NR students all pass state background checks.
- Students are volunteers with their hosts and are covered by the hosts' insurance.

Positioning for Future:

Refined and Ready

- Teacher Jamie Valadez was removed in January; CNR1 class is not financially viable.
- If NR Options is allowed to run in summer, there will likely be >50 students enrolled.
- 19 students and parents signed affidavits w/intent to enroll in NR 2 class in 2015-16.



Student and Teacher Participation

Issue	Answer
1. There is very little teacher contact time for students	The teacher has direct personal contact with students weekly and depending on the class, the teacher spends 5-60% of the total learning time in-person with students. This aligns completely with state ALE rules (digitalllearning.k12.wa.us/ale/support/4.php).
2. Volunteers are providing direct instruction	PASD volunteers help provide “learning activities,” but it is the certified NR teacher who provides “direct instruction.” This aligns with state ALE rule 3c .
3. PASD is liable for students working away from school	Students sign up as official volunteers with their host organizations and are covered by those organizations’ insurance policies (RCW 51.12.170).
4. Students do not meet for the required hours	Students meet in-person with the teacher or NR professional for 60% of the Skills Center-required 540 hours and work independently for the other 40% of the hours (Skills Center WAC 392-600-030(4)). There is no minimum teacher contact time in ALE (State ALE rule 4b).
5. ALE classes are not allowed at Skills Centers	On 3/4/15 via email, OSPI’s CTE Director Betty Klattenhoff confirmed that ALE classes are allowed at Skills Centers. In addition to the NR program, NOPSC offers and plans to continue an IT Tech ALE program.
6. Counselors do not know the NR students’ classes	Counselors sign every enrollment form; forms clearly state the class(es) for which the student will enroll (nopsc.org/natural-resources/enrolment). Additionally, the teacher regularly sends lists of enrolled students, classes and credits to counselors in all schools.
7. Students are kept enrolled after asking to drop	The only time this happens is when students under 18 do not yet have NOPSC-required parental permission to drop. All student drops are documented and follow this published class procedure: nopsc.esd114.wednet.edu/mod/page/view.php?id=1820 .
8. Students are not attending	Attendance is on par with classes serving at-risk youth and other NOPSC classes. When students miss scheduled sessions, the teacher communicates with them directly.
9. The student pass rate is too low	1 st semester of 2014-15, 75% of students earned credit in English, science and/or CTE. This is on par with other NOPSC and remedial science classes at high schools. There are many at-risk students earning academic credits, and performance standards are set and kept to.
10. Enrollment is low	There has been an average of 69 students enrolled over the 2014-15 school year. Counting students who transferred out at semester or other times, 100 different students have enrolled in the NR program in 2014-15.
11. There is only one student enrolled	The Cultural and Natural Resources 1 class has 1 student but is not proposed for continuation. On 4/1/15, the NR Options class had 48 and the NR 2 class had 16 students.

Economic Analysis

Issue	Answer
12. Program was losing ~\$30K in Sep and ~\$22.5K in Feb	Inaccurate enrollment numbers and budget assumptions were provided by the NOPSC Director to the Administrative Council in September and February. Also, dozens of completed enrollment forms were submitted to NOPSC administration but not entered into the system to receive state funding.
13. Program is in the red for the 2014-15 school year	Including data for state FTE funding from actual monthly enrollment records, expenses from salary & benefits, and 25% overhead, the program will be in the black by ~\$15K in 2014-15 (grants not included). With 80% of the count days upon which state funding is based already complete, the NR program is certain to have an average FTE of ~20.
14. Program is in the red for five years	The program was in the red in 2012-13 and 2013-14, but not 2010-11, 2011-12 or 2014-15. This does not include summer school or grants, which put the program in the black each of the last five years.
15. District may have to pay FTE funding back to the state	The given rationale was that it would be due to the 75% student pass rate. WEA confirmed that this is not true.
16. ALE classes are funded at 80% of the state CTE rate	According to current PASD financial reports (www.k12.wa.us/safs/rep/app/1415/05121app.pdf), the ALE funding rate is \$5,755/FTE, or 86% of the full Skills Center rate of \$6,682/FTE.
17. ALE classes are not economically viable	The lower ALE funding rate requires more students to be enrolled in ALE classes, which is the case with the NR program, which has an average FTE of 20.
18. ALE classes are not CTE classes	ALE rules are school finance rules . ALE classes can be CTE and Skills Center classes, they just do not get the augmented Skills Center and CTE funding rates.
19. NR Options class will not be funded by the state	After 2014-15, NOPSC classes offered for <540 hours will not be funded; therefore, all NR Options classes will require 540 hours. The NR teacher requested that this change be made 2 nd semester 2014-15 but was denied.

Performance History

Issue	Answer
20. Program has declining enrollment over the years	The average annual student enrollment FTE has grown steadily from 11.7 in 2010-11 to 20.0 in 2014-15.
21. Program audits will have major findings	An ALE desk audit of the program was completed in 2014-15 and no follow-up was required. All required ALE paperwork is complete, accurate and on-file.
22. Program is in violation of district policies	The NR program has responded quickly to remedy any violations. For example, now all community members working with students are official PASD volunteers.
23. The teacher cannot offer English and science credits	OSPI says, "If the district determines the class is a CTE course, the teacher does not need to meet the ESEA HQT requirements." The science and English credits offered in the NR program are fully-aligned with state rules.

Evolution of Program

Issue	Answer
24. Program has too many teachers	From 2008-14, the program went from 0.5 to 1.0 to 1.4 teachers and added 2 summer teachers. In 2015, the program lost a 0.4 school year teacher.
25. Teacher was told in 2013-14 of the program's end	NOPSC Administrative Council minutes from early-2014 say the NR teacher would be told of a pending reduction; no such communication ever happened.
26. Natural Resources Options class was never approved	The NR Advisory Board planned NR Options in 2008. The NOPSC Director started the class in 2010. The class CTE Framework was approved by OSPI in 2010 and 2014.
27. ALE is not the right way to run this program	The NR program fits state rules for CTE 'instructional worksite learning' (WAC 392-410-315) and could be run as such. The NR teacher is certified in worksite learning.
28. NOPSC needs to make room for new programs	The NR program has changed over time, filling essential niches such as senior projects, community service, and credit recovery for area school districts. The program has consistently grown and has many student success stories.

Sustainability of Program

Issue	Answer
29. Students do not want to enroll in the program	In 2014-15, 100 different students from Sequim, Port Angeles, Forks and La Push enrolled in the program.
30. ALE rules change all the time	ALE rules have had two significant changes since 2008 and various small changes. Through all these changes, the program has stayed in compliance.
31. There are not many natural resource jobs	The Olympic Peninsula has abundant and growing natural resource job opportunities for people with all levels of education and training. Dozens of Natural Resources students have gained jobs and paid internships after their time in the program.
32. Not many students in Port Angeles take classes	The program vision is to provide a pathway including preparatory classes and internships that lead to natural resource jobs and post-secondary education for students in all five NOPSC consortium districts.

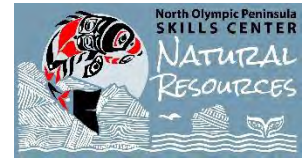
Grants are Gravy

Issue	Answer
33. There is no record of the grants received	More than \$50K of grants have come directly to PASD for the Natural Resources program since 2008.
34. Grants do not pay for teacher salaries	Natural Resources grants have covered equipment, transportation, student activities, overhead and other costs. Most NR grants are flexible allowing PASD or NOPSC to allocate funds as they choose.
35. Grants are not reliable	Past funders have publicly stated that they want to keep funding the program, and there is already an \$8,600 grant approved for the next two years.

NOPSC Natural Resources Program Proposal for 2015-16



Maintain Financially-Viable Classes



This document includes details about the future of the Natural Resources program and responses to some common misperceptions. In order for the overall program to remain viable, and due to low enrollment, Cultural and Natural Resources 1 class will be eliminated in 2015-16.

To continue to meet the needs of our students and local natural resource employment opportunities, it is suggested that the 540 hour 'Natural Resources Options' and 'Natural Resources 2 Internship' classes be offered through the North Olympic Peninsula Skills Center in 2015-16.

Natural Resources Options Class:

Maintain and Modify

- The 540 hour NR Options class is currently available in Sequim, Port Angeles, Forks and La Push.
- Students choose which natural resource organization(s) to work with each semester.
- Approximately 270 hours per year are in-person with natural resource professionals.
- The teacher supports students as they complete project journals & other lessons for ~270 hours.

Natural Resources 2 Internship Class:

Maintain

- More than 100 internships are available across the Olympic Peninsula and posted on class website.
- Students work one-on-one with professionals in job settings and gain valuable skills and experience.
- NR teacher contacts all students weekly and works extensively with each student at least 2x/month.
- Enrollment in this class has grown each year since 2010 (16 enrolled on most recent count day).

Delivery Method:

ALE or Instructional Worksite Learning

- NR Options and NR 2 Internship classes comply with all ALE rules outlined by [WAC 392-121-182](#).
- Per OSPI's Betty Klattenhoff & Karl Nelson, ALE courses qualify as CTE and are legal at Skills Centers.
- NR Options and NR 2 classes comply with "instructional worksite learning" rules ([WAC 392-410-315](#)).
- "Instructional worksite learning" classes receive enhanced state FTE funding and ALE classes do not.
- These classes offer out-of-the-box opportunities for students to gain science, English and CTE credit.

Program Finances

- An approved \$8,600 2014-15 grant will cover transportation, equipment and more for 2015-2017.
- Total expenses in 2015-16 are expected at <\$90,000 (includes salary w/benefits and 25% overhead).
- No school district will experience a loss in state funding for having a student enroll in an NR class.

Future Actions

- Actively recruit at least 30 students from PASD, QVSD, and Sequim for 2015-16 by May 15, 2015.
- Design and hopefully implement an NR Options class for Crescent in 2016 and Cape Flattery by 2018.