

ECO

Educating Children Outdoors

(Note: The original presentation contained student pictures. Those pictures and slides were removed from this document.)

ECO Schedule Overview

- **Getting Ready/ Inspiring Activity:** grab bags, books, pictures, natural objects (happens inside)
- **Morning Meeting:** check in on how we are feeling, schedule, song (happens both inside and outside)
- **Cooperative Game:** engages the senses, release energy (happens outside)
- **Walk to “classroom”:** stopping along way to observe and record
- **Snack/Story:** gather around circle for oral story while we eat snack
- **Guided Exploration:** integrating math, literacy, science and social learning
- **Forest Choice:** cooperation, community building, teamwork, pride/ownership
- **Sit Spot:** 10-15 minutes of sitting alone connecting to nature with senses, writing in journal, reflecting on day
- **Thanksgiving circle:** share of what we are thankful for from ECO day
- **Walk back to school:** back by 11:45

ECO Curriculum

Still to learn this year at ECO...

Red text denotes Next-Generation Science Standards.

How plants and animals can change their environments to meet their needs:

K-ESS2-2

Importance of weather forecasting: **K-ESS3-2**

Force in Motion: K-PS2-1, K-PS2-2, K-2-ETS1-1, K-2-ETS1-2, K-2-ETS1-3

The sun warms the earth: **K-PS3-1**

Building structures reduces heat: **K-PS3-2**

Humans can reduce the impact they have on the land: **K-ESS3-3**

Family Connections

- We are projected to have had 12 different parent volunteers from the beginning of the year to the end of December.
- At least 4 families have reported going to the ECO classroom outside of school hours with at least 2 more specifying plans to visit our outdoor classroom in the future.

ECO survey (November 15th)

Statement	Yes	No
I feel that my child enjoys ECO.	14	0
I feel that my child does good learning at ECO.	14	0
I feel that my child has or is supplied with the proper clothing for ECO	13	1 (sometimes)
I feel that my child is safe at ECO.	14	0
I feel that it is important for my child to spend time outdoors.	13	1 (weather permitting)

Feedback

“I felt that the ECO day was a great way for the kids to gain a better appreciation for the outdoors. I also believe that being outdoors helps the kids to form tighter bonds with one another. Having the kids work in groups outdoors, I believe, will help to form a lasting learning experience that they can not fully receive in the classroom.” - Parent Volunteer

“G loves ECO! He looks forward to it each week and talks about it all the time!!” -Parent

“C absolutely loves ECO day. She enjoys working with other students and gets very excited. I think it’s great to get outside the classroom and learn. It’s hands on and I think C really enjoys that and learns well that way” -Parent

“Very well organized, great opportunities for learning outside a traditional classroom.”
-Parent Volunteer

Feedback

“We went to the ECO classroom and T showed me the shelters she and her friends made and her sit spot. It was very impressive. I am so happy that she has the opportunity to participate in this program. I wish every class was able to do this.” -Parent

“We plan on making it to the ECO classroom the next time we enjoy the playground. Our daughter loves it and can’t wait to share it with us.” -Parent

“I hope that Barre Town adopts this concept and partners with Nature Branch (North Branch Nature Center) through all the grades. They would see a significant decrease in undesired behaviors and an increase in attention span.” -Parent Volunteer