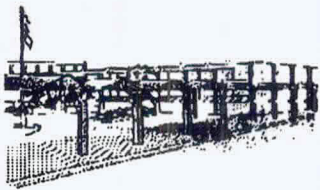


920263



North Clackamas School District
REX PUTNAM HIGH SCHOOL
4950 SE Roethe Road - Milwaukie, Oregon 97267-3799
(503) 653-3800 - FAX (503) 653-3811

Deno Edwards
Principal
Jeff Davis
Asst. Administrator
Ron Noren
Asst. Administrator
Connie Whitlock
Asst. Administrator

November 9, 1998

Lynn Wilson-Dean
Metro

- you can do partial
- use vol labor as in-kind
- did you get material, donated
or prof services?

Dear Lynn,

This is a difficult letter for me to write, but one I don't feel should be put off any longer. The grant that the Nature Trail at Rex Putnam High School received in January, 1998, for \$4,000.00 needs to be cancelled/forfitted. Due to a variety of factors, I will be unable to meet the goals established in the agreement. The staff is beginning to show an interest in developing projects involving the trail, however, the restructuring of the classes/building in order to meet CIM and CAM standards, thus graduation requirements, has become top priority. Also, the district has not begun the renovation of the greenhouse yet, and this was a considerable piece of the "matching funds".

The Nature Trail will be continued, but at a slower than anticipated pace and mainly involving the student of the special education classes. I truly appreciate your patience and the opportunity to participate in this grant program. The material I receive from you and Jennifer via email is often used or passed on to others. I hope that can continue. Please let me know what I need to do regarding the grant and contact me if you have any further questions.

Thank you for your help and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Candace Churchley
Rex Putnam High School
4950 SE Roethe Road
Milwaukie OR 97267

Memo 1/5/98
To re-work grant
for

Rex Putnam High School Nature Trail

Pre-Grant (March, 1996-December, 1997)

- Presented the idea of the Nature Trail to building administrators
- Got permission for go ahead from building and district administrators
- Presented idea to my Modified Living Skills class which resulted in an enthusiastic desire to help out
- Laid out where the trail would go
- Began removing 4 inches of sod-4 feet wide along trail route
- Filled in the cleared area with donated woodchips

During the 1996 school year, an Americorp volunteer and myself decided to apply for this grant through Metro and US Fish and Wildlife. After several brainstorming sessions, along with the help of my class, we arrived at the goals we would like to achieve and the time frame with which this would happen. The Nature Trail is two-thirds of a mile long around the perimeter of the Rex Putnam High School campus. As part of the brainstorming session, all of us wrote a Vision and a Mission statement to help guide and remind us of our purpose (see attached).

After receiving the grant the events that occurred were;

- Began removing blackberries from an 800 square foot area at the trail head
- Received permission to let the grass grow along the trail after submitting a letter describing our responsibilities and the ground crews responsibilities.
- Planted hundreds of native plants
 - Western hemlock
 - Cedar
 - Large leaf maple
 - Vine maple
 - Red twig dogwood
 - Red alder
 - Red elderberry
 - Blue elderberry
 - Oregon ash
 - Cascara
 - Salmonberry
 - Pacific crabapple
 - Creeping Oregon grape
 - Sword ferns
 - Barberry
 - Willows
 - Spirea
 - Douglas fir
 - Shore pines
 - Butterfly bushes
 - Yew

- 80% success rate of the plants taking roots, if they were not mowed down, dug up, or broken in half.
- ❑ 10 bird and bat houses built.
 - ❑ 3 benches one 20 foot bridge, and 1 entry arbor build by the building construction class and placed along the trail
 - ❑ During the 98-99 school year, special education students from Concord Elementary School worked on the trail once a week along side the high school students
 - ❑ Willamette View Manor (a retirement home complex) contacted about joining forces to share their knowledge and interest in constructing nature trails
 - ❑ Community awareness activities initiated and continued throughout the entire grant timeline:
 - Posters hung in the hallway
 - Announcements of activities planned given once a month
 - Monthly comments on environmental issues and the nature trail sent home in the school newsletter-received by 1300 parents.
 - 98,99, and 2000 clean-up the environment days (see attached volunteer lists)
 - Modified Living Skills class presented a slide show on the Nature Trail to the North Clackamas School Board
 - Article in the Oregonian (Metro Section) about the students working on the Nature Trail
 - PowerPoint presentation at the PSU Stewards of the Environment Student Conference
 - Participated in the fall, 2000 Watershed Awareness Weeks with displays and entertainment
 - ❑ Ongoing, never ending battle of keeping the trail open and clear and the removal of blackberries all without chemicals.
 - ❑ Spring, 2000-North Clackamas School District agreed to use the Nature Trail as a magnet class for all the three high schools.

During the months of April and May, I met with the three other Learning Specialists from Milwaukie High School, Clackamas High School, and the Sabin Center. I presented the idea of the Nature Trail being a valuable environmental and life skills learning "classroom" for all of the schools to access. We all agreed and presented our plan of action to the district for its approval. The Nature Trail class will now be offered for 174 minutes, every other day to all special education students in the North Clackamas School District. The Nature Trail project will continue for years to come as part of the Special Education Curriculum offered in the North Clackamas School District.



VISION



The Nature Trail of Rex Putnam High School will be developed and created over the next five years with more and more classes and students becoming involved each year. The Leadership and Government classes will continue to offer the Nature Trail as a means to earn community service hours, several levels of the science classes will use the trail and green house as an outdoor lab, building construction will continue to design and build a variety of structures along the trail and the special service programs will use it to develop a variety of pre-vocational skills. As students continue to work on the trail, the community will discover the natural resource so readily available to them and an increase in trail use for leisure activities will ensue. The Nature Trail will be a valuable educational, community and environmental resource.



MISSION



The Nature Trail of Rex Putnam High School will provide multiple, on-going performed based projects for a variety of classes at the school while beautifying the campus, providing a recreational resource to the community and developing a natural ecosystem for our environment. The entire length of the trail will be naturescaped by students and community volunteers with different types of native Pacific Northwest plant species. The naturescaped trail will naturally attract wildlife and establish its own ecosystem while becoming a viable resource to the Milwaukie community and surrounding area.

Building nature path hones pupil work ethic

■ Candace Churchley's Putnam High class gets a feel — as in thorny blackberry bushes — for contributing to the community

By LAURA GUNDERSON

of The Oregonian staff

MILWAUKIE — As the school bell rang inside Putnam High School's bright, warm hallways Friday morning, raincoat-clad students from Candace Churchley's class headed outside into the cold morning fog.

Her students hadn't really believed her when she said "rain or shine," but the spunky special education teacher has dragged them out onto the school's oozing mud trails every other day this winter.

"We're teaching about the environment and how students can give back to it and the community," Churchley said. She has worked on the nature path that twists for almost a mile behind the school for more than two years. "Students are also learning about a work ethic — how everything you have to do in a job isn't always fun."

Churchley has had help on the trail from other students and teachers, and through a fund-matching grant from Metro, but nature is still winning.

Stubborn blackberry bushes sneak along its sides, and mud oozes through the path's fading layer of bark dust. Native plants that reinforced the walkway have died, and when the sun finally arrives, no trees will be there to provide welcome shade.



Putnam High School students (from left) Bonnie Smith, 15; Jennifer Coffey, 16; and Nadja Holuk, 16, team up for a tug of war against a tough blackberry vine along a trail they are trying to build behind the school.

JOEL DAVIS/The Oregonian

"It still needs a lot of help," said teachers' aide Kathy Bocek, who has helped in Churchley's classes for about a year. "And so do we."

The class doesn't have tools. The trail needs volunteers with brush-movers, leaf-blowers and power rakes, Bocek said.

Students hope to plant donated trees and plants. A new load of wood chips is needed to make the path safe and puddle-free. And they dream of a small, wooden bridge across a lower swampy section of the trail.

"It's a good place for wildlife, so

birds and animals have somewhere to go," said student Nadja Holuk, 16. "But it is hard digging dirt. And you get poked a lot from berry bushes."

Students want to finish the path by spring so the track team, teachers and the community can enjoy it. They hope other student groups from the school will help when the weather gets better.

"In the past, science students and leadership groups have come out to help," Churchley said. "These students work with the special education students, and it's a good relationship for both of them."

Churchley's class soon will begin updating a Web page (www.geocities.com/Rainforest/Vines/1014) to show progress on the trail. In the past, students have recorded what they learned about planting native plants and removing non-native ones on their individual Web pages linked to the school's site.

Community volunteers with time or equipment are encouraged to help the students work on the trail from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 24. For information, call 653-3800.

Successes and Frustration

The Nature Trail has been an extremely rewarding project. Giving something back to the environment instead of continually taking from it has been really important to me, but what has inspired me the most is developing that understanding in others. Watching my students talk to others about their world and taking ownership in its welfare has been the most gratifying experiences.

What has been the most beneficial is setting the vision and mission statements first. I needed to continually reread them because of the roadblocks that would sometimes detour our trail. Battling neighbors (don't cut the blackberries because they are our protection and the morning glories are so pretty, please don't cut them down), having countless trees and shrubs mowed down, promises for restoration of a greenhouse denied, and equipment stolen does become extremely frustrating. Looking back at the vision/mission statements renews purpose and value.

After the statements, I think the most important tool is communication. This can be time consuming and difficult at times, but often people are willing to help out in this area. I am not a "telephone" person, so I enlisted the aid of two people who enjoy talking on the phone. They would monthly call grounds crew personnel to inform, compliment, or complain along with calling for donations from area businesses. Once this process was in place, frustration levels decreased.

Another realization is scheduling. When signing people up for volunteer days, check the community calendar. Try to stay away from holidays, popular festivals, and SOLV clean-up days. Active people will most likely be participating in these events and not able to attend yours.

The main thing is to persevere. If one way doesn't work, I found that you shouldn't give up, just try it again, but maybe a slightly different way.