

Thursday, June 26, 2025

Senator (NAME /Representative (NAME),

Today I reach out to urge you to protect dedicated Out-of-School Time (OST; Section 32n) funding in the upcoming 2025-26 Michigan budget.

As a Woldumar Nature Association Board Member, I have seen firsthand the benefits of these OST funds in enabling our organization to better serve Lansing area youth and families during our summer and school break programs. The loss of the OST grants will deal a blow to community-based organizations, like ours, who are so well poised to continue the important work of educating and caring for Michigan's youth outside of the school classroom.

Our OST grant support in 2023-24 and 2024-25 has been significant in the recent growth of our capacity to serve more families in the greater Lansing area with high-quality, nature-based, camps. This additional funding allowed our program to grow by over 20% in 2024 and continue that growth this year; increasing access to more area youth by expanding the capacity of our outstanding summer camp, creating competitive seasonal jobs to hire more well-qualified counselors, bolstering our ability to better care for children with special needs, and ultimately better providing support for our community including offering before and after camp care to better align with the needs of working families. We offer a safe, nurturing, and educational place where kids can spend their breaks exploring, learning, and playing.

The retention of dedicated OST grant funds makes good sense to continue to provide lift for the many organizations already embedded in Michigan communities and doing the important work of providing safe, supportive, enriching care for our children. Please do all in your power to maintain dedicated OST funding in the 2025-26 Michigan budget.

Thank you for your service to our State!

Sincerely,

*Woldumar Nature Association Board of Directors*

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