

NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE MT. BAKER SNOWSCHOOL

2017

SUMMARY REPORT

Mt. Baker SnowSchool is an outdoor winter learning adventure combining applied science education with snowshoe-powered exploration. Middle and high school students and their teachers engage in research and hands-on learning around the themes of weather, watersheds and climate. Students from Western Washington University are trained as instructors, and work alongside snow scientists from Northwest Avalanche Center to engage students in an exploration of the winter environment.

Students receive two sessions—a classroom session focusing on weather monitoring and predictions, public lands and watersheds, and a full day at the Mt. Baker Ski Area participating in real world data-gathering through the lens of snowpack analysis, snow algae sampling protocols, snow/water equivalency and watershed health.

APPLIED SCIENCE
learning in weather,
watersheds and climate



Exposure and
inspiration to pursue
STEM CAREERS



Encourages healthy,
active lifestyles through
WINTER RECREATION



Sense of
PLACE AND CONNECTION
to community

NEW & NOTABLE

Increased demand and participation: over the past 2 years the number of sessions and schools served has increased with the number of students served nearly doubling.

Curriculum expansions: including snow sample collection for long-term biological field science studies through a collaboration with Western Washington University research students.

► **In the media:** SnowSchool Coordinator Abby Sussman wrote about the impact SnowSchool has on students, teachers, instructors and our community for *Cascadia Weekly*. Read the article at: <http://bit.ly/2nH7xZ5>.



“Mt. Baker SnowSchool asks students and teachers to consider the greater influence of the snowpack on our everyday lives—from recreation to drinking water, agriculture to fisheries, mountains to bay.”
– Abby Sussman

AT A GLANCE

91% TITLE I
low-income
schools

444 YOUTH
participants

77 TEACHER
& PARENT
chaperones

12 SCHOOLS
participated

521 TOTAL
participants

58% RURAL
schools

“We wanted to connect our students to the magnificent mountain in their backyard. Most of our students have never been to Mt. Baker and we are the closest school to the mountain. We basically decided it was important to connect them to their big backyard.”

– Teacher, Mt. Baker School District



“Interacting with the kids in a cool adventure setting definitely helps build relationships. I think it is also valuable for the kids to realize that science is applicable to their everyday lives.”

– Teacher, Sterling Meadows

2017 PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

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REI
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