

REACH NEWSLETTER

REACH Site: Dallesport

Site Coordinator: Kenji Stasiewicz

Session (Fall/Winter, Spring or Summer): Summer 2026

Date Submitted: Fri 7/17

Activities *(Please tell us about an instructional lesson/activity that you and your students enjoyed in the past few months):*

For the fourth year in a row, Dallesport REACH collaborated with Lyle School District to deliver a robust summer school program open to all K-8 students at Lyle. District staff teamed up with REACH staff to produce a Titanic themed program inspired by OMSI's special Titanic artifact exhibit, culminating in a field trip there to bring it full circle.

Students were divided into mixed age groups, assigned an adult captain, and came up with their own team names. To set the scene each morning, staff read from the Magic Tree House book *Tonight on the Titanic* while students decorated their own name tags and tote bags symbolizing passports and luggage for the journey ahead. After the story, students then engaged in group games that reinforced teamwork and simulated aspects of the experience like following captain's orders, getting into life rafts, and pulling each other to safety.

Special thanks to Ms. Labryer, Mr. Magill & Mrs. Smith for their support in coordinating, and all the district and REACH staff that helped pull it off. We had a great team!

Grant Partners *(Please tell us about an activity with a grant partner that you and your students enjoyed in the past few months):*

Our expanding partnership with Arts in Education of the Gorge cultivated a collaborative arts integration curriculum that greatly enhanced the Titanic summer school experience. Teaching artists facilitated projects that taught students about the era in which the Titanic existed and imagined what the lives of the people aboard the ship must have been like. Activities included creating ocean themed journals, sculpting clay candle holders and wax candles, making maps, taking long exposure pictures out of homemade pin hole cameras, writing messages in a bottle, reassembling shattered tile into personal mosaics, and producing shadow box puppet plays that reenacted fictional tales of people on the Titanic.

Performing artists from Fort Vancouver Regional Library rounded out the summer school days by entertaining & educating students through a variety of playful and creative mediums. Jessa & The Saplings sang about nature, plants, animals, and our relationship to them. Science Heroes displayed live action science experiments that illustrated concepts in

physics and chemistry. Ms. Pearl's Circus Palooza had students acting out their very own student circus. Dragon Theater retold the story of Johnny Appleseed and the birth of America through artisan puppetry. The Historical Conjuror shared magic from the perspective of early science exploration. And Henrik Bothe wowed students with juggling tricks and spinning plates.

The Columbia Gorge Discovery Center supported our summer school adventure day with a field trip to The Dalles Dam Visitor Center for a ranger-led water safety activity and nature-based scavenger hunt followed by an afternoon at the Dufur Park & Pool to explore the local creek and swim in the community pool.

We are so blessed to have such supportive and talented partners that are willing to collaborate and create such special memories for all of our students!

Parent Events *(Please tell us about a parent event/involvement/family activity that you and your students enjoyed in the past few months):*

Families were invited to join students on the very last day of summer school in order to reflect on the two week journey and celebrate with a pizza lunch afterward. After a short hike up the Klickitat River trail, families joined students at the Lyle Activity Center to watch a slideshow of all the photos from summer school and congratulate them on surviving the experience. Getting to witness students and parents react to all the memories made was a joy to behold.

Field Trips *(Please tell us about a field trip that you and your students enjoyed in the past few months):*

After Lyle Summer School ended, Summer REACH began! Summer REACH is fast and furious, filled with long days and short weeks of outdoor adventure field trips around the region. This year, we focused on traveling the four cardinal directions to experience the incredible diversity the Gorge has to offer.

The Lyle Hill Fire created quite a stir to kick off week one, but with help from the Lyle Lions Club, we were off to the South to hike around Lost Lake and pick fresh fruit from Montavon Berries in Parkdale. Travels to the West brought us up Tanner Creek for a visit to Wahclella Falls and a tour of the Bonneville Fish Hatchery before ending with a pit stop at the Hood River Waterfront to watch all the windsports take off. Week two continued the tour around the wheel to the North, taking us to the Natural Bridges trail in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and wetlands of the Trout Lake Natural Area Preserve. To end the day, a hike down to BZ Falls afforded a sighting of rafters coming down the White Salmon River. The four directions tour culminated in the East with a fishing trip Cottonwood Canyon on the John Day River and swimming at The Dalles Pool.

Special thanks to site assistants Abigail, Jesika, and Sara for all their support and supervision, bus drivers Bill and Cynnamon for getting us there safely, and the seven adventurous REACHers for rocking it each and every day!

Community Connections *(Please tell us about an activity with community members [not contracted grant partners] that you and your students enjoyed in the past few months):*

Each week, Summer REACH wrapped up with a special visit to a local site hosted by one of our dear community connections. Risi of Howards Haven Animal Sanctuary hosted us on week one and Robbie from Believe Acres hosted us on week two to showcase life on an animal sanctuary and homestead respectively. Students got to meet many incredible animal companions and learn about life on the land. Thanks Risi & Robbie, for your generosity and hospitality.

Upcoming Events *(Please tell us some upcoming events for the program):*

Summer 2026 was one for the books! We are beyond grateful for all the community, family, school, and partner support that makes REACH a reality. Our students truly deserve it. We hope everyone has a wonderful summer, and look forward to seeing you again on the other side.

Student Highlight:

Name: Tristin Spino

Grade: 3rd

What is your favorite thing about REACH?

I get to spend time with my friends

What is something fun you did at REACH recently?

I got to go swimming and fishing

What have you learned at REACH recently?

About having fun with other people

Quote (optional):

I'm grateful