Outdoor Classrooms Close Achievement Gaps and Create Safe Spaces for Learning

The American Academy of Pediatrics calls using outdoor spaces for learning a “high priority” for schools reopening in the fall because of how they positively affect social emotional learning and can be used as a social distancing strategy. Outdoor spaces also:

- Increase social distancing
- Increase fresh air
- Decrease shared surfaces

In their reopening plans, many states such as Georgia and Florida specifically emphasize the importance of utilizing outdoor classrooms as much as possible, because outdoor learning spaces are a quick, flexible and relatively inexpensive way to increase any school’s academic footprint.

Out Teach, a national nonprofit, is the leading expert in creating outdoor learning spaces and providing effective teacher training to ensure spaces are well-used and well-maintained. Partners benefit from:

- 15+ years experience designing and building outdoor classrooms
- Landscape Architects on staff
- Specialized educational features
- High-quality, long-lasting, low-maintenance spaces

In addition to adapting to meet health guidelines, schools ALSO need to make up huge learning gaps caused by COVID-19 shutdowns.

- Research shows that students may be returning to schools this fall with 70% of a typical year’s reading gains, and only half a year’s gains in math. -- NWEA

Studies show that outdoor classrooms accelerate learning and improve outcomes for all students when used for real-world hands-on learning. Experiential learning in an outdoor classroom will:

- Increase subject comprehension and information retention long-term -- EdWeek
- Accelerate learning for disadvantaged students – National Wildlife Federation
- Improve STEM skills -- American Institutes for Research
- Support cross-curricular learning for every subject – Outdoor School For All
- Embed SEL and 21st Century skill development - Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education

Out Teach is the leading expert in empowering teachers to activate outdoor spaces for effective instruction. Districts and schools can support their return to school plans with:

- Design and Construction Services
- Job-embedded coaching
- Group trainings
- Online resources
- Learning Communities