Introduction

The Youth Outdoor Policy Partnership shares state policies that help young people get outside. Every year, we put out a report to inspire lawmakers, community leaders, and young people themselves.

Our Annual Trends Report highlights innovations to inspire legislators, advocates, communities, and youth to replicate, rethink, and collaborate on youth outdoor opportunities that reach all youth equally and fairly. This report summarizes outdoor recreation, education, access, and equity policy trends, initiatives, and specific bills enacted in 2026 across:

- General Trends
- Outdoor Opportunity for All
- Outdoor & Environmental Learning
- Outdoor Health & Wellbeing
- Outdoor Access & Leadership
- Related Federal Policy
- New and Exciting Outdoor Ideas

These bills were identified by the Youth Outdoor Policy Partnership:

Children & Nature Network

naaee
North American Association for Environmental Education

National Environmental Caucus

NUESTRA TIERRA

As a partnership, we do not endorse any specific bills or policy ideas. We share these examples to inspire local champions and legislators to consider what might work in their state.

About

What is the Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook (YOPP)?
Founded in 2017, the Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook is a collaboration between organizations that support nationwide networks of state and local leaders dedicated to youth, education, and the outdoors. As partners, we collaborate to track policies, create resources, and connect leaders–including youth, lawmakers, practitioners, and advocates–driving state policy efforts to ensure every child has the opportunity to experience the benefits of a meaningful connection to the outdoors.

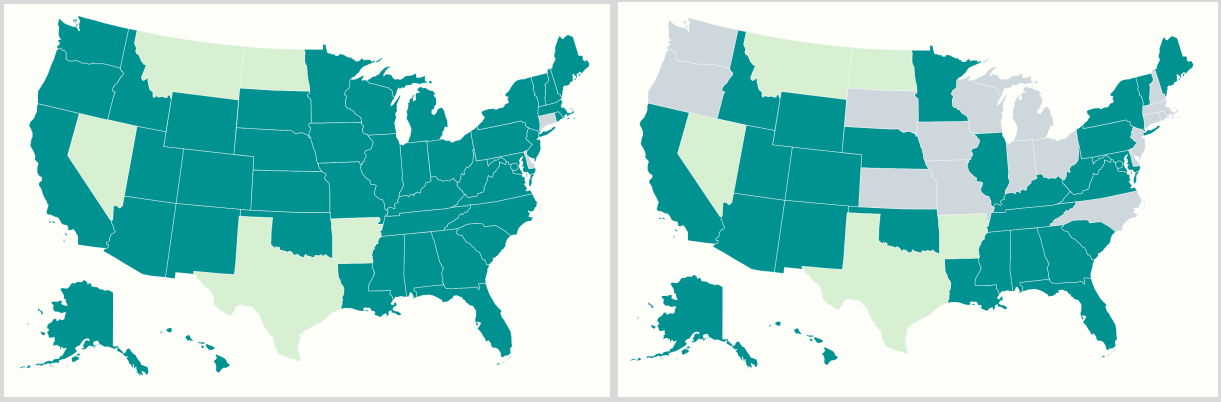
Who works on the Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook?
YOPP is a partnership between the Children & Nature Network, the National Environmental Caucus (the Caucus), the North American Association for Environmental Education, and the Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project.

I have a question, comment, idea, and/or want to share a policy you missed! How can I do that?
We would love to hear from you! YOPP operates on an "invitation model." That means we work to make sure leaders know about YOPP, and then we let leaders decide whether YOPP might be able to support their work, or if we can work together on an idea or policy initiative. Reach out to us at info@necleaders.org.

How can I stay updated about YOPP?
We share updates about YOPP through the Children & Nature Network and the eeADVOCATE newsletters. State legislators may contact info@necleaders.org to receive updates on outdoor policy and outdoor policy resources, including the Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook.

General Trends

Outdoor policy held steady despite competing legislative priorities for youth and the environment. In 2026, **42 states and territories introduced at least 238 bills** on outdoor recreation, education, access, and opportunity for all. More states introduced youth-related outdoor policies than in any previous report, despite four state legislatures not meeting (MT, NV, ND, TX) and one state not considering new legislation this session (AR).



238 Bills Introduced in 43 States **53 Bills Enacted in 28 States**

Of the over 238 bills introduced this session, 53 bills were enacted in 28 states and territories. As of Fall 2026, five additional bills awaited executive action, and two bills had passed both chambers pending transmittal to the governor.

About 22% of all outdoor bills introduced this session became laws, compared to about 16% of bills across all issues, reflecting the strong bipartisan partnerships driving youth outdoor engagement policy.

Emerging Trends in 2026

Emerging outdoor policy trends in 2026 included:

- Outdoor education & career pathways
- Outdoor play & recess
- Outdoors for health
- Outdoor economic opportunity for all

Outdoor Opportunity for All

While youth are increasingly interested in spending time outdoors, they also spend less day-to-day time doing so, and time in the open air increasingly takes place as occasional destination experiences. States continue to investigate and improve the structural barriers to time outdoors, while innovating to address historic and ongoing barriers through administrative clarity, fairness, and the broader story of shared experiences.

As the importance of ensuring policy reaches all youth and families grows, not only for those who can afford it, opportunity for all is increasingly embedded in all youth outdoor issue areas. Because opportunity cuts across all issue areas, this section focuses on innovative approaches that build outdoor access into policies not always recognized as youth-centered outdoor policy or that overlap with multiple youth outdoor issue areas.

4 Bills Enacted in 3 States - 28 Bills Introduced in 19 States

Administrative Alignment

In 2026, states updated and clarified how state leaders work together to tell, create, and imagine new stories outdoors.

- **Colorado** enacted H.B.26-1008, which helps state agencies coordinate to make it easier to spend meaningful time outside. Legislators asked Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to lead on developing a collaborative vision for conservation, outdoor recreation, and climate resilience with partners at Tribal governments, other state agencies, and local governments. CPW will now create annual planning reports and serve as a clearinghouse for accessible, sustainable, and inclusive outdoor practices.
- **Maryland** enacted H.B.404 / S.B.280, changing how the state refers to parks that preserve and interpret the history of specific populations. Community leaders, parks officials, and lawmakers recognized that labeling these sites as “historical parks” set them apart, when parks centered around stories are more often simply called “state parks.” They removed the word “historical” to clarify that the existing initiative establishing and improving parks that preserve and interpret the histories of African American, Asian, Native American, and Hispanic or Latino populations are talking about stories that are active and ongoing, just like all other state parks.
- **Utah** enacted H.B.12 , which allows outdoor recreation infrastructure grants to fund projects and equipment that improve accessibility for disabled and adaptive users.

Continuing Connections: Transit to Trails

Existing public transit options often don't connect to parks and trails even when both transit and greenspace networks are robust. While states have enacted active transport policies for well over a decade, Illinois H.B.5277 (2024) was the first to explore direct funding for connections between public transit and trails. Illinois directly inspired Nevada to enact S.B.405 (2025), which creates a Transit-to-Trails Task Force to determine how the state can fairly and equitably connect public transit to outdoor recreation sites such as trails, parks, and recreational areas.

Illinois legislators built on Nevada's work in return by enacting S.B. 2111 (2025) in a later special session, successfully ensuring that the final version of this public transit omnibus included outdoor engagement. An omnibus is a bundle of multiple proposed laws that get voted on together as one bill; this omnibus created a Transit-to-Trails grant program to connect public transportation to outdoor recreation sites as part of a larger effort to unify, improve, and increase equitable public transportation planning. It also increases state and local transit funding, promotes transit-oriented neighborhoods and innovation, and integrates environmental benefits for all.

In 2026, states continued momentum on solving one of the biggest barriers for older youth to spend time outside:

- **Nevada's** Transit-to-Trails Task Force partnered with the Regional Transportation Commission to invite public comments on outdoor access, resulting in adjustments aimed at improving reliability, trip length, and proximity of stops to recreation sites. The Task Force continues to explore funding options and is expected to bring initial recommendations to the 2027 legislative session.
- **California** enacted A.B.2168, which updates the existing Active Transportation Program to prioritize fairness, opportunity for all, and public transit to natural areas. California joins New Mexico, Ohio, Washington, and cities like Lansing, Michigan in integrating trails into Active Transportation Programs.

Outdoor & Environmental Learning

Outdoor, environmental, and climate education remains one of the most powerful ways to improve youth academic, mental, and physical outcomes while building confidence in their capacity to grow and thrive in a healthier future. However, while environmental conditions shift rapidly, American children spend 35% less time playing outdoors than previous generations. The primary barriers to outdoor unstructured play are screen time and the built environments surrounding where children live and learn. Public education campaigns and advice from health providers can help caregivers successfully change screen use in preschoolers and show promising results for other age groups, but caregivers can't often easily change where they live and work.

With youth spending 1,000 hours per year in school, mostly indoors, lawmakers and community leaders are increasingly turning to school-based policy as an affordable, scalable way to expand outdoor access and foster environmental stewardship for virtually every child.

Because education policy reaches so deeply into children's daily lives, it requires students, caregivers, educators, advocates, agency officials, and lawmakers to carefully weigh every decision, knowing it will shape kids and communities for decades to come. Even with that high responsibility, more outdoor and environmental education bills are introduced in more states every year. Growing coalitions in nearly every state continue to do the hard, collaborative work to enact lasting policies that will connect kids and communities to nature for decades to come.

12 Bills Enacted in 10 States - 88 Bills Introduced in 28 States

School-Based Infrastructure, Planning, & Funding

- **Georgia** enacted S.B.148, which establishes an outdoor education pilot program to develop statewide recommendations on school facilities and curriculum, as well as creating opportunities for youth to safely learn real-world outdoor skills through hunter safety curriculum. Lawmakers also continued to fund their successful Georgia Outdoor Learning Demonstration (GOLD) Grants, providing $100,000 for the fifth year in a row to schools, non-profits, or public agencies that engage public school students in outdoor learning.
- **Louisiana** enacted H.C.R.97, which launches a study on offering age-appropriate conservation, hunting, and target sports curriculum in

schools to offer pathways back into activities that remain relevant and exciting for today's youth but have a high learning barrier, especially for women and girls, which is made worse by unequal knowledge of hunting safety.
- **Hawaii** enacted H.C.R.91/S.C.R.102 (H.R.83/S.R.96), which directs the Department of Natural Resources to partner with the Department of Education to develop a long-term program to establish, fairly distribute, and sustain tree canopy coverage across all public schools.
- **Kentucky** enacted H.J.R.50, which directs the state auditor to study and update regulations that support nature-based early childhood programs and child care licensing, with guidance from providers and caregivers.

Changing State Policy Through Regulations
Lawmakers often leave room in policies for government officials to update them over time, especially for education. Community leaders can work with state officials to update regulations. In New York, the Youth Steering Committee led the Climate and Resilience Education Task Force, a statewide coalition of students, parents, educators, partners, policymakers, and officials, to successfully update learning standards to require climate education in all three grade bands, meaning that students will learn about climate issues and solutions at least once in elementary school, again in middle school, and again in high school.

Guaranteeing Outdoor Play-Based Recess (K to 5)
Students need physical movement and mental breaks to thrive, yet students increasingly spend less time on unstructured outdoor play than their parents, with over half of all school districts having no minimum requirements for outdoor recess in 2025. In 2026, at least fourteen states introduced at least 25 bills to set minimum recess requirements, often requiring recess to take place outdoors when possible or exploring reasonable limits on withholding recess.

- **Oklahoma** enacted S.B.1481, which guarantees all public school students in kindergarten through fifth grade 40 minutes of daily recess and prohibits withholding recess as a punishment.
- **Oklahoma** enacted S.B.2045, which guarantees all students in kindergarten through fifth grade daily recess that is outdoors when weather allows and is accessible for disabled students.
- **Pennsylvania** enacted H.B.1505, which guarantees all students in kindergarten through fifth grade 30 minutes of recess that is outdoors when weather allows and can't impact lunchtime or be disproportionately taken from non-assessed subjects such as art.
- **South Carolina** enacted H.B.3195, which guarantees Kindergarten through fifth-grade students 30 minutes of daily recess that is outdoors when weather allows. It also increases time for physical education, sets criteria for quality

physical education, clarifies that arts education cannot be reduced to provide recess, and restricts taking recess away as a punishment to a maximum of two days per school week.

Continuing Connections: Seal of Climate Literacy
Encouraging lasting relationships with nature can prepare youth for college and tomorrow's workforce. The share of U.S. hires that demonstrate "green skills" - those that combat the effects of climate change - has grown nearly 9% a year since 2021, yet fewer than half of students heading straight into the workforce (48%) feel prepared for the job they want.

Continuing the decades-long trend of states championing climate and environmental education proven to support youth, Colorado enacted S.B.24-014 in 2024, which created a high school diploma endorsement for students mastering climate literacy and skills. Local Education Providers (LEPs) can choose to offer it and can partner with nonprofits, industry, and higher education to remove access barriers. Conferral grew from 16 students in 2024 to more than 827 across 26 LEPs in 2026, more than half from rural counties.

In 2026, two additional states followed Colorado's footsteps:

- Maine created its "Seal of Climate Literacy" through the Maine Department of Education and awarded it to 57 students in its first year.
- California enacted S.B.1 048, a voluntary diploma Seal for students who show climate literacy through classroom, extracurricular, community, and career experiences. Districts can start conferring the Seal once the State Board of Education adopts criteria, which will happen by the 2028-29 school year.

These early states are a preview of a national movement, and students are leading it. They lobbied for California's recent bill, and in every state they are advocating, convening, and helping shape policy. Student leaders worked with legislators in Minnesota and Hawai'i to introduce their own Seal legislation last session. In Colorado, 426 students earned the Climate Seal during the first year of implementation; this is expected to grow to over 3,600 by the spring of 2027.

Outdoor Health & Wellbeing

States are championing proactive health solutions by addressing the underlying drivers of rising medical costs, both direct and indirect. Lawmakers and community leaders are increasingly using research to connect everyday greenspaces, trails, and natural canopies directly to better physical and mental health.

In 2026, Youth Outdoor Policy Partner the Caucus worked with the Nature and Health Alliance (NHA) to release an updated and expanded resource, the Outdoors as a Health Solution Briefing Book. The updated version shares new strategies, approaches, and proven ways to work together. The NHA, a leading alliance of health experts, works to deepen connections with state and local leaders, doctors, researchers, and scientists across the country to share and innovate ways to improve everyone's health through time outdoors. Its 175+ members are based in 33 states, with 10 active state chapters in Washington, Utah, Colorado, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Missouri, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana, creating a nationwide network of experts generating and propelling evidence on the benefits of nature for health into policy and practice.

15 Bills Enacted in six States - 47 Bills Introduced in 15 States

Directly Connecting to Public Health

- **Wyoming** enacted H.B.122, which leverages federal funds to establish a rural health care program that will support outdoor engagement programs as part of a comprehensive, holistic, and prevention-focused approach.
- **Tennessee** enacted H.J.R.149, and **Iowa** enacted H.F.2676, which encourage public awareness around healthier lifestyle choices like physical activity, especially when outdoors.
- **Hawaii** enacted H.C.R.98/S.C.R.107 (H.R.90/S.R.101), which encourages the creation of countywide housing permit books to increase access to well-designed, nature-centered housing that can drastically improve physical and mental health. Creating a countywide housing permit book can streamline permit approvals and reduce regulatory barriers for features such as indoor/outdoor living, walkable neighborhoods, and climate-responsive architecture. The bill requests collaboration between builders, architects, energy-efficiency experts, community stakeholders, and public health officials to promote attractive and healthy living environments.

Addressing Outdoor Safety Infrastructure

- **Hawaii** enacted H.R.151/H.C.R.161, which establishes a swimmer classification system to help schools support safer participation in physical education, interscholastic athletics, outdoor education, and enrichment programs while also promoting equal and fair access to water safety skills.
- **Alabama** enacted S.J.R.109, which creates a task force to study and recommend improvements to boating safety and enforcement to increase water recreation safety.
- **New York** passed through both chambers A.B.7594-C/S.03852-C, which prohibits the sale of playground surfacing materials containing intentionally added toxic chemicals such as PFAS, PAHs, or lead, building on Maryland

enacting H.B.1147 in 2024. A.B.7594-C has not been enacted but remains viable after session ending because both the Assembly and Senate voted to make it a law. The Assembly and Senate still need to agree on a final version and send it to the Governor to sign.

Outdoor Access & Leadership

Funding and leadership are the most common limiting factors in states executing environmental and educational goals. As states increasingly learn from one another, states are championing low-cost, sustainable solutions that make the most of existing funding or encourage virtuous cycles such as ensuring that the tax revenues made through public green spaces go back into maintaining and expanding outdoor opportunities for all.

As the outdoor economy continues to outpace traditional legacy industries like mining, automotive, agriculture, energy, and utilities, state economies are seeing every dollar invested in the outdoors multiply fourfold or more, slashing healthcare costs, creating jobs, and boosting local sales. For youth, this can translate directly into better neighborhood and state parks, greener schoolyards, and outdoor programs that survive tight budget cycles.

29 Bills Enacted in 22 States - 110 Bills Introduced in 26 States.

Maximizing Existing Resources
Ranging from increasing visibility to rethinking the use of funding, states led on finding ways to maximize outdoor spending.

- **West Virginia** enacted H.B.4126, which maximizes the sustainability of existing mineral lease revenues by providing strategic guidance for the parks and recreation endowment funded by those leases, ensuring funding remains available as mineral industries shift while still meeting immediate funding needs.
- **Utah** enacted H.B.567, which expands the definition of 'recreational infrastructure project' to include the restoration of natural features, such as waterbodies, to enhance public access to outdoor spaces that previously fell between the cracks.
- **Arizona** enacted H.B.2117, which redirects revenues from a special license plate to support environmental education programs.
- **Mississippi** enacted H.B.1941, which increases capacity to distribute and maximize the state Outdoor Stewardship fund by allowing more funding to go to administering the funds. State officials are often very busy and may struggle to distribute funds, especially when there are many possible projects to consider.

New & Expanded Funding for Public Access

States also found new ways to promote and fund outdoor access, often through affordable administrative solutions or rethinking how funding is distributed.

- **Utah** enacted S.B.130, which establishes a new matching grant program for local governments to enhance recreational access and environmental restoration along the Jordan River.
- **Georgia** passed, and then vetoed S.B.478, which would have built on the success of the state's existing Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund, doubling the percentage of sales tax revenue from sporting goods stores invested and extending the program through to 2039. In 2024, the Fund distributed $46 million to conservation and recreation projects, many of which directly served youth and families with children.

Federal Policy

States are often referred to as the “laboratories of democracy” where ideas can be tested and refined, with state policy often inspiring federal action. Additionally, states play a pivotal role in carrying out federal programs in both deploying federal funding and collaborating with the federal government on state plans.

State Leadership on Federal Policies

Several state legislatures built on opportunities created by federal policy, urged federal partners to promote continuing sustainable outdoor access to public lands, and took steps to assess how federal changes may impact outdoor access.

- **Wyoming** S.J.9 (enacted 2026) urged Congress to protect state access to public lands, oppose broad federal land sales without state input, and support responsible, locally driven land management; several other states considered related bills.
- **In Utah,** H.B.509 (enacted 2026) directed the Department of Natural Resources to study and report on the status and management of wetlands, especially impacts from federal reclassification, to evaluate the impacts of these changes on outdoor recreation.
- In **Colorado,** H.B.26-1205 (enacted 2026) built on the Good Neighbor Authority expansions in the EXPLORE Act to enhance collaboration between federal, tribal, state, and local partners to implement forest management, recreation, and improvement projects on public lands.

Federal Policy Proposals

The following are current federal policy proposals that relate to state efforts around youth outdoor engagement. While many state legislatures only meet for the first half of the year, Congress meets all year and will be considering the following bills until its session ends in December 2026:

- **In Real Life (“IRL”) Act** (S. 5531, introduced, 2026) has two components: imposing a digital advertising tax on the largest social media companies, and establishing a new Social Capital Fund for local communities. Revenues from the digital advertising tax would be distributed to local communities for the institutions, programs, and physical spaces that bring their residents together in common cause. Funds could be used to support rec sports, arts, and public library programs, beautify local parks or other public spaces, and assist parent-teacher organizations at public schools or other public programs that teach communities how to engage responsibly with technology.
- **Revitalizing America’s Schoolyards Act** (S.4258 and H.R.8303, introduced, 2026) would establish a competitive grant program for nature-based improvements to schoolyards. These grants can fund planning and implementation of nature-filled schoolyards. Districts with a large number of students on free and reduced meals will be prioritized. *States with existing or*

in-development green schoolyard studies and/or funding programs are expected to be more effective in applying for, receiving, and distributing funding.

- **National Strategy for Social Connection Act** (S.4818, introduced, 2026) would create a permanent Office of Social Connection Policy to establish national guidelines and integrate social connection policy across federal agencies. At state and local levels, this creates a framework that recognizes community outdoor spaces and nature-based programs as essential social infrastructure, laying the groundwork for future multi-agency federal research, guidance, and cross-sector funding aligned with youth outdoor engagement.
- **Prioritizing Lifestyle and Activity for Youth (PLAY) Act** (H.R. 6245, introduced, 2026) would establish an interagency task force focused on physical activity, youth health, and recreation infrastructure, especially playgrounds, to create a coordinated federal strategy for outdoor play. States are expected to benefit from technical guidance on best practices, multi-agency collaboration frameworks, leverage points for existing physical activity and preventative health program funding, and a policy precedent for future funding streams.
- **The 2026 Farm Bill** (H.R. 7567, passed House, 2026) directly addresses outdoor recreation. The current draft:
    - Creates a Forest Conservation Easement Program to conserve land with high recreational and ecological value.
    - Supports initiatives to create access to landlocked public lands in partnership with neighboring private landowners, a key source of rural recreation areas for youth.
    - Reauthorizes the Conservation Reserve Program to enhance habitat on private land, which has improved wildlife observation, hunting, and fishing on public lands.
    - Does not include additional mandatory funding for the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP), which pays landowners to allow public hunting, fishing, and recreation on their land; VPA-HIP land often offers rare opportunities for suburban access.

Exciting Ideas

It's not uncommon for policy ideas to be introduced multiple times before becoming law, especially when they explore new ideas. The following concepts considered in the 2026 legislative session offer a glimpse into just a few of the exciting new ideas in youth outdoor policy:

1. **California** considered S.B.2158 (introduced, 2026), which would have required the state Department of Education to develop statewide guidance on outdoor learning and to establish an outdoor learning pilot program.

   Comprehensive statewide guidance would allow local school boards to implement locally-led, student-centered outdoor learning across all subjects. Championed by a minority party leader, S.B.2158 was strongly bipartisan, receiving unanimous approval by the Assembly, the Assembly and Senate Education Committees, and the Assembly and Senate Appropriations Committees.

2. **Massachusetts** considered S.B.391 / H.B.560 and S.B.410 (2025/2026), which would have established an Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Trust Fund to fund curriculum development as well as formally added climate science and climate solutions to state learning standards.

   These bills reflect growing momentum and recognition of youth leaders, who highlighted the need for interdisciplinary climate tools both in the capitol and in featured essays in the Belmont Voice, Marblehead Current, and Newton Beacon.

3. **New Mexico** considered S.B.177, which would have directed $9 million to the Outdoor Equity Fund as part of a series of transfers from the General Fund designed to catalyze statewide economic development, innovation, and competitiveness.

   S.B.177 recognized the power of the Outdoor Equity Fund, placing it in the same urgent, high-return category as quantum computing facilities, advanced energy research, structural food system resilience, and rapid rollouts of renewable energy.

4. **At least seven states** considered prohibiting withholding recess as a punishment unless a student poses an immediate serious risk to themselves or others, including **Idaho** H.833, **Kansas** S.B.339, **Kentucky** S.B.111, **Michigan**

H.B.5794, **New Hampshire** S.B.578, **New York** A.6939A / S.6858A, and **Tennessee** H.B.2391 / S.B.2187. These states would have joined **Illinois** (S.B.654, 2021), **Minnesota** (H.F.2497, 2023), **California** (S.B.291, 2023), and now **Oklahoma** (S.B.1481, 2026) in strictly protecting recess for youth.

2026 marks the tenth anniversary of states working to ensure students that get recess, with **Rhode Island** (H.B.7611/S.B.2669, 2016) requiring a good faith effort to avoid withholding recess and **New Jersey** (S.B.847, 2018) prohibiting withholding recess unless it is related to a violation of the student code of conduct, such as bullying, and not more than twice a week.

5. **Massachusetts** introduced S. 791 (2025-2026), which would have covered nature prescriptions under state and state-regulated insurance. It would also review the locations and capacities of existing outdoor therapy programs to understand how the state might support resource gaps.

   Nature prescriptions (or Nature Rx programs) are formal prescriptions written by healthcare providers recommending patients spend time outdoors for physical and/or mental health benefits. Writing nature prescriptions pushes patients to overcome the "action gap" and follow through with a doctor's order that outlines recommended time spent outside and activities to engage in. Nature prescriptions also provide a path for insurers to offer preventative care that can reduce their costs while also reducing costs for individuals.

   These prescriptions create collaborative relationships within a community through free admission or waived parking fees to local outdoor resources like state parks and botanical gardens, connecting communities to the benefits of time outdoors that extends beyond each initial individual Nature Rx.

6. **Hawaii** (H.B.1925/S.B.2473) and **Minnesota** (H.F.3557/S.F.3659) considered creating Seals of Climate Literacy. These states would have joined **Maine** (by way of regulation) and **California** (S.B.1048) in following **Colorado** (S.B.24-014), empowering local districts to offer youth relevant experiential and practical resources to explore, prepare for, and move into high-demand, high-quality green jobs, offering lifelong opportunities to meaningfully connect to nature.

Acknowledgments & More Resources

While this report shares a snapshot of exciting milestones from across the country, it is far from a complete picture of every innovative policy, idea, and effort in motion. To explore the full list of legislation we are tracking in 2026 or to view what we are tracking right now, visit our tracking resources:

2026 Outdoor Engagement Legislation Bill Tracking [Short link & QR code]
Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook Current Bill Tracking [Short link & QR code]

Additional resources supported by our partners include:

- [C&NN] From birth to age 5, children's brains grow at a faster rate than at any other time. This makes early childhood a critical period for access to nature, setting the stage for children's developing social-emotional skills, executive function, and physical and mental health. The **Nature in Early Childhood Hub** provides resources and policy ideas to help parents and caregivers, educators, early childhood care providers, public agencies, and other partners to understand, plan, advance, and implement nature-focused strategies for young children and their families.
- [C&NN] Learning, playing, and just being in nature sparks curiosity, creativity, collaboration, and social connections. Adding nature to schoolyards provides space for environmental learning and emotional regulation, and can help school infrastructure withstand extreme weather impacts. The **Green Schoolyards Resource Page** provides ideas and strategies to support policymakers, educators, parents, and young people to develop and utilize green and living schoolyards.
- [NAAEE] **Coalition for Climate Education Policy** is a diverse and multi-sector coalition of organizations advocating for federal and state policies and cross-agency efforts to advance climate literacy in the United States. As a non-partisan network, we work to advance climate change education and ensure that education and engagement are part of the toolbox of solutions to build more resilient communities and create a climate-ready workforce.
    - We invite national, state, and local organizations and networks to unite behind a shared policy agenda that elevates education in all sectors—from schools and universities to zoos, museums, nature centers, and many other community education institutions—as key to meaningfully addressing climate change.
- [NAAEE] **eePRO Advocacy, Policy, and Civic Engagement Group**: Looking to advocate for environmental education (EE), gain support for your programs, or secure funding for a new project but not sure where to start? Let this group assist you in your efforts. From the latest in state environmental literacy plans to federal appropriations to our allies in STEM, green schools, and nonformal education, join this group to discuss how we can work together to secure the

future of environmental education, bring EE to our communities and the world, and rally support and recognition for the field.

- [Nuestra Tierra] **The Outdoor Opportunity Coalition** connects youth, lawmakers, advocates, organizations, and families to build public and political momentum for the creation of a National Outdoor Opportunity Fund that will enable large-scale and long-term investments in programs to ensure that all youth across the nation have an opportunity to explore the great outdoors and enjoy its health, educational, and career-building benefits.
- [Nuestra Tierra] **The Coalition for Outdoor Equity Fund New Mexico** stewards a state Outdoor Equity Fund first spearheaded by the Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project. Through nine core organizations supported by dozens of partners, the coalition advocates for regular state appropriations–and eventually permanent funding–to continue and grow the impact of the Outdoor Equity Fund. The coalition also aims to share their process and progress to support leaders in every state in achieving the youth health, wellbeing, academic outcomes, community engagement, and workforce pathways created and growing under the New Mexico Outdoor Equity Fund.
- [NEC] **The Outdoor Engagement Issue Page** hosts a range of policy resources such as factsheets and briefing books across a wide range of outdoor recreation, education, access, and opportunity for all issues.
- [NEC] **The Outdoor Working Group** *(State Legislators and Staffers)* is a virtual collaborative, nonpartisan, and non-lobbying space for state legislators and their staff working on outdoor education, recreation, access, and opportunity. Meetings center on peer-to-peer connections and open discussions among state legislators and staffers from across the country and political spectrum. Please contact info@necleaders.org to join.

This work is powered by an incredible community of youth leaders, teachers, state legislators, community activists, Elders, caregivers, city planners, students, and many other advocates championing meaningful time outdoors for all youth.
Thank you for another year of sustaining, growing, and creating youth outdoor policy efforts and successes!