

Outdoor education sparks enthusiasm for learning

By Jill Oberly, Reno Gazette-Journal

It's a Tuesday morning, and for about 60 Sun Valley Elementary School fifth-graders, that typically means sitting in a classroom studying pictures of photosynthesis or some other scientific phenomenon in a textbook.

This day, however, is different. It is the start of a four-day, three-night excursion along the eastern shore of Lake Tahoe with the Great Basin Outdoor School.

It is the first time some have spent a night away from Sun Valley. And the wondrous looks on the faces of Stefanie Braun's students when they first see Lake Tahoe is quickly replaced by shouts of excitement and the release of pent-up energy from a long bus ride.

While part of the goal of the Great Basin Outdoor School during the next few days is fun, the children still are in school, learning in a real-world environment that demonstrates practical ways to use life skills. Great Basin's mission is to ignite children's passion for learning in the outdoors.

The nonprofit organization is funded by grants and community contributions.

Teachers can contact the school if they are interested in enrolling their class in the program.

Read the whole story