

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

# *Teacher Escape Weekend*

2022



**GREAT SMOKY  
MOUNTAINS  
INSTITUTE AT  
TREMONT**





## Why Teacher Escape?

Through hands-on professional development, Tremont empowers teachers to get their students outside - whether through a trip to Tremont or in their own schoolyard. With a train-the-trainer model, teachers have the opportunity to engage in these opportunities as a learner first, then work with their students by facilitating these experiences.

Impacting educators is one of the most important endeavors we can take on as an organization. Teachers in turn reach thousands of students and build the "soil" in which future generations will grow. With benefits of outdoor learning including improved mental and physical health, social and emotional growth, and academic motivation, training educators through aims to ensure students are receiving meaningful education experiences.

"IT'S AN AMAZING VALUE AND SOME OF THE BEST PD A TEACHER CAN RECEIVE!"

- TEACHER ESCAPE PARTICIPANT



# What was the response?

**100%** OF RESPONDENTS NAMED THE WORKSHOP WAS GOOD OR EXCELLENT

**98%** OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED THE QUALITY WAS AS GOOD OR BETTER THAN LAST YEAR

**98%** OF EDUCATORS REPORTED THAT THEY LEARNED SOMETHING THEY INTEND TO IMPLEMENT INTO THEIR CLASSROOM

**85%** OF PARTICIPANTS COMPLETED THE FEEDBACK SURVEY - A 20% INCREASE OVER LAST YEAR



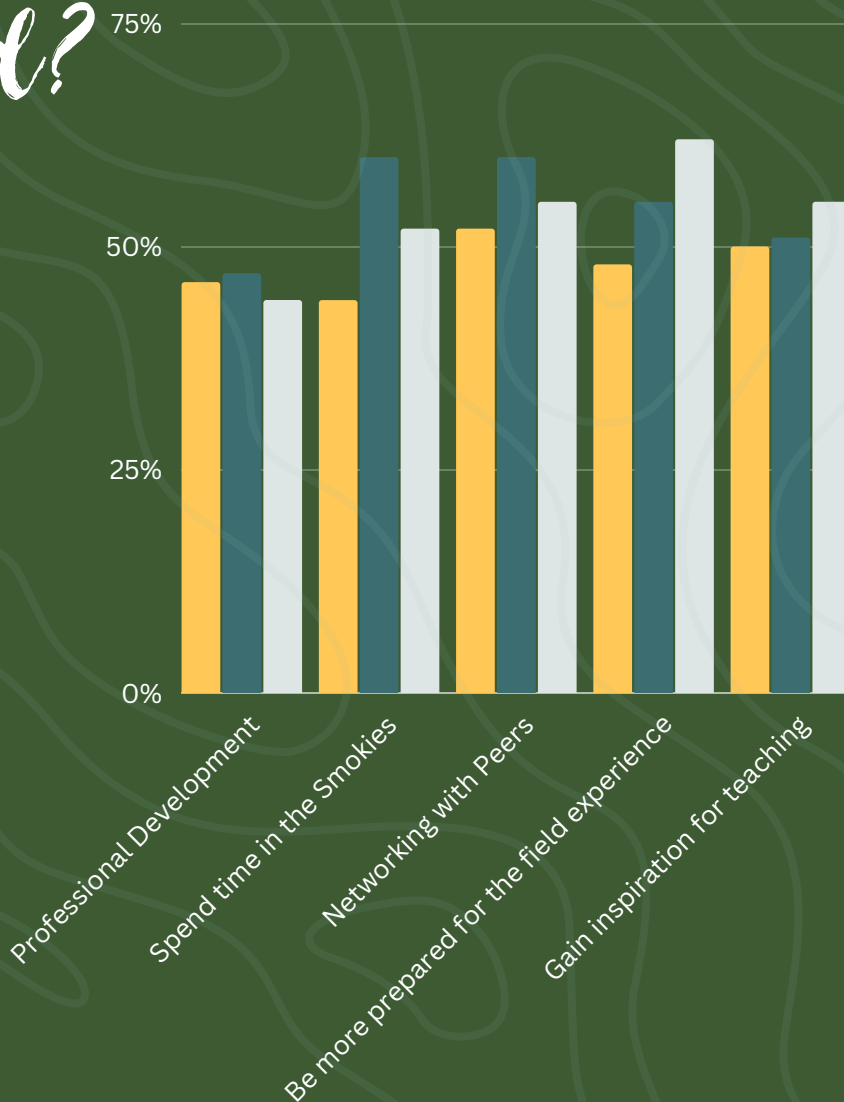
This year, Teacher Escape Weekend returned to normal capacity hosting 160 educators, on site, across three weekends. This weekend workshop gives educators an opportunity to meet and network with other educators, share ideas, learn about new and current offerings from Tremont, and retreat to Great Smoky Mountains National Park for respite.

"THIS WORKSHOP ALLOWED ME TO GROW AS AN EDUCATOR WHILE ALSO GIVING ME THE MENTAL PEACE OF MIND SO MANY TEACHERS NEED."

- TEACHER ESCAPE WEEKEND PARTICIPANT.

# Why did folks attend?

When asked the reasons teachers attended Teacher Escape Weekend, respondents most commonly named the following reasons:



## We also heard things like this...

"THIS IS THE BEST PD. I LEARN SOMETHING NEW EVERY YEAR. I AM A DISTRICT LEADER AND WHAT I LEARN HERE HAS ABSOLUTELY INFLUENCED EVERY ELEMENTARY TEACHER IN OUR DISTRICT. WHEN I DO PD FOR TEACHERS WHAT I DO HERE AT TREMONT ABSOLUTELY INFLUENCES WHAT I DO. THE INSTRUCTORS HERE ARE AMAZING! SO INSPIRING TO US TEACHERS SO WE CAN INSPIRE STUDENTS. I WORK AT A SCHOOL WHERE STUDENTS RARELY GET OUTSIDE AND IF THEY DO, THEY ARE NOT INTERACTING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT MUCH. AFTER THIS WORKSHOP, I'M RETURNING TO SCHOOL WITH AN ARSENAL OF STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES TO GET MY STUDENTS INVOLVED WITH THE ENVIRONMENT WITH HANDS ON ACTIVITIES, HOPEFULLY IGNITING A PASSION FOR STEWARDSHIP AND EXPLORATION."

-- TEACHER ESCAPE WEEKEND PARTICIPANT



# & other reflections...



"THIS WAS IMPACTFUL FOR ME AND MY TEACHING STYLE. IT WAS A GREAT TIME TO SLOW DOWN AND MAKE MEANINGFUL DECISIONS ABOUT HOW I WILL TEACH STUDENTS. THANK YOU FOR THIS EXPERIENCE."



"IT WAS PHENOMENAL OVERALL. THE BEST THING I'VE EXPERIENCED AS A TEACHER. THE FACT THAT IT WAS AFFORDABLE WAS EVEN BETTER AND I AM THANKFUL FOR THE FUNDING SO TEACHERS WHO CAN'T AFFORD THESE AMAZING WORKSHOPS HAVE A CHANCE TO DO ONE."



"THIS WORKSHOP INSPIRED ME TO BE BRAVE WITH MY EDUCATION STYLE AND TAKE RISKS BY GOING OUTSIDE WITH MY STUDENTS AND USING INQUIRY BASED AND CURIOSITY DRIVEN LEARNING. IT GAVE ME SPECIFIC STRATEGIES TO BOTH HELP MY STUDENTS LEARN AND MYSELF BE MORE REFLECTIVE AND INTENTIONAL."

"THE TIME I SPENT REFLECTING ON DAILY ASPECTS OF LIFE - INVALUABLE. ALSO THE TEAM BONDING THAT OCCURRED WILL BE SOMETHING I WILL REMEMBER. SO IMPORTANT TO GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER AND UNDERSTAND WHERE WE ARE COMING FROM."



"THIS WAS SUCH A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE IN REGAINING A CONNECTION AND DESIRE TO BE IN NATURE AGAIN! IT WAS VALUABLE TO BE SURROUNDED BY OTHER EDUCATORS WHO WERE EQUALLY AS PASSIONATE. THE STAFF WAS SO KNOWLEDGEABLE AND WELCOMING."

## ...from the Field





## WHAT'S *Next?*

Saying goodbye is never easy, so it is soothing to know as teachers leave Walker Valley, it is more of a “see ya later.” Educators from around the region and beyond continue to engage monthly beyond Teacher Escape Weekend during the virtual, Schoolyard Network calls - sharing ways they are getting kids outside, thought-partnering on solutions to barriers they are facing, and bolstering their outdoor learning toolkit with new strategies and activities to bring into the schoolyard.

Looking ahead to Teacher Escape Weekend 2023, we are excited to continue offering an immersive, connective experience in Great Smoky Mountains National Park - expanding the impact by inspiring the teachers who inspire the kids who are our future.



# GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT



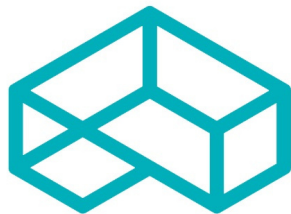
*Connect*



*Explore*



*Inspire*



**ARCONIC  
FOUNDATION**

Teacher Escape Weekend is  
supported through funding from  
the Arconic Foundation.

*Thank you!*