



Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program Certification Requirements & Benefits

After you have completed the development of your outdoor classroom and schoolyard wildlife habitat, and you are using it as an education tool with your students, it is time to certify your outdoor classroom through the Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program!

Your Outdoor Classroom Consultant will assist you and your planning committee with the certification process, which typically takes about 4-6 weeks.

Certification Requirements

To certify your outdoor classroom, your school must complete the following requirements:

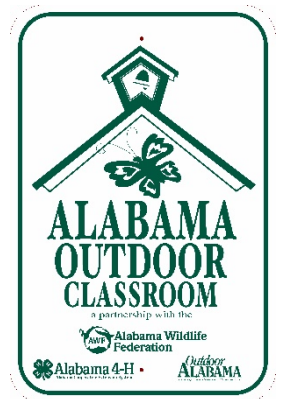
- An active planning committee that meets at least four times a year;
- A sustainable Master Plan with short-term and long-term goals that has been entered and updated in your school's online OC Data Hub on the Alabama Wildlife Federation's website (*go to the OC Schools Map, follow the links to your school's webpage, and use your OC Data Hub at the bottom of the page*);
- Outdoor learning stations including a weather station, cardinal directions sign and sensory garden;
- A Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat that includes a songbird sanctuary, butterfly garden, pollinator garden, and frog and toad habitat;
- Educational learning station signs and plant identification signs;
- On-site professional development for the faculty to ensure that all of your teachers feel comfortable using the outdoor classroom as an educational tool;
- Hands-on, multi-curricular, inquiry-based activities using the outdoor classroom;
- A maintenance plan that includes weekly and seasonal maintenance tasks along with a summer maintenance schedule; and
- An outdoor classroom that you are ready to present as a model for other schools across Alabama.

Benefits of Certification

When you are ready for certification, your Outdoor Classroom Consultant will meet with you and your planning committee to assist you with the certification process, which includes organizing a certification ceremony to receive your certification awards.

Upon certification, your school will receive the following:

- ✓ A certification ceremony (*or presentation-see below*) with your faculty, students, parents, volunteers, sponsors, school board members, and other dignitaries to celebrate your accomplishments and recognize your school's partners who helped you develop your outdoor classroom;
- ✓ An official Alabama Outdoor Classroom Certification Sign;
- ✓ An official Alabama Outdoor Classroom Certificate;
- ✓ A customized Outdoor Classroom Activity Kit including educational materials and supplies that your school needs such as magnifying loupes, field ID guides, etc.;
- ✓ A full set of *Discovering Alabama* DVDs & teacher guides from Dr. Doug Phillips; and
- ✓ A National Wildlife Federation Schoolyard Habitats® Certificate & Sign (*optional*).



***Certification Presentation:** *If you prefer not to have a ceremony, we can present your certification awards at a faculty meeting instead.*



For more info about the Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program,
visit <https://www.alabamawildlife.org/outdoor-classroom-program/>