

## Williams-Cone School

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am so impressed with the Cathance River Education Alliance and Sarah Rodgers that I feel it is critical I write this letter. With Sarah's leadership, CREA has provided fourth grade students at Williams-Cone, Topsham, Maine, with amazing learning opportunities. I urge anyone associated with CREA, or anyone considering a partnership with them, to support CREA in anyway possible.

In the spring, I attended training about the Cathance River Education Alliance. I visited a resource center that stimulated all my senses and made me eager to learn! I spent the day walking some of the trails and exploring the river near the Ecology Center. I made connections that would help me teach my students, but more than that I realized the importance of CREA. I knew I had started a relationship that needed to continue.

Sarah and I met this summer to make plans for my fourth graders. We wanted the kids to have experiences in both the classroom and at the Ecology Center. Paying close attention to the state's learning standards and my expectations for students, we planned to have Sarah in my classroom sharing pond water and then additional hands-on learning visiting the property of CREA to reinforce student understanding.

This fall we visited the Ecology Center. I think the extension to classroom learning CREA provided is best described by the students. These are some of the phrases from their thank you notes to Sarah:

- "I most liked scooping for macroinverbrates! The vernal pool was interesting and being outdoors made me want to search the yard around my house."
- "I learned that it takes over 100 years for the decomposers to make an inch of dirt. I was in shock. Sarah, you are a great teacher!"
- "CREA is awesome! I really like the solar panels. One of my favorite things was the British Soldiers with the red fungi hat."
- Thank you so much for taking me and my group to the pond to look at some bugs inside the pond. I learned things that I've never found before. That was an exciting trip.

It is obvious that these experiences provided a connection to ecology that a text book or my teacher-lead lessons could never have done. My students are "experiencing" science.

Please support this organization because more and more students need to have these experiences.

Sincerely,

Debra Dunn  
Williams-Cone School



A nurturing learning community, where the connections between teacher and student are centered in each child's learning.