

# Oakridge Middle School



## Learning by Doing and Serving the Community

### Community Partners

- Robb Zoelmer, Field Project Coordinator
- Heidi Frei, DNR
- Melissa VanderVelde, PJ Hoffmaster Park
- Jennifer Darling, Adopt-a-Beach and Darling Cetaceans
- Jamie Cross, Alliance for the Great Lakes Adopt-a-Beach Program

*Cleaning up the beach for the enjoyment of everyone.!*



### Student Learning Outcomes

The students will understand how they impact the environment both positively and negatively.

To get ready for the day at the beach, the students had the opportunity to have an actual volunteer share her experiences with the Adopt-a-Beach program.

Jennifer Darling volunteered her time, describing her Adopt-a-Beach involvement over the last 5 years. This gave the students a look into the program; what it is, why it was created, and how groups can deal with the littering problem.

On the day of the trip the students were broken into teams, given their litter collection materials, and scoured the Lake Michigan beach front, picking up anything that wasn't part of nature and tallying their clean-up process. The students then weighed and discussed their unique or funny findings during a lunch break. A total of 246.5 pounds of garbage were removed from the beach. They discovered that humans leave behind many items that nature doesn't

need.

In preparation for the Garlic Mustard pull, each student chose, researched, created, and shared brochures about a plant or animal that is currently invasive to the Great Lakes. The students understand what an invasive species is, how many arrived into the Great Lakes area, why they are harmful to our environment and our native species, and the ways they are being dealt with.

During the afternoon we were in the campground where everyone was sent on a "search and pull" mission against Garlic Mustard. Heidi Frei showed the kids the areas in the campground where the Garlic Mustard was in the past and live examples of what to look for. The students found and pulled the Garlic Mustard and then marked the locations on a map for future reference.

The students have now experienced ways they can change the environment we live in for the better.

Oakridge Middle School  
2012-2013

### School Year Team:

- 155 Students
- Six Teachers
- Six, 7th grade classrooms

**Students beginning their search and pull mission.**



**Students documenting their garbage collection.**





Students removed 264.5 pounds of garbage from Lake Michigan's shoreline and pulled Garlic Mustard in nine different locations throughout PJ Hoffmaster Campground.

## 2012-2013 School Project Time Line

Students studied the Weather and the Water Cycle and how humans impact water flow and its cleanliness.



Research and create Brochures about Invasive Species in MI or the Adopt-a-Beach program



Submit Results to Adopt-a-Beach program

October

May

June



Jennifer Darling shared her Adopt-a-Beach experiences.

Beach clean-up and Invasive Species Search and Pull Mission

Results and Information shared with Board of Education and community

### Skills learned:

- Civic & Community Responsibility
- Invasive Species Studies
- Environmental Responsibility
- Creative Writing & Journaling
- Data Entry

