

The Kodiak Ocean Science Discovery Program bridging the gap between working scientists and classroom science

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The cooperation between the Kodiak Laboratory of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Kodiak Borough Assembly, Kodiak Island Borough School District and the Kodiak College supports the Kodiak Ocean Science Discovery Program (KOSDP) by promoting locally based Ocean Science and Marine Stewardship through a combination of formal and informal education. A curriculum based core program provides age appropriate ocean science lab units for grades 3-8. Additional informal education modules offer a variety of public outreach, art, and in-depth after school programs as well as special units for the six remote k-12 village schools in the district. During annual visits to the KOSDP, all Kodiak public school students gain exposure to hands-on Marine Science lessons in a state-of-the-art laboratory with access to a seawater research facility and public touch tank, while scientists and volunteers are given opportunities to share their ocean knowledge and passion with the students.

Topics for grades 3 through 5 include the marine food web, keystone species, and an introduction to scientific experimentation. Grades 6 through 8 explore the chemistry and biological effects of ocean acidification, and the ocean's role in energy and matter cycling. Application of scientific techniques, a field trip to a working fisheries management facility and exposure to local scientists and fisheries managers interact systemically to create interactive learning experiences, which are reinforced through different units every year until high school. The high school curriculum is enhanced through KOSDP opportunities for Marine Science classes, guest speakers, a state-wide student competition, and internship opportunities. Embraced by the community, the Borough, scientists, students, teachers, parents, artists, fisheries managers, fishermen and ocean conservation groups, the Ocean Science Discovery Program has become a gateway of Marine Science education in Kodiak.