

impact

University of Idaho Extension
programs that are making a
difference in Idaho.

Learn Everywhere with 4-H brings together formal and informal education

AT A GLANCE

Learn Everywhere with 4-H allows Idaho students to earn in-school credits for out-of-school learning through University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development programs.

The Situation

In recent years, the K-12 education landscape has evolved rapidly with parents, educators, elected officials and community partners working to expand options for both delivery modes and course content, especially in rural communities. Utilizing statewide outreach partnerships and programming efforts already established, UI Extension 4-H Youth Development was approved by the Idaho State Board of Education as the first out of school provider to offer out-of-school programming for in-school credit.

Our Response

4-H was awarded a three-year Innovative Grant from the Idaho Workforce Development for \$761,209 to expand programming. With three newly hired program staff in 2025, the team focuses on growing school partnerships, marketing course availability to youth and families, and converting 4-H curriculum and experiences into online credit courses. To earn credit, youth must complete a minimum of 60 hours of combined learning which includes:

- Online coursework
- Learning activities



A 4-H member exhibiting their animal project as a part of a Learn Everywhere with 4-H course for school credit.

- Record book
- Exhibit project
- Oral presentation
- Interview

Through the development of this program, challenges have centered around the relationship with each school district. Idaho is fortunate to have local autonomy with each school district to best meet the needs of their constituents, similar to the 4-H program. However, this meant that Learn Everywhere with 4-H had to be adaptable for over 150 different school partnerships, all while maintaining a consistent, high-quality, educational out-of-school program.

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Learn Everywhere with 4-H begins the school partnership in a variety of ways. Youth or parents see social media posts and reach out to the 4-H staff or the school indicating their interest in making an in-school credit for out-of-school learning happen. Other times a school board member, who might also happen to be a 4-H volunteer, begins the conversation. Often, the interest starts with 4-H members advocating for themselves to receive school credit for their 4-H work, and the 4-H professional reaches out to a school's administration.

The consistent message within each conversation is not what 4-H is taking away, but what additional opportunities 4-H can offer youth in our communities. The biggest hurdles are the layers of approval needed and the process of documentation. Sometimes the conversation moves quickly, and we have a school's approval to offer the credit within just a few weeks. More commonly, the conversations take 3-4 months for approval and in a few cases even longer.

Program Outcomes

Eighty percent of learning happens outside of school. This in-school credit opportunity recognizes the hard work that a youth does and is not dismissed just because the work does not happen in a formal classroom. Youth that participate in Learn Everywhere with 4-H have put in between 60 and 600 hours per credit (60 hours is the minimum/credit required in Idaho). Each school district recognizes the credit differently, whether science, government or civic credit or even as an elective. The first students to earn credit averaged

236 hours and were from both online and brick and mortar schools.

"Being recognized for the hard work, dedication, and commitment that happen outside the classroom has motivated me to push my projects even further."

~Gooding County 4-H member and Learn Everywhere participant

Learn Everywhere with 4-H allows the youth to drive their own learning, highlighting the different strengths of our youth. It opens opportunities for them to take advantage of other courses they are interested in, either within the school or through Learn Everywhere.

The Future

As this program grows and opportunities expand through school partnerships and course offerings, University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development is leading the way with out-of-school opportunities both within Idaho and around the country. Learn Everywhere with 4-H offers youth, parents and schools content adapted to the interests of our youth and the educational needs throughout the state. One school district partner has said, "Your program provides students with "real," practical experience, that is often difficult, if not impossible to replicate in the classroom.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

Learn Everywhere with 4-H now has for-credit agreements with 32 school districts. However, the list is always changing, please contact our team members at learneverywhere@uidaho.edu to confirm a youth's eligibility for the Learn Everywhere with 4-H credit.

FOR MOR INFORMATION

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