THE FOLK SCHOOL
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Kids Woodworking Instructor Development Cohort

The Folk School is launching a pilot **Instructor Development Cohort** to grow an enthusiastic community of instructors dedicated to teaching woodworking to young people. This program is designed to build teaching skills, deepen craft knowledge, and expand opportunities for kids' woodworking education in Interior Alaska.

What is the program like?

In this program, a cohort of 4-6 participants will take part in a weekend workshop, learning teaching techniques and kids' woodworking projects from Alex Brede—a skilled educator with forty years of experience teaching woodworking to kids. The following week, the cohort will learn by doing as they student-teach two kids woodworking class series alongside Alex. Afterward, The Folk School will host a series of work sessions for the cohort to share ideas, develop projects and troubleshoot together, with support from Alex and local woodworking mentors. Members of the cohort will be invited to play an active role in guiding how the training program and ongoing community take shape.

By investing in instructor development, The Folk School aims to create more opportunities for kids to engage in hands-on making while cultivating a supportive network of educators who are excited about teaching and learning together. This pilot cohort will help shape a model for future instructor development programs across other craft areas at The Folk School.

Why Participate?

> "For more than 40 years, teaching woodworking to children has been the most powerfully positive activity I have engaged in as an educator." Alex Brede

As school systems stress time in seats over hands-on learning, many children lose their sense of agency and see themselves as passive recipients instead of creators. Working with wood and using hand-powered tools is one remedy: Children see and feel the results of their work firsthand. Over time, they develop the skills to imagine, design, and bring their own visions to life.

This is about more than making boats, boxes and dolls. It is about supporting the development of children, who will soon be adults, in understanding themselves and what they can be capable of.

What You'll Learn

- How to teach safe and effective usage of essential hand tools to children aged 5-12, and techniques for adapting instruction for age, learning style, and ability
- Several woodworking projects developed by Alex, designed to serve as a flexible foundation for developing your own kids woodworking curriculum
- Approaches to fostering creativity, confidence, and safety in a hands-on learning environment

- Classroom management strategies for working with kids

Benefits to You

- A supportive network of fellow woodworking instructors to share ideas, challenges, and inspiration
- Ongoing opportunities to teach kids woodworking classes at The Folk School
- Monthly cohort gatherings for continued learning and connection (schedule TBD based on participant availability)
- Support from The Folk School in finding opportunities to teach kids' woodworking classes to the broader community
- A $350 stipend, provided upon completion of the program

Commitment

Participants are asked to commit to:

- Participating fully in the instructor training workshop; there is a $50 workshop fee
- Student-teach two kids woodworking class series, held Monday–Friday, August 3–7
- Participate in a series of post-workshop cohort meetings (schedule TBD based on participant interest and availability)
- Perpetuate the joy of hands-on learning by teaching kids woodworking classes in the community!

Tentative Program Schedule

Friday, July 31— Welcome Dinner
Saturday & Sunday, August 1–2 — Instructor Training*****
Monday–Friday, August 3–7—Kids Woodworking Series
Morning, 1.5 hour session for 5–7 year olds
Afternoon, 2 hour session for 8–12 year olds
TBD — Wrap up session/debrief with Alex
Monthly (TBD) cohort meetings

*The instructor training schedule may be adjusted according to participants' availability. Another option would be to hold the Instructor Training over a week of evening sessions.

Who Should Apply

This program is open to anyone with enthusiasm for craft education, skill-sharing, and community learning, and a desire to teach kids woodworking classes in their community. No prior woodworking experience is required! Curiosity, patience, and a love of working with kids are the most important qualifications.

All participants will be required to complete a background check per The Folk School's policy.

How to Apply

If you're interested in participating, please submit this application.
Questions? Email Kadey at programs@folk.school

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