


# The Outdoor School



teaching respect, inspiring wonder

## 2009-2010 Teacher's Handbook

2680 Highway 154  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105  
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New Timing  
and Policy  
Information  
Inside



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Dear Teachers, Principals and Superintendents:

Welcome to The Outdoor School family; a Tri-County tradition since 1957. We are proud to offer your learners a unique and unforgettable four-day/three-night residential outdoor education experience. This booklet is designed to help you prepare for a week of adventure, excitement, and learning with your class. It also outlines your role in the experience. If you have any questions, comments, concerns or suggestions, do not hesitate to call 805.686.5167, email us at [info@theoutdoorschool.org](mailto:info@theoutdoorschool.org), or speak to us while you are here.

Included in this book:

• The Outdoor School checklist	3
• Packing list	4
• Your role at The Outdoor School	5
• The Outdoor School community	5
• Cabin leaders	6
• The Learning Environment	7
• A typical Outdoor School week	8
• Curriculum hikes	9
• Teacher tips and tricks	10
• Health information	11
• Class summary health sheet	13
• Cabin assignment sheet	14

The Outdoor School operates out of the Rancho Alegre Scout Camp on Highway 154, sixteen miles north of Santa Barbara. Your learners will be sleeping in dormitories, divided into eight to ten groups you will create. You will be staying in the Health Lodge. This two-bedroom cottage at the heart of the camp has one and a half baths, a TV and VCR/DVD player, meeting space, a small refrigerator, as well as an infirmary with an attached bunkroom for sick children. The Health Lodge phone line (805.686.5172) is listed as the main contact number in the Parent-Student Handbook. In addition to the Health Lodge there are 10 dormitories, a dining hall and kitchen, nature center, archery range, large indoor meeting spaces, miles of hiking trails, campsites, streams, a lake and more – all on over 200 acres.

We look forward to spending a week with you and sharing this beautiful place.  
See you soon!

Justin “Fox Feet” Canty  
Education Director  
The Outdoor School

# The Outdoor School Checklist



## IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS OF SCHOOL

- Contact your local high schools to arrange for Cabin Leaders.
- Email the Education Director and confirm your class size/estimated turnout so we can put your handbooks and slideshow CD in the mail.
- If a parent slideshow is a critical part of your fundraising effort, or if you are a new school or new teacher, please email us as soon as possible for a slideshow date.
- Send your first payment (20% of the contracted total) to ensure your \$10 discount.

## ONE MONTH BEFORE ARRIVAL

- Email the Education Director and confirm your revised class size/estimated turnout. It is critical that you adjust your contracted group size before or when you receive your 90% invoice (see below). You will be required to pay for at least 90% of your contracted number of students, even if they do not attend.
- Select Cabin Leaders and distribute Cabin Leader Handbooks.
- Send the parent and student handbooks home.
- Collect and review the completed student and Cabin Leader release forms.
- Send your second payment (90% of remaining contracted amount).
- Read this handbook!

## ONE WEEK BEFORE ARRIVAL

- Review completed release forms and make a list of any major medical or behavioral issues, as well as any food allergies you find.
- Prepare girls' and boys' cabin assignments...there are new worksheets in the back.
- Make a list of any learners who should not be in the same HIKING group.
- Email all of this information to the Education Director or fax it to 805.686.5175.

## DAY OF YOUR ARRIVAL

- Make sure to bring **ALL** student health, emergency forms, and medications.
- You should arrive between **9:00-10:00 a.m.** Make sure to let bus drivers know to be back on the last day at **11:00 a.m.** for loading and departure around noon.

# Packing List

## PERSONAL ITEMS

- Bedding (for a single or twin bed) and pillows. We recommend you bring a sheet to cover the mattress even if you are bringing a sleeping bag.
- Toiletries and towels
- Hiking shoes – 2 pairs
- Comfortable shoes or slippers
- Outerwear – including rain gear, warm and cold weather clothes
- Comfortable clothing
- Flashlight and water bottles
- Hiking gear for the Waterfall or Nine-Mile Hikes
- Treats and snacks for you (NOT FOR STUDENTS)
- A re-usable beverage cup (coffee, tea, etc.)



## SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

- This Teacher Handbook
- Any schoolwork, papers to grade, etc. for infirmary time.
- Recreational reading and DVD/VCR recordings to donate to our collection
- If you like, you can create your own Special Activities... just bring the materials!
- Bring your instruments or drums and join The Outdoor School Band at campfires!
- Cameras and video equipment

## FORMS

- Release forms for your students, the cabin leaders, and you
- Class health summary and cabin assignment worksheets, just in case.



## MISCELLANEOUS

- Emergency phone number of your school administrator
- A positive attitude and a willingness to have fun with your students

## Your Role at The Outdoor School

Teachers play an integral role in The Outdoor School experience. In fact, teachers started The Outdoor School in 1957. At The Outdoor School, you are a:

- **PARTICIPANT** – the learners will want to share this adventure with you. Your participation and enthusiasm will enhance this experience for both you and your learners.
- **ROLE MODEL** – we hope you will help us model positive behavior for the students at all times. The students will look to you as an example of how to behave in this new setting.
- **INFIRMARY ATTENDANT** – there are scheduled times when a teacher must be in the Health Lodge to treat injuries or general malaise. Teachers are also responsible for administering all student medications and ensuring their proper authorizations.
- **LEADER** – Your excitement and enthusiasm will make supervising recreation time, showers, boating, and morning and evening bed checks a snap.
- **MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY** – the leadership team, staff and teachers work together to create a positive, educational and enriching experience for all participants. We strive to communicate openly and honestly, deal with situations fairly and equitably, and most importantly to deliver a quality service.



If you have questions or concerns about your role, or would like to contribute more, please contact the Education Director at (805) 686-5167 or [educationdirector@theoutdoorschool.org](mailto:educationdirector@theoutdoorschool.org).

## The Outdoor School Community

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** oversees all activities at Rancho Alegre.
- **EDUCATION DIRECTOR:** manages operations for The Outdoor School.
- **PROGRAM COORDINATOR :** assists the ED, trains Cabin Leaders, evening oversight.
- **NATURALISTS:** are teachers, guides and activity directors at The Outdoor School.
- **INTERNS:** are naturalists-in-training and will assist in all program areas.
- **REGISTRAR:** manages booking, contacts, accounts and billing.
- **FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR:** manages the team that prepares meals and snacks.
- **RANGERS:** maintain all the buildings and facilities on the property.
- **CABIN LEADERS:** stay in the cabins with the students at night, hike with the students during the day, assist with meal set-up/clean-up and escort the students everywhere (more information on the next page).
- **CLASSROOM TEACHERS:** that is you!

## Cabin Leaders

**Cabin Leaders are a VERY IMPORTANT part of The Outdoor School experience.**

Their attitudes, enthusiasm, and maturity will guide your learners and support the program. It is the responsibility of participating teachers to recruit, select and train the Cabin Leaders who will be coming with their group. In cases where more than one school will be attending simultaneously, the largest of the schools will have this responsibility unless other arrangements are made with the school administrations and the Education Director.

Please carefully consider the Cabin Leader responsibilities below and consult the Cabin Leader Handbook before choosing these individuals. As always, if you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact us.

- The Cabin Leaders should be high school juniors or seniors, or in some cases parents or school staff. In cases where the Cabin Leaders are over the age of 18, your school's policies, or those of the other schools, may require them to be fingerprinted and/or have a background check.
- We require one Cabin Leader for each cabin; schools will be charged half of the student tuition for each additional Cabin Leader they bring. In weeks where there will be less than 140 students, plan on recruiting eight Cabin Leaders (four males and four females) as well as two to three spares. In cases where there will be more than 140 students/week, plan on recruiting 10 Cabin Leaders and spares.
- Responsibilities
  - Assist Naturalists with supervision and activities on curriculum hikes
  - Monitor safety and model good behavior in the cabins
  - Respond responsibly to student needs
  - Supervise meal set-up, clean-up and behavior
  - Communicate any concerns or questions with the Naturalists, Education Director and Teachers
  - Escort the students to activities on time
  - Create a sense of community in their cabin and hiking groups



## The Learning Environment

It is our belief that The Outdoor School should be a place for all learners. We strive to create an environment built on self-respect, respect for others, and for the environment. We are avid practitioners of positive role modeling, teamwork, and we make every effort to foster the development of intrinsic motivation and joy in all of the participants.

We also use positive reinforcement to extrinsically reward what we see as stellar behavior in the form of “stars” and the “Golden Star Award” which is given out at the end of each week. As is often the case when trying to balance the needs of individuals with the needs of a group, we sometimes are forced to rely on an extrinsic system of discipline to help students better understand their role as learners at The Outdoor School. When a student repeatedly demonstrates inappropriate behavior, s/he will receive “checks”.



- 1st check – a formal warning and discussion about inappropriate behavior with a Naturalist. Participating teachers will be alerted of this warning.
- 2nd check– the student loses the ability to choose his/her next Special Activity and teachers are asked to intervene in the developing situation.
- 3rd check – the student misses recreation time or a Special Activity and the learner creates a behavior contract with the Education Director.
- 4th check – the student misses a Special Activity and/or recreation time and a phone call is made to the student’s parents to discuss his/her behavior issues.
- 5th check– the parents of the child are notified and the child is sent home.

Any student or students who exhibits extreme or unsafe behavior such as fighting or intentionally harming others physically or emotionally, intentionally endangering themselves or others, participating in cabin raids or other violations of personal space, stealing, bringing or using knives or controlled substances will be immediately removed from The Outdoor School by parents or their school’s administration. We reserve the right to adjust our policies after consulting with teachers and, though it is not our intention to remove youth from the program, we do reserve the right to have any person or persons removed from the property, at any time, if their behavior is deemed dangerous or inappropriate. If you or a parent has any questions regarding the learning environment at The Outdoor School, please feel free to contact us.



## Early Dismissal and Guests

If a student has to leave the program early for any reason (discipline, emergencies, special events, etc.) it is the responsibility of his/her teacher to ensure that the child is picked up by a responsible individual and is signed out in the binder located in the Health Lodge. If you would like to have school staff or guests visit the program other than parents (which are not allowed) please clear it with the Education Director ahead of time and sign them in and out at the Health Lodge. All visitors must wear a ‘Visitor Badge’, located with the binders in the Health Lodge, and you assume responsibility for their behavior/activities during their stay.

## A Typical Outdoor School Week

### DAY ONE:

9:00 – 11:00	Arrival and Welcome/Orientation Hikes
11:00 – 12:00	Learners Move into Cabins
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch and Cabin Time
1:00 – 4:00	Curriculum Hike
4:00 – 5:30	Recreation Time and Showers
5:30 – 6:30	Dinner
6:30 – 7:00	Cabin Time
7:00 – 8:00	Evening Curriculum Activity
8:00 – 9:00	Opening Campfire
9:00 – 9:30	Bedtime and Lights-Out

### DAY TWO AND THREE:

7:00 – 8:00	Wake-Up and Cabin Time
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 – 12:00	Curriculum Hike
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch and Cabin Time
1:00 – 2:00	Nature Writing or Journal Time
2:00 – 4:00	Special Activities
4:00 – 5:00	Recreation Time and Showers
6:00 – 7:00	Dinner
7:00 – 9:00	Curriculum Hike or Closing Campfire
9:00 – 9:30	Bedtime and Lights-Out

### DAY FOUR:

7:00 – 7:45	Wake-Up and Cabin Time
7:45 – 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 10:00	Curriculum Hike
10:00 – 11:30	Quiz Bowl and Lunch
11:30 – 12:30	Departure



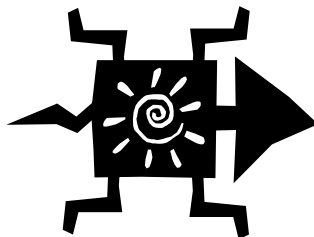
## Special Activities

Special Activities are extracurricular activities created by Teachers and Naturalists that follow The Outdoor School themes. There are a great variety of activities for the students to choose from each week with some long hikes (like the Waterfall Hike and the Nine-Mile Ridge Hike which we ask that at least one teacher participate in), short hikes, workshops on tracking, survival, map and compass, archery, boating, arts and crafts, games, and creatively centered projects. There are also nighttime Special Activities on night three. These include games, extended campfire programs, astronomy, night missions, and some scary hikes. In all cases the teachers have oversight of student participation in Special Activities. Not all activities can be facilitated each week for staffing and safety reasons, though we will make every effort to accommodate special requests and tradition.

## Curriculum Hikes

The Outdoor School's curriculum embodies 50 years of tradition blended with the best of place-based experiential education. Our Curriculum Hikes include teambuilding games, explorations and inquiries, hands-on science learning, and engaging activities linked together with direct experiences in nature. The themes and content of the five Curriculum Hikes are closely aligned with the California State Standards for fifth and sixth grade.

- **THE GEOLOGY HIKE** focuses on plate tectonics and the resulting geology of the Santa Ynez Valley, faults and all. Learners will explore and classify rocks and rock formations, search for fossils, and see firsthand the power and products of erosion.  
**Useful Vocabulary:** tectonic plates and continental drift; sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks; core, mantle, and crust; magma; weathering; erosion; faults; subduction; convergent, divergent and transform plate boundaries; fossil.
- **THE WILDLIFE BIOLOGY HIKE** broadens learners' understandings of animal adaptations and the interdependences that link all living things together using games and activities, observing and tracking wildlife, and exploring animal artifacts.  
**Useful Vocabulary:** predator and prey; nocturnal, diurnal and crepuscular; carnivore, omnivore and herbivore; decomposers; scat; ecosystem and community; food pyramid
- **THE PLANT ECOLOGY HIKE** reinforces basic concepts like photosynthesis, ecosystems, and habitats while helping to connect learners to place by letting them explore our plant communities (and eat some of the edible inhabitants).  
**Useful Vocabulary:** mutualism, parasitism and symbiosis; photosynthesis; carbon dioxide and oxygen; native, medicinal and edible plants; interdependence
- **THE NIGHT HIKE** is one of the highlights of The Outdoor School week and is a true sensory experience. Activities focus on astronomy, nocturnal animals and adaptations, as well as confidence building through the famous "Courage Walk".  
**Useful Vocabulary:** light years; speed of light; universe; constellation; galaxy; meteors, meteorites and comets; solar and lunar eclipses
- **THE CHUMASH HIKE** helps wrap up The Outdoor School experience by exploring Chumash culture, how these people survived in the valley, and the interactions people, both past and present, have with their environment.  
**Useful Vocabulary:** ethno-botany; artifact; basic human needs; culture; shaman



## Teacher Tips and Tricks

### **TEACHER MEETINGS:**

You will have two opportunities on day one to meet with staff and cabin leaders to share any pertinent information about your learners. It is important to come to these meetings with your information organized by cabin so the meetings can be facilitated effectively.

- 11:15 am with the Education Director and Naturalists to review students' needs
- 1 pm with Education Director and Cabin Leaders
- Bring your class health summary, behavioral concerns, and release forms

### **MEDICATIONS:**

It is important for children with inhalers/epi-pens to have them with them at all times and on the first hikes. Give these students their inhalers/epi-pens before they get off the bus, or as soon as they arrive at the outdoor school. If this cannot be done, please be sure to distribute them at lunch on day one.

### **CABIN GROUPS:**

The worksheets at the back of this booklet will help you create your cabin lists. Please remember that you are sharing these dorms with other schools and are expected to distribute your learners as evenly as possible in the allotted number of cabins. For groups with a combined total smaller than 140 learners, plan on 4 boy and 4 girl cabins. For groups larger than 140 learners, plan on using five of each. Other considerations include:

- Making sure each child has two or three friends in their cabins whenever possible.
- If you have parent Cabin Leaders, they can either stay in the same cabin as, or hike with, their child, but not both.
- Be sure to email or fax the cabin list to the Education Director a week before you arrive to avoid last-minute changes and switches.

### **DEALING WITH DIFFERENCE:**

The Outdoor School is truly a place for all learners. The staff and administration are experienced in and able to accommodate most childhood issues from bedwetting to food allergies, mobility problems, shyness, snoring, behavioral disorders, health problems, and learning issues. That being said, the more we know in advance, and the more details you provide us with at the day one meetings, the better we are able to serve your learners.

### **BEFORE YOU ARRIVE:**

Teacher attitudes and enthusiasm are a major influence on the success of our program. Please share your excitement with your students and help them get excited before they come!

## Health Information

### EMERGENCY FORMS:

It is **CRITICAL** that parents sign and fill out the Student Release forms **COMPLETELY**. No student will be able to attend The Outdoor School without this form. We rely on teachers to fill in any gaps in information that parents omit. Please give us as much notice as possible regarding major medical, mobility issues, or food allergies!

### MEDICATIONS:

DUE TO CHANGING DISTRICT POLICIES, THE OUTDOOR SCHOOL NO LONGER PROVIDES MEDICATION FORMS. EACH SCHOOL NEEDS TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN MEDICATION FORMS BASED ON SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY. IN MANY CASES, MEDICATION CANNOT BE ADMINISTERED TO A MINOR WITHOUT THE PRE-AUTHORIZATION, IN WRITING, FROM A DOCTOR, INCLUDING OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS THAT WE STOCK LIKE BENADRYL, TYLENOL, IBUPROFEN, ANTIHISTAMINE LOTIONS, ETC. TEACHERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DISPENSING ALL MEDICATION AND FOLLOWING ALL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEDICATION POLICIES.

### FIRST AID

The Naturalist will provide first aid if the injury occurs on trail. Afterwards the student will be brought to the infirmary for first aid. First aid for minor accidents generally includes rest, ice, compression, elevation, wrapping of sprains, and cleaning and bandaging scrapes and cuts.

### EMERGENCIES

- **Fever over 101 degrees** – notify parents, and the child should be sent home. Please contact a member of the leadership team **before** calling the parents.
- Medical Emergency
  - Minor – A teacher, or member of the leadership team will transport the injured student to Santa Ynez Valley Cottage Hospital (15 minutes). It is preferred that two adults transport students in a program vehicle.
  - Major – Immediately notify a member of the leadership team, they will call 911 while you inform your school administration as well as the parents/guardians. If you cannot contact any member of the leadership team or staff then call 911 and your school.
- All of The Outdoor School staff have first aid and CPR training
- **DO NOT CONTACT** parents/guardians without discussing the matter with the Education Director



**Adult Health History/Emergency Treatment Form**  
**The Outdoor School at Rancho Alegre**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Birth date:** \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ **Sex**\_\_ **Age**\_\_\_\_  
**Home Phone** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Home address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Numbers (fill in *completely*):**

I. **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Relationship:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cell:**( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Day phone:**( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Night phone:**( ) \_\_\_\_\_

II. **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Relationship:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cell:**( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Day phone:**( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Night phone:**( ) \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby assign and grant The Outdoor School the right and permission to use and publish photographs/ film/videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings made of me during the week. I release The Outdoor School from any and all liability from such use and publication and waive any right to any compensation.

**Sign:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICATIONS BEING TAKEN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH HISTORY:** (Please circle yes or no; provide comments on management)

**Yes No** Severe Allergies to bees, food, etc.  
Date of last reaction and its severity: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you have/carry an Epipen? **Yes** **No**

**Yes No** Food allergies, hay fever or allergic to some medications  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes No** Asthma: Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes No** Heart Condition: Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes No** Diabetes: Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes No** Epilepsy: Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes No** Frequent Severe Headaches or Fainting: Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



<b>Boys</b>	<b>Jalama</b>	<b>Cuyama</b>	<b>Michumash</b>	<b>Nipomo</b>	<b>Pismo</b> <small>For groups larger than 140 only</small>
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20			XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
<b>Cabin Leader</b>					

<b>Girls</b>	<b>Sisquoc</b>	<b>Sespe</b>	<b>Anacapa</b>	<b>Anapamu</b>	<b>Ojai</b> <small>For groups larger than 140 only</small>
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20			XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
<b>Cabin Leader</b>					

