

**STUDENT PACKING CHECKLIST.** Please review with your child to make sure they pack everything they may need while at outdoor school.

Sack Lunch & drink for the first day	Toothbrush/Toothpaste
Sleeping bag or sheets/blanket	Comb or brush
Pillow	Shampoo & soap
Pajamas	Towel & washcloth
Underwear	Sunscreen
Long or crew-length socks	Kleenex
Bathing suit (for showering)	Chapstick
Jeans or long pants	Water bottle
Shirts (long & short sleeve)	Digital Camera (we sell one-time use cameras)
Sweatshirt or sweater	Stationery/paper/postage stamps/pen
Jacket & raincoat/poncho	Reading book
Hats (for sun and warmth)	Money (for student store purchases)
Shoes (hiking boots, tennis shoes, shower sandals)	Day Pack
	Medications (should be given to teacher)

**PLEASE DO NOT PACK:** Valuable items, cell phones, food, candy, electronic games, I-pods, fishing gear, jewelry, high-heeled shoes, or any kind of weapon.

**LIABILITY**

The outdoor school does not accept responsibility for student's personal property. Please check your child's suitcase or duffel bag and send only the items necessary at the outdoor school. Please clearly mark all personal belongings with child's name.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Students are not allowed to call home except in emergencies. Parents should call the outdoor school only in case of an emergency. Social calls are not permitted.

**Emergency phone numbers:**

- Rancho El Chorro Office (805) 782-7336
- Rancho El Chorro Director (805) 782-7334
- Rancho El Chorro Cell Phone (805) 458-7196

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
RANCHO EL CHORRO OUTDOOR SCHOOL**

2450 Pennington Creek Road  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405  
(805)782-7336 office, (805) 544-7559 fax  
[www.ranchoelchorro.org](http://www.ranchoelchorro.org)



**RANCHO EL CHORRO OUTDOOR SCHOOL  
PARENT GUIDE**

**DEAR PARENT OR GUARDIAN:**

Your child's upcoming experience at the Rancho El Chorro Outdoor School will make a very important contribution to his/her education. The Outdoor School program enables students to reach out and touch the natural world and explore their place within it. The program is academically oriented and serves as an extension of science curriculum in the classroom. Students develop a greater awareness of and an appreciation for the environment. Responsibility, respect, and cooperation are stressed at the outdoor school. Group living encourages the development of these traits. Each student will be responsible for cabin neatness, caring for personal belongings, personal hygiene, and getting along with his/her cabin and trail group.

**PARTICIPATION AND TRANSPORTATION**

**IT IS THE PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLETE AND SIGN THE STUDENT REGISTRATION FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE CLASSROOM TEACHER.** It is the home school's responsibility to accept financial responsibility for expenses. This usually involves some fund-raising. We encourage every school, public and private, to participate in the outdoor school program.

**Attention:** In an effort to maintain a closed campus and lessen disruption of the program, visitors who are not registered participants are not allowed on campus. We also ask parents to plan on their student staying for their entire session. This may mean choosing between outdoor school and other activities such as sports. Outdoor school is a once in a lifetime experience and student are very disappointed when they have to miss any part of it. In this manner, parents can assist in the development of their child's independence and maintaining a closed campus.

**Transportation** to the Rancho El Chorro Outdoor School is the responsibility of the home school. Transportation to the Marine Science Program at various sites along the coast is the responsibility of the outdoor school.

## A WEEK AT RANCHO EL CHORRO OUTDOOR SCHOOL

The San Luis Obispo County Office of Education operates the outdoor school program located off of Highway One, between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay. Students participate in a 3-5 day residential program. While at the outdoor school students will receive room and board, which includes three meals/day plus snack. The outdoor school maintains a restroom and shower facility, a dining hall, an auditorium, classrooms and labs. Students are assigned a cabin group with a cabin leader. Each cabin has eight beds and has a heater. Students are placed in hiking groups and are led by Naturalists who have academic backgrounds in the sciences and natural resources. Students will experience many kinds of outdoor areas: a creek, a freshwater pond, an oak forest, grasslands, chaparral, tide pools, beaches, and the camp setting. The marine science component of the program is conducted in several locations along the central coast. The regular classroom teacher accompanies the students to outdoor school and on the trails. During non-instructional periods, the students are under the supervision of cabin leaders and the classroom teachers. Students are supervised 24 hours a day.



## WHAT WILL THE STUDENTS LEARN?



The curriculum supports Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards, and the Environmental Principle & Concepts approved by the CA State Board of Education. All lessons teach easy to understand ecological concepts that allow students to develop an appreciation of and concern for the natural world. Each student is given a journal to record their own personal discoveries on the trail. Examples of the science topics covered in the lessons include: plants, wildlife, insects, fresh water and marine ecosystems, earth sciences, and environmental stewardship.

## OUTDOOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Days are quite full at the outdoor school beginning at 7:00 a.m. until lights out at 9:45 p.m. Days are spent learning on the trail, enjoying recreation time, resting, and at meals. Evening activities are conducted after dinner including campfire programs. Meals at the outdoor school are tasty and varied. Students learn table manners, how to compost organic food waste, and clean up after their meals.



## PROGRAM STAFF

The Director at the Outdoor School is responsible for supervising the program. The outdoor school employs Naturalists who lead the trail groups. All of the Naturalists hold degrees in the sciences or related fields. The Naturalists play a key role in the outdoor school experience. Naturalist Interns assist in the delivery of the program. The staff also includes an Administrative Assistant, Food Service workers, and Maintenance personnel. They play key supporting roles in our program.

The classroom teachers are the school district representatives and are responsible for the health and safety of the students. The teachers accompany students on hikes and supervise them at all times. The classroom teachers also play a key role in the program and are your primary contacts. Cabin leaders are parents, other school employees, or carefully selected high school students that exhibit leadership, maturity, and good academic preparation. The selection of cabin leaders is the responsibility of the participating school districts.

## WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Your approval and enthusiasm for the outdoor school program will help your child look forward to this time away from home. Please read the following suggestions:



- Talk to your child and tell them what to expect at outdoor school.
- Promote independence in your child.
- Encourage your child to get regular exercise to promote fitness.
- Write to your child (at least a week ahead) at the address provided on this form, or FAX your letter to (805) 544-7559. Be sure to include school name and dates of attendance.
- Advise your child that phone calls home are prohibited.
- Pack together. Be sure appropriate items are sent and inappropriate items remain at home.
- Send postage stamps and provide stationary/pen for your child.
- Review sample menu posted on website. Indicate special dietary needs on registration form.

**Please provide your child with a sack lunch and drink for the first day.** Students and parents will be notified by the classroom teachers as to the departure time from school and the arrival time at school. Please contact the staff at the Rancho El Chorro Outdoor School if you have any questions. Your support of the program is critical to a successful experience for your child. We sincerely appreciate your efforts.

**Merchandise:** If you would like to purchase Rancho El Chorro merchandise for your child, please complete the attached order form and payment and return to the classroom teacher. We accept cash, check or credit card. Merchandise will also be sold in the student store.

## MEDICATION

When your child attends the outdoor school, it is important to remember the following instructions regarding medications that you may be sending:



**Non-prescription medication:** These include all over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, tylenol, cough drops, etc. If you should decide to send these medications, they must be listed on the reverse side of the Student Registration Form and signed off by a physician before they can be administered. They must be in the original store container with your child's name clearly marked on the container. **Please note:** Consult with your physician whether or not to send over the counter allergy medication. Many students experience allergy symptoms at the outdoor school due to spending a greater amount of time outdoors.

**Prescription medication:** This includes all medicines that are prescribed by a doctor. The reverse side of the Student Registration Form must be filled out and signed by a physician. The prescription medicine must be in the prescription bottle with your child's name on it and with clear instruction for administration. Please check the expiration dates on all medications. Medication that has expired cannot be administered.

**ALL medications should be given to the teachers and not packed with your child's luggage.** Medications are kept locked until they are administered with the exception of inhalers and epipens. Once recorded, they remain with your child for the duration of the outdoor school session. Please list all medications on the back page of the registration form and obtain physician's signature.