Dear Chaperone/Cabin Leader,

Thank you for choosing to share your time with the students during this environmental education program at Westminster Woods. The following information is crucial to the success of this event for the students and you. Please read this letter carefully and address any questions to your child's teacher. Enclosed are the Medical Release Form, equipment list and a map to Westminster Woods. All students and chaperones need to fill out the Medical Release Form (both sides) and return it to the teacher.

Sample Daily Schedule (times are approximate)

7:00 Wake up
8:15 KP
8:30 Breakfast
9:30 – 4:00 EE Program in Teaching groups/lunch
4 – 5 free time
5:15 KP
5:30 Dinner
6:30 Class meeting time (Chaperone free time)
7:30 Evening program
9:00 Cabin time (prep for bed)
9:45 Lights out (depending on age group)

Responsibility and Oversight

A chaperone/cabin leader must supervise students at all times. If you ever have to leave your students, please make sure another chaperone or teacher watches your group. All incidents and accidents must be reported to the teacher and the EE office immediately.

Meals and KP (Kitchen preparation)

The dining room is a shared facility; groups of many kinds may be present at meal times. We appreciate your support in keeping a calm and comfortable atmosphere in the dining hall. Chaperones oversee each table. Seating in the dining room is 9 persons per table, 8 students and one chaperone. You are responsible for maintaining a wel mannered and behaved table. Please try to keep the noise level down at the table. Allow only one person up from the table at a time. Kitchen Preparation (KP) is 15 minutes before each meal. Please make sure your cabin group washes their hands before coming to the dining hall.

Free Time

Student free time – Chaperones and teachers supervise student free time. The areas include: the meadow/playground, basketball court, cargo net, and pool (if permitted and available).

Chaperones free time – Chaperones will have an hour off during the teacher class time from 6:30-7:30pm each day. For larger groups with multiple chaperones per cabin, additional time can be arranged.

Trail Groups

Trail groups consist of approximately 15 students and two chaperones/cabin leaders. They should be approximately half girls and half boys.

Cabin Groups

Cabin groups consist of approximately 7 students and 1 chaperone/cabin leader. Find time to meet with your cabin group to set the tone on the first day. During the week, check in with each of the students individually and the group as a whole. Make sure each student showers during the week. Be aware of bed-wetting and handle the situation in a discrete way (we have a washer/dryer available for use). No food is allowed in the cabins, absolutely no cabin raids, and no graffiti. Please remember this is a school trip not a family camping trip so please model appropriate behavior. Students will be expected to pay for graffiti removal and any damage to cabins. Students will sweep cabins at checkout and the school will do a cabin check for cleanliness and damage.

Technology Access

Emergency # (707) 874-2426 Ext. 616 or 624.

Phone Use – Payphones are available to chaperones for emergencies and important needs. Students may only use phones with their teacher's permission. Cellular phones get very poor to no reception in this area, but will work at some of our off site programs and en route from your home district.

Lost and Found Policy

Please check you camper's luggage to be sure nothing is left behind. If something still appears to be missing, fill out a *Lost and Found* form at the Office. We do not take responsibility for lost items but we will do our best to get your lost things back to you. Please report missing things right away! We donate unclaimed items after two weeks. **Please do not have students bring valuables or heirlooms** ☺

Discipline

Group management is key to a successful week. Also, being aware of individual and group needs makes a big difference in preventing problems. We have zero tolerance for abusive or violent behavior. Physical disciplinary methods are not allowed at anytime.

Our general discipline procedures are as follows:

1. A verbal warning, without humiliating the student.
2. A time out, always supervised by an adult.
3. A conference with the teacher and EE director.
4. A call home to the parents with the teacher and EE director present.
5. The student is sent home. Parents must come to pick up their student.

Many exceptions apply to the above framework. Certain behaviors go immediately to a 3, 4, or 5. Please ask for help from other chaperones, teachers, and the EE staff. Please do not use a discipline system different from the one outlined here. Setting a positive tone and establishing a spirit of cooperation make a difference in helping the students have a wonderful and successful week.

Being a role model

You are an important role model for all the students. They will be watching everything you do and say. Please be respectful of the environment, the teacher/naturalists, teachers and all students and chaperones. Doing things such as picking up trash sets a positive tone for the students to do the same. Participate in the activities as much as possible. When appropriate, encourage the students to be problem solvers and figure things out for themselves. So many attributes go into being a good chaperone and counselor we can't cover all of them here, but hopefully this information will help. Keep in mind the quote, "Ultimate respect verses immediate popularity" when setting the tone and establishing a relationship with the students.

Sharing Talents

Please feel free to bring any appropriate special talents you have such as instruments, stories, songs, a telescope, and binoculars, as are all welcome. Check in with the teacher/naturalists about finding a time to share your talents.

Thank you for your commitment to the student's education. We have a short written evaluation form for you to fill out at the end of the week, and encourage your feedback to help us continue to improve in making this a quality experience for all.

Sincerely,

David Berman
Environmental Education Director
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