



# Teacher's Planning Packet

School Year 2019-20

# The Outdoor School

Dear Teachers,

We are so excited that you have chosen The Outdoor School for your trip this year! We are looking forward to meeting you and your students.

This packet is designed to help you plan your trip. There is a “Quick Checklist Guide” for you to help you know what is due to us and when, but each of those items are explained in the pages following the checklist. We know that there is a LOT to do in preparing for this trip, but we do ask that you please get all information to us by the required date so that we can plan your trip as efficiently as possible.

If you have any questions, please call or e-mail... we will be happy to work with you in any way we can to create the perfect program for you and your students.

Please contact the person who emailed you originally (contact info is below) as s/he will be the one scheduling your trip. If you have not yet received an e-mail from us, please give us a call and we'll get you connected! Our main office number is 830-598-6282.

Deb Guinn	<a href="mailto:dguinn@outdoorschool.com">dguinn@outdoorschool.com</a>
Mark Stein	<a href="mailto:mstein@outdoorschool.com">mstein@outdoorschool.com</a>
Rob Letendre	<a href="mailto:rletendre@outdoorschool.com">rletendre@outdoorschool.com</a>
Avari Tawater	<a href="mailto:avarit@outdoorschool.com">avarit@outdoorschool.com</a>
Amy Koch	<a href="mailto:akoch@outdoorschool.com">akoch@outdoorschool.com</a>
Jewels O'Brien	<a href="mailto:jobrien@outdoorschool.com">jobrien@outdoorschool.com</a>
Katie Chaffin	<a href="mailto:kchaffin@outdoorschool.com">kchaffin@outdoorschool.com</a>



# Quick Checklist Guide



Due Date	Action Item	Completed
6 weeks out: (date: _____)	Send Student Packet home with each student <i>(please set due date so you have time to mail them to us)</i>	_____
	Send Chaperone Packet home with each chaperone	_____
	Request payment check from bookkeeper	_____
	Reserve Transportation	_____
	Secure nurse <i>(if you're bringing one)</i>	_____
5 weeks out: (date: _____)	Begin discussing activity choices with your team	_____
4 weeks out: (date: _____)	Submit Activity Choice Form <i>(online form)</i>	_____
	Submit approximate student numbers	_____
3 weeks out: (date: _____)	Submit Sales Tax Exemption Form <i>(if applicable)</i>	_____
	Submit Hotel Tax Exemption Form <i>(if applicable)</i>	_____
	Submit Certificate of Liability Insurance Form	_____
	Approve preliminary schedule <i>(we'll send this to you for approval)</i>	_____
2 weeks out: (date: _____)	Submit School Information Form <i>(online form)</i>	_____
	Mail Medical and Visitor Agreement Forms	_____
1 week out: (date: _____)	Submit Team Roster <i>(we'll send you a template)</i>	_____
	Submit Cabin Assignments <i>(we'll send you a template)</i>	_____
	Have students make Nature Journals <i>(if applicable)</i>	_____
	Secure the trip payment from your bookkeeper	_____
	Secure a first aid kit from your school nurse	_____
	Remind students to bring sack lunches for the first day <i>(if applicable)</i>	_____
Arrival day:	Have journals accessible <i>(preferably grouped by team)</i>	_____
	Have cabin list accessible	_____
	Have trip payment accessible	_____

## 6 weeks before your trip:

You should have been contacted by one of our schedulers by this point.

If not, please contact us at 830-598-6282

### Paperwork:

1. Make sure each student has a copy of the Student Packet (on our website). **IF YOU HAVE COPIES OF THE PACKET FROM PREVIOUS YEARS, PLEASE DESTROY AND PRINT THE NEW ONE.** We make small changes to it each year, so please use the updated one from our website every year. Thanks!

Please set a deadline for getting those forms back from parents as **we REQUIRE that you send them to us one week prior to your arrival.** We would prefer that you mail them to us... email is not secure so know that you would be transmitting private information about students via an unsecured system. If you DO scan and email them, please bring the originals with you when you come.

2. Make sure each chaperone (teacher AND parent) has a copy of the Chaperone Packet (on our website). All chaperones must also turn in the forms. **IF YOU HAVE COPIES OF THE PACKET FROM PREVIOUS YEARS, PLEASE DESTROY AND PRINT THE NEW ONE.** We make small changes to it each year, so please use the up dated one from our website every year. Thanks!

### Billing:

We ask that you please arrive with a check for your trip in hand. If your bookkeeper needs time to process that check, you may need to start that process now. The preliminary invoice was attached to the initial email you received from your scheduler... please let him/her know if you need anything adjusted on that invoice:



1. If you would like to swim in our pool, there is a charge of \$125 for each session. This has not been included in your preliminary invoice. (Lake swim is free).
2. We allow for one free chaperone for every 10 students that come. And we round UP... so if you have 51 students, for example, you would have 6 free chaperones. All additional chaperones will pay the full contracted fee per person.



### Medical Care:

Our staff is certified in both First Aid and CPR, and most (if not all) are certified lifeguards. We do not have a nurse on staff, however, and we strongly encourage you to bring one if at all possible, especially if your group is large.

### Camp Store:

If you are a returning school, please note that we do not have a form to pre-order TOS apparel anymore. If you would like to offer only the t-shirt as the souvenir, you're welcome to do so (however, please note that we do not guarantee that items other than our TOS t-shirt are in stock). We will happily collect any money that you have collected when you arrive. Otherwise, we will have a time in the schedule (if you would like the camp store to be open) for your students to visit our camp store and select their items.

### Transportation:

If you are using district buses, please double check with your bus barn on your arrival and departure times and make sure that they correlate with the times on your contract.

If you are using parent drivers in multiple cars, please have an accurate count of how many cars will be driven so that we know when all students have arrived.

If you are coming by bus, we ask that you bring at least one separate car so that if there is an emergency, you have the ability to take your students to the nearest medical facility (about 15 minutes away).

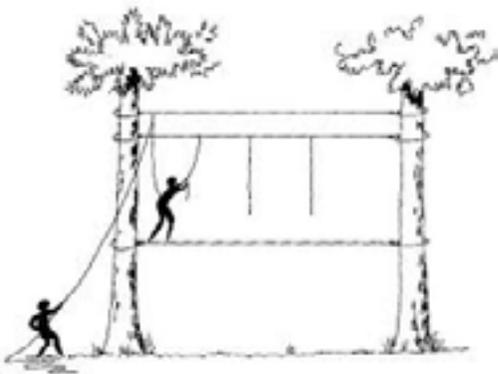
# 5 weeks before your trip:

## Activities:

Begin having meetings with your teaching team to determine what activities you would like your students to participate in. This is not due to us until 4 weeks before your trip, but start thinking about it now.

### 1. Activity Choices:

- **Day trip:** Your scheduler will be in touch with you to determine what you would like your day to look like. We have no “standard schedule” for day trips as this is a unique experience for each school depending on your arrival and departure times.
  - **One night overnight trip:** You will have time for 4 daytime activities and 1 evening activity. No free time is given for this quick trip... if you would like to have that as an activity period, please let us know. Swimming can be one of your activity periods. (**NOTE: if your trip is after daylight savings time ends in November, free time is required in our last activity period for the day because it gets dark during that period and we cannot teach in the dark. So you will have 3 activity periods and 1 free time period**).
  - **Two night (or more) overnight trip:** You will have time for 7 daytime activities and 2 evening activities. There is a free time period each day. If you choose to swim (either pool or lake) this will be during that free time period.
  - **Swimming:** We do not swim after daylight savings time ends in November or before it begins in March.
2. There is a description of our activities on our website. Each activity period is 90 minutes long.
  3. Please check the age requirement for activities before you pick them.
  4. Please note that there will be other schools here the same time as you and a few of our classes (such as kayaking and the Screamin’ Eagle) are both group-size restrictive and offered on a first-come, first-served basis.
  5. **NOTE: if you are bringing students in 6th grade or older:** Because of the popularity of both the Screamin’ Eagle and the Pirate Ship Ropes Course, and because these activities are group-size restrictive, you may choose only one of these activities. If your choice has already been chosen by another school attending the same dates as you are, we will automatically give you the other activity. Thank-you for understanding that these activities are in high demand and that we want to share our facilities equally with all.



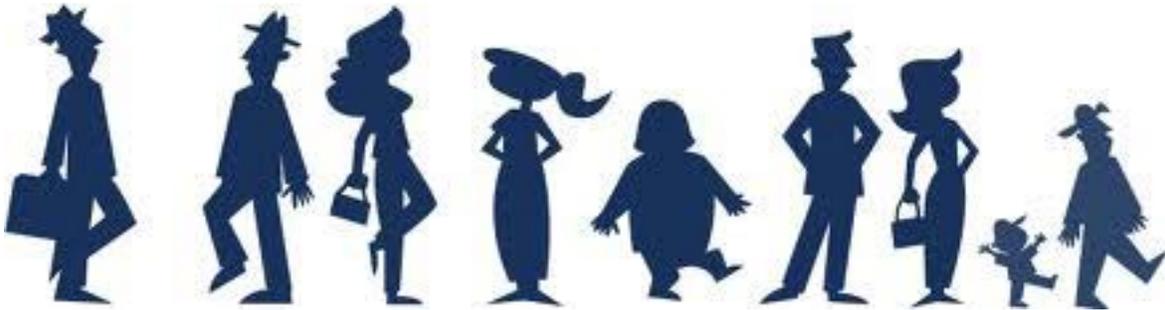
## Paperwork:

As you start receiving student paperwork back from them, please make sure that there are THREE signatures. One in bolded box on the front of the Medical form, one on the back of the Medical form, and one on the Visitor’s Agreement form. **Students will not be allowed to participate if any of these signatures are missing.**

## 4 weeks before your trip:

### Items due:

1. **Activity Choices** are due to us. Fill out the online form.
2. **Approximate student numbers.** This will help us begin coordinating your trip with the other schools also attending that week. We will let you know how many teams you will have based on this number, and we will send you a template two weeks out for you to plug your student names in.  
For your reference, we plan on each team having 15 students.



### The next things to do:

#### 1. Documents:

Next week, we will need your secretary to send us 3 documents if we do not already have them on file (your scheduler will let you know if we do or do not have these forms)

- Sales Tax Exemption form – if your school is exempt from sales tax.
- Hotel Tax Exemption form – if your school is exempt from hotel tax. NOTE: This exemption is only valid for state hotel tax. NO ONE is exempt from county hotel tax, so know that this will be included on your invoice.
- Certificate of Liability Insurance form (or COI).

If you are a public school, these forms will be from the district, not your individual school. If your secretary does not know what one or more of these forms are, please have her contact us and we can provide her with examples.

#### 2. Paperwork:

Don't forget to check for all three signatures on the student forms. Remember: Students will not be allowed to participate if any of these signatures are missing.

## 3 weeks before your trip:

### Items due:

#### 1. Documents Due:

- Sales Tax Exemption form
- Hotel Tax Exemption form
- Certificate of Liability Insurance form

#### 2. Preliminary Schedule.

We will send you a preliminary schedule. Please look over this document and let us know if you see any mistakes. THIS is when we need to fix them, not when you arrive.

### The next things to do:

#### 1. Forms:

Next week, we will need the School Information Form sent to us.

#### 2. Paperwork:

- Don't forget to check for all three signatures on the student forms. Remember: Students will not be allowed to participate if any of these signatures are missing.
- Team Lists: Begin putting your students into their teams (your scheduler will let you know how many teams you will have). Make sure all students are included on this list. Please list students by first name, not by last name.



## 2 weeks before your trip:

### Items due:

#### 1. School Information Form Due:

Fill out the online form. Once we receive this document, we will send you templates for your team roster and for your cabin assignments.

#### 2. Mail the Medical/Visitor's Agreement Forms.

Please mail them early enough so that we have them in our hands one week prior to your trip. Please do not separate the two forms (one stack of Medical Forms and one stack of Visitor's Agreements). It is much easier for us to go through them if they are attached.

Remember that students will not be allowed to participate until we have all forms AND all signatures are accounted for. So make sure there is a signature on all 3 pages for each student.



### The next things to do:

#### 1. Team Assignments:

Fill in the team assignment template that we send you. Please list students by first name first and not by last name (for example: John Smith... not Smith, John.)

#### 2. Cabin Assignments:

Fill in the cabin assignment template that we send you. We cannot send this to you until we have the School Information form and know how many of each gender you have coming. Please note that not all of our cabins have the same number of beds. So please look carefully at the cabin template we send you and make sure you're not over-filling cabins!

#### 3. Check Requested:

Make sure you have a check request submitted so that you can bring it with you.

#### 4. Make Journals:

Have your students make journals. We require that each student have a Nature Journal upon arrival unless:

- You are a day group or overnight group doing teambuilding and high ropes/climbing wall only.
- You are taking primarily adventure courses rather than academic courses.
- You have discussed with your scheduler that you do not wish to use them.

Please call or email your scheduler if you are unsure if your students need a journal.



#### 5. First Aid Kit:

Have your school nurse put together a first aid kit for your trip.

- The TOS staff are First Aid and CPR certified and we all carry first aid kits, but we do not administer anything ingestible. Therefore, we suggest that your school nurse put together a basic first aid kit that includes medicines you would be able to administer: pepto bismol, aspirin, benadryl, etc.
- If a child becomes ill during the trip, we ask that s/he be sent home in order to prevent the spread of the illness. Because we have no nurse, we have no established infirmary, so we do not have a place for children to be isolated.

# 1 week before your trip:

## Items due:

### 1. Medical and Visitor's Agreement Forms:

These should be in our hands by this point. Remember that students will not be allowed to participate until we have all forms AND all signatures are accounted for. So make sure there is a signature on all 3 pages for each student.

### 2. Cabin Assignments:

Send us the cabin assignments on the template that we emailed you.

### 3. Team Roster:

Send us the team roster on the template we sent you.

### 4. Check:

Make sure you have a check to bring with you for payment.

### 5. Sack Lunch:

Remind the students that they need to bring a sack lunch for that first day (unless we have specifically discussed otherwise with you.)

### 6. Journals:

Students should have a journal for their trip. Please bring them to us in a box rather than having each student responsible for bringing their own journals. It is tremendously helpful to us if they are grouped together by team instead of by homeroom.

### 7. First Aid Kit:

Have your school nurse put together a First Aid kit for your trip.



## To bring with you (easily accessible):

### 1. Sack Lunch:

Your students will be eating their sack lunches upon arrival (time for this is built into our schedule) so make sure they have this at their fingertips.

### 2. Cabin Assignments:

You will be moving into your cabins very quickly after arrival, so have this list easily accessible.

### 3. Journals:

Our instructors will divide up the journals while your students are moving into their cabins.

### 4. Check:

We'll be happy to collect this during teacher orientation and place it in our safe so that you don't have to hang onto it during the trip.

Also, if you have collected money for t-shirts we'll be happy to put that in our safe as well.



# Teacher/Chaperone's Role At The Outdoor School

**Please make sure your teaching team understands the following:**

## Teachers in cabins:

Your school must provide the chaperones for the cabins. We recommend bringing school personnel as chaperones, but understand that sometimes a parent needs to come to fill a chaperone hole for a cabin.

## Teachers in classes:

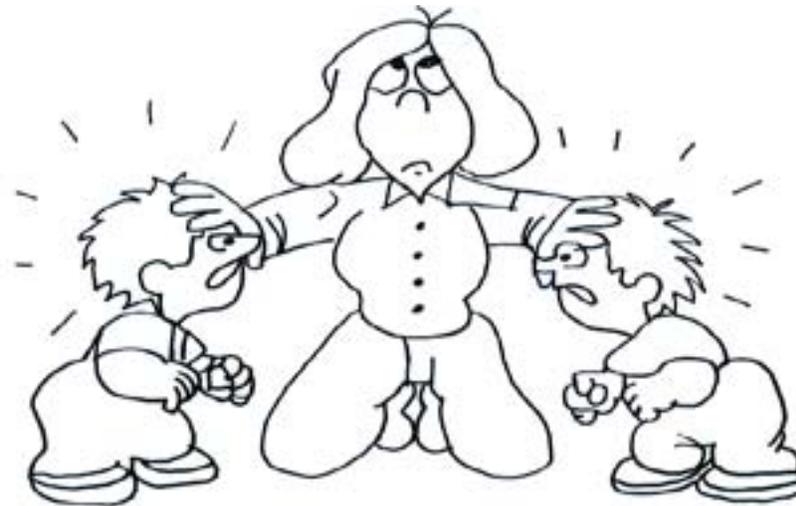
We do not require you to attend our activities, the rationale being that you are in the cabins with the kids at night getting a very poor night's sleep! So, if you need a break during the day, please feel free to take it (we have a Teacher's Lounge set up for you just for this purpose). However, we encourage you to attend our classes if you can. Feedback is very important to us, as that is how we maintain a strong program, and you can only give us feedback if you've been to the activities. We do all the teaching, but if you have additional information, we'd love for you to share! If there are any disciplinary issues, we will ask a teacher to stay with that particular team of students.

## Teachers supervising students:

For most of the day, the students are kept very busy and are supervised by Outdoor School staff. However, we also realize the importance of free time for students. The Outdoor School staff uses that free time to take care of equipment or other issues that may arise, so we ask that you monitor the children during those times (generally an hour or so). If you are swimming, we will lifeguard, however! We are also absent from the shower facilities and cabin areas, so please be prepared to monitor the students in those areas as well.

## Discipline:

The Outdoor School staff likes to handle minor disciplinary issues as it gives us more credibility with your students. However, we are never offended if you would like to jump in. All disciplinary policies set forth by your school are also enforced at The Outdoor School. Since those policies are a bit different for every school, we will rely on you to let us know if the students are not behaving to the level that you expect.



## ESL/ELL

Please know that it is not a requirement for our instructors to be bilingual; in fact many of us are monolingual (English). Because of this there are a few things for you to take into consideration for your students (and perhaps chaperones):

1. If you have a large population of ELL students, please feel free to make sure that you have a student in teams who can (and will) translate for the ELL students if necessary.
2. If you choose activities that have higher safety concerns (archery, Pirate Ship) you **MUST** have a chaperone there (preferably a teacher) who can translate those safety issues to the students.
3. It is tremendously helpful if all of your chaperones speak English; however, we realize that a school will bring a chaperone who's first language is not English. If you bring ELL chaperones, you will need another chaperone to translate what we're saying during the chaperone orientation so that they know what they will need to do as a chaperone. Please make sure they have received a copy of the Chaperone Packet in Spanish.
4. During large group announcements (arrival, after meals, before bed), please have a chaperone who can translate those announcements to the ELL students. We want to make sure that all students (and chaperones!) know what is happening, where they need to be, and when.
5. Translation helps with behavior management. If students know what we are saying to them, they know what is expected of them. So please feel free to jump in at any time to clarify or help in this vein.
6. All of our teaching posters and journal pages are in English. This gives students the opportunity to really focus on their English language skills and vocabulary while here. So again, if you would like a student to translate for them, that is perfectly fine.

Thank-you for your help with our ELL students (and chaperones)!



# Creating a Nature Journal

Because a trip to The Outdoor School can be so meaningful to your students, we ask that each student have a Nature Journal upon arrival. Each of our classes has a section built in that utilizes the journal and we have found it to be an invaluable part of our curriculum. Students have used their journals to teach their families or younger students at their school what they have learned. Many have continued writing in or filling up pages in their journals once back at home and school, and show them proudly to us when we have visited.

We begin using the journal almost as soon as the students are off the bus, so we do ask that time be made before arrival to The Outdoor School to create them. Making the journal is a great art project for your class, but it can be done at home as well. There are directions below on how to make a fun journal. They do not have to conform with these directions – the most important thing is that the students have a binder that pages can be easily slipped into (please no folders with only pockets and no brads as the loose pages blow away in the wind). We also ask that you have each student fill the “Before You Come” page (there is a copy of this page at the end of the packet). This helps to set the students expectations that they are going to The Outdoor School and not summer camp!

## Materials:

- Per Student :
  - 8 ½ x 11 Folder with built in brads. Pockets in the folder are not necessary, but brads ARE; loose papers blow away in the wind.
  - Worksheet pages that are included in this packet (the rest your students will receive upon arrival at The Outdoor School).
  - Extra paper if the teacher wants to include it.
- General:
  - Masking tape (at least one inch in width).
  - Brown shoe polish.

## Procedure:

1. Rip pieces of masking tape one to two inches long and randomly cover the outside of the covers.
2. Rub shoe polish over the masking tape to give your journal covers an old, weathered, tree bark look. Let covers dry for 5 to 10 minutes. Add extra coats for a darker finish.
3. Insert worksheet pages and extra paper in between the two covers.
4. Write your name on the outside of the journal. Decorate further if desired.



# The Outdoor School

*Adventures in Learning*

Name:

---

Team #:

---



# BEFORE YOU COME...

Students, what do you think you're going to do at The Outdoor School?

Set three goals for yourself while you are at The Outdoor School.

Goal 1.

Goal 2.

Goal 3.

What classes are you taking at The Outdoor School?

## Map and Directions:

**Special Note: Do NOT follow Google, Map Quest or GPS directions that take you to Camp RIDGE Road. We are NOT on that road! We are WEST of Marble Falls, not EAST. Please call if you have questions, and please make sure your bus drivers know the CORRECT address!**



### DIRECTIONS TO CAMP CHAMPIONS FROM:

**HOUSTON OR AUSTIN:** From Houston; arrive in Austin on Hwy 290 or Hwy 71. From Austin, take Hwy 71 west approximately 45 miles to Hwy 281. Turn right (north) on Hwy 281 into Marble Falls. After crossing the bridge into Marble Falls, go to the 5th traffic light (Pizza Hut's on the corner) and turn left (west) on FM 1431. Go 7.8 miles to C.R. 125 (you'll see the Camp Champions sign). Turn left. Our gate is the first entrance on your right. Look for the giant spur!

**DALLAS OR FT. WORTH:** Take I-35 south of the Hwy 29 exit in Georgetown. Turn right (west) on Hwy 29 to Burnet (about 35 miles). Turn left (south) on Hwy 281 into Marble Falls. At the 5th traffic light into Marble Falls (Pizza Hut's on the corner) turn right (west) on FM 1431. Go 7.8 miles to C.R. 125 (you'll see the Camp Champions sign). Turn left, our gate is the first entrance on your right. Look for the giant spur!

**SAN ANTONIO:** Take Hwy 281 north into Marble Falls. After crossing the bridge into Marble Falls, go to the 5th traffic light (Pizza Hut's on the corner) and turn left (west) on FM 1431. Go 7.8 miles to C.R. 125 (you'll see the Camp Champions sign). Turn left, our gate is the first entrance on your right. Look for the giant spur!