6th Grade Outdoor Education

Parent Information Meeting:
5:30 - 6:30 pm
on
Friday, September 8, 2017
Located at Tilden Middle School
Followed by PTSA Back to School Picnic starting at 6:30 pm

Outdoor Ed Student Session Dates:
Session 1: Monday, Sept. 25 - Wednesday, Sept. 27
Session 2: Wednesday, Sept. 27 - Friday, Sept. 29
Session 3: Monday, Oct. 2 - Wednesday, Oct. 4
at
Lathrop E. Smith Center
5110 Meadowside Lane
Rockville, MD 20855

NAME: ___________________________ Session #_________
OUTDOOR EDUCATION INFORMATION

What is Outdoor Education? All sixth graders at each middle school in MCPS are invited to participate in a three-day, two-night residential outdoor environmental education program. While in residence, students study various aspects of the local environment as they participate in outdoor investigations that are directly connected to the grade six curriculum and the MSDE environmental education standards. Students are accompanied by their teachers, who, in collaboration with an OEEP staff member, provide instruction and supervision during their stay.

During their stay, students participate in a variety of lessons and activities that support the Montgomery County Public Schools curriculum. Instruction focuses on environmental studies and science, while integrating math, reading, world studies, and physical education. Generally, students will participate in four to five of the lessons listed below as well as evening activities. Classes are led by staff from the school and the outdoor environmental educator.

**Stream/Pond Investigation**
Students investigate the complex interactions within the local watershed and work in groups to assess the health of a nearby stream or pond.

**Exploring the Watershed Using Map and Compass**
Working in groups, students conduct a field survey of the surrounding forest and riparian buffers in the local watershed using maps and compasses for navigation.

**Predator/Prey Relationships**
Students explore the predator-prey relationships that animals exhibit in our local ecosystem by participating in an outdoor simulation.

**Confidence Course**
Students participate in a series of mentally and physically challenging team and individual events designed to strengthen teamwork, cooperation and self-esteem.

**Student Service Learning (SSL)**
Students participate in an environmental SSL lesson during the outdoor environmental education program. Topics for the stewardship lessons include habitat improvement, energy conservation, and protecting natural resources.

**Evening Activities**
Instruction does not end when the sun goes down! After dinner students participate in various outdoor and indoor activities determined by the school.

Parents and students should carefully read this packet together. OE is an invaluable opportunity for students to develop self-advocacy, team building and leadership skills with the support of their teachers and peers.

2017 Outdoor Education Coordinators Contact Information:
Emily Prather
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Adam Atwood
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FINANCES

Each child is charged $90.00 for the three-day outdoor education program. The major portion of this fee ($76) includes transportation, meals, lodging, snacks, on-site nurse and medical insurance. The remaining $14 is for Tilden’s cost to buy supplies for instructional and evening activities and an Outdoor Ed t-shirt. If you would like to help support children in need at Tilden, donations of any amount above the fee are always appreciated. **Payment is due no later than Friday, September 15th.**

**Methods of Payment:**

**Online Payment Portal:** Online payment option is available by going to the Tilden website and clicking on the payment portal link on the left side of the page, under Quick Links.

**Checks:** Make checks or money orders payable to Tilden Middle School writing your child’s name and session number on the memo section. Students should give the fee and completed forms to their science teacher or Ms. Prather during their class time or MAP.

**Cash:** Please put in a sealed envelope with your child’s name and session number on the outside of the envelope.

**Financial Assistance is available:** If this fee imposes a financial hardship, confidential arrangements can be made by contacting Mr. Alessi, the sixth-grade counselor, at 301-230-5940.

MEDICATIONS

- All medications, including aspirin, vitamins, and cough medicine to be administered at Outdoor Education, must be accompanied by the MCPS Form 525-13 “Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication to an MCPS Pupil While in School”. The medicine container should be labeled with the child’s name. Prescription medicine should be in the original container with the pharmacy label. **Over the counter medication should be in an unopened container.**
- The night nurse can only administer the exact dosage at the specified time written on the medicine label by a registered pharmacist. If the dosage has changed, the label must be updated by a registered pharmacist prior to leaving for Outdoor Ed.
- **Parents must bring their child’s medication and Form 525-13 to the Tilden Middle School nurse by Friday, September 15th,** before the team is scheduled to go to Outdoor Ed. The medications will be stored and administered in the health room at Smith Center. Medication must be picked up by the parent in the Tilden health room at the conclusion of the Outdoor Education program.
- Please make a notation on the permission slip if your child has any health concerns, including allergies, a need for medication, or any condition of which the nurse and the staff should be aware.
- If your child already has medication at school that is given whether routinely or as needed, the medication will automatically be sent to Outdoor Ed. A new order form will not be necessary.
- If your child does not need any medication while at Outdoor Education, you do not need to complete the medication form.
- Please feel free to contact the school nurse if you have any questions or concerns regarding medication: Phone Number: (301) 230-5987

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

If your child requires a special diet of any kind, please send this information in writing to Ms. Prather, attached to the permission form. The Smith Center meals are served family style. This should accommodate most dietary restrictions. If necessary, parents can send prepared meals for their child’s individual needs.
WEATHER

The weather can be tricky. Our outdoor activities will be carried on, rain or shine. Students must be prepared with appropriate clothing. Please do not buy new clothing for Outdoor Education. Comfortable shoes appropriate for daily walking are necessary. Broken-in sneakers are a perfect choice.

WRITING TO YOUR CHILD

Children love getting mail at Outdoor Education! Planning ahead is important. A letter mailed a week before your child departs should arrive on time. On the lower left corner of the envelope, please write your child’s session number and Tilden Middle School.

The address is: Lathrop E. Smith Center, 5110 Meadowside Lane, Rockville, MD 20855

The phone at Smith Center (240-740-1404) may only be used in an emergency. If it is necessary for you to call, ask for Ms. Prather. Students are not permitted to use the phone, except in an emergency.

SAFETY/DISCIPLINE

Safety is our number one priority at Outdoor Education; the entire staff is trained and committed towards this objective. It is the responsibility of each student to know the rules and to follow them. Breaking a rule that jeopardizes the safety of any student will result in that student being sent home from Outdoor Education. **There will be no warnings or second chances when safety is involved. In the case of a serious infraction, parents will be called and required to come pick up their child immediately, day or night.**

DAY OF DEPARTURE – Session 1: Sept. 25th; Session 2: Sept. 27th; Session 3: Oct. 2nd

Please make arrangements for your child and his/her luggage to get to school at **8:45 AM**. MCPS will not allow students to bring their luggage on the school bus. As they arrive, students should drop off their labeled luggage at the flagpole near the parking lot and proceed to the cafeteria through the rear door. Staff will be available to assist with the luggage. Your child’s belongings should be contained in only two pieces of luggage. One may be a suitcase or a duffel bag and the second should be a sleeping bag wrapped in a waterproof cover such as a large plastic bag, labeled with tape, and tied securely. All luggage will be transported directly to Smith Center on separate MCPS buses.

Each student will need a bag lunch for the first day of Outdoor Ed. All lunch items must be packed in disposable bags or containers. Be sure to clearly write the student’s first and last name and instructional group on the lunch bag. For this meal, only water will be provided at Smith Center. Lunches should NOT be packed in the luggage.

DAY OF RETURN – Session 1: Sept 27th; Session 2: Sept. 29th; Session 3: Oct. 4th

Students will return to Tilden at approximately 1:00 PM. Sixth grade staff and students will be dismissed to go home immediately after the buses have been unloaded. It is essential to make transportation arrangements for your child to be picked up at this time. Again, students are not allowed to take luggage on their regular school bus for safety reasons. If you are not able to meet your child, please make sure a note authorizing alternative transportation is received by Ms. Prather prior to the first day of Outdoor Ed. Students will not be allowed to wait for the afternoon buses.
OUTDOOR EDUCATION ESSENTIAL ITEMS PACKING LIST

BEDDING
- Sheets and a blanket or a sheet and a sleeping bag
- Pillow

TOILET ARTICLES
- Toothpaste and toothbrush
- Soap and container (A plastic sandwich bag works great)
- Bath towel
- Brush or comb
- Shampoo
- Pillowcase or large plastic bag for dirty clothes
- Deodorant

CLOTHING
(Label all clothing and items. Bring only comfortable clothing appropriate for outdoor physical activity. Try to avoid buying new items - worn in shoes and clothes work best.)
- Sleepwear
- Underwear
- Socks (5-6 pairs…some will get wet!)
- Three pairs of jeans, slacks, or sweatpants (NO SHORTS, NO EXCEPTIONS!)
- Long sleeved shirts
- Sweatshirts/sweaters
- Two pairs of sturdy shoes (sneakers are fine-boots as well if it is snowing)

OUTERWEAR
- Warm winter jacket
- Hat
- Rain coat or poncho (This is a big one – we’re out all day, rain or shine.)
- Scarf
- Gloves

OPTIONAL
- Novel for independent reading
- Reusable Water Bottle (highly recommended)
- Watch
- Lip Balm/Sunscreen
- Journal/Pen/Pencils
- Flip Flops for showers only

STUDENTS MAY NOT BRING THE FOLLOWING:

Pocket knife     Matches or lighters     Money     Cell phones
Flashlights      Comic books/magazines  “Teva Type” Sandals     Cameras
Drinks           Gum, snacks or food   Binoculars     iPod/iTouch
Blow Dryers      Aerosol Sprays         Portable Gaming Devices

*If it is inappropriate for school, it is inappropriate for Outdoor Ed.*
To Do Checklist:

- Turn in Permission Form by Friday, Sept. 15th.
- Turn in Check for $90.00 by Friday, Sept. 15th.
- If needed, turn in Meds + Form to nurse by Friday, Sept. 15th.
- Label all luggage + bedding.
- Pack a disposable bag lunch for the first day.
- If unable to pick your child up on the date of return, send a permission note describing your alternative transportation arrangements.