

*Battle Creek
Outdoor Education Center
Clear Lake Camp*

Teacher Handbook



BATTLE CREEK OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER TEACHER HANDBOOK

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CAMP PREPARATION TIMELINE

More than 1 month before camp

- ✓ Send home registration materials including:
 - **Registration and Health Information form** (copy double-sided),
 - **Medication Permission & Medication Information form** (copy on **white** paper)
 - **Code of Conduct** (optional, copy single sided)
 - **What-to-Bring-to-Camp** (copy double-sided).
- ✓ Inform parents of **www.clearlakecamp.org** and Parent Manual available there.
- ✓ Inform parents of Clear Lake Camp Facebook page.
- ✓ Contact camp if requesting ROV's, canoeing, high ropes, or climbing tower.
- ✓ Read teacher handbook.

3 or more weeks before camp

- ✓ Mail or fax all planning forms (*School Information, Activity Selections and Class Information*). Fax # 269.721.1071
- ✓ Contact Shannon Thornton about medical and dietary needs.

2 weeks before camp

- ✓ Mail or deliver copies of alphabetized **Registration and Health Information** forms, **Medication Permission** forms, and **Enrollment** forms. Please do NOT fax.
Camp Address: BCPS OEC, Clear Lake Camp
10160 S. M-37 Hwy.
Dowling, MI 49050
- ✓ Prepare your class physically and mentally for their camp experience.

Arrival Day

- ✓ Bring originals of all student forms. Recommend to bring on bus with students..
- ✓ Bring originals of *Class Enrollment* forms.
- ✓ If any students are leaving camp early, bring a note from the parent/guardian.
- ✓ Bring completed *Teacher Health History Records*.
- ✓ Optional: Collect student medications by class and turn in at registration.
- ✓ Optional: Collect student store money by class and turn in at registration.
- ✓ Call us with your estimated arrival time so we are in the parking lot to greet you!

TEACHER PREPARATION

Forms

This section details the purpose and due dates for each form. Many camp forms can be found online at <http://www.clearlakecamp.org>.

Planning Forms

Please fill out and return these forms at least 3 weeks before your visit.

- The “**School Information**” form helps us be aware of any medical or food related issues well in advance of your visit. Only one form per school per week is needed.
- The “**Activities Selection**” form lets us create your camp schedule. Please read over all of the class descriptions. Contact us if you would like more information about any of our offerings!
- The “**Classroom Information**” form gives us further insight into your students and helps our staff focus instruction during your visit. The more information you provide, the better we can meet your needs and expectations.

Class Enrollment Forms

The *Enrollment* form is the roster for the class the students will be in for the week. Students are listed alphabetically, separated by gender, with an emergency phone number for each. Please use our form as we copy the same form for multiple purposes.

Please mail a copy of the *Enrollment* form with the student registration forms and bring the original to camp.

Teacher Health History Record

Teachers attending camp must fill out a *Teacher Health History Record*. These may be sent ahead of time with the student registration forms or turned in on arrival day.

Registration and Health Information Form

Every child at camp must have a completed *Registration and Health Information* form. This form acts as a release giving the OEC parental permission should their child need medical attention and also gives us important information about the child.

Please mail double-sided photocopies of these forms to us at least 1 week before your trip along with medication permission forms. Do not fax. Bring the originals and any additional forms to check in on arrival day.

Encourage families to answer **all** questions. If a question does not apply, a line through the space or N/A is preferred to a blank space. Please check each form to be sure it is signed on the back.

The questions about bed-wetting and sleepwalking help us place students in the dorm. A yes, maybe, or blank line for those questions will place that student on a bottom bunk. Our staff is very sensitive to the possible embarrassment for a child who wets the bed. Dorm staff will wake children during the night for bathroom use, if requested. Soiled sleeping bags and pajamas are washed and returned discreetly.

Medication Permission form

In order to give any type of medication, either prescription or over the counter, we must have a completed *Medication Permission* form signed by both the parent/guardian and a physician.

Please mail photocopies of these forms to us at least 1 week before your trip along with the registration forms. Bring the originals and any additional forms to check in on arrival day.

The Medication *Information* Form contains detailed information for parents. Important points to emphasize are the medication must be in the *original* container and must be *up to date*. ALL medication, including but not limited to prescriptions, inhalers, over-the-counter meds, supplements, vitamins, ointments, etc. requires a doctor's signature.

Code of Conduct

If you utilize the *Code of Conduct* form, it needs to be signed by both the student and parent/guardian. Please bring these forms to camp and turn them in at check in on arrival day.

Clothing

You should prepare yourself physically like the students with the same type of clothing and footwear. Note that our student dress code requires long pants for all activities and prohibits tanks tops. In colder weather, you may want to dress slightly warmer than the students because you will not be as active as they will. Remember rain gear!

Your Schedule

Your camp day begins by 8:00 AM at breakfast. It is important you are on time so dorm staff can talk to you about any problems from overnight in the dorm. This is also a time when morning staff may meet with you to prepare for the day and offers excellent opportunities to check in with your students. We appreciate your assistance in supervising at meals.

All afternoon activities will be finished by 4:30 PM and many will finish by 4:00 PM. If you cannot stay until 4:00 PM, or if you will not be available for any part or all of a scheduled camp day, please make arrangements for a substitute person. For the some of the challenge activities, it is essential that you are present. If the minimum number of teachers required is not available, we may have to cancel an activity.

Dinner is served at 5:30 PM and students go to the dormitories at 8:30 PM. Evening activities are conducted between 6:30 PM and 8:30PM. You are welcome and encouraged to attend the evening activities.

Overnight accommodations for teachers are available for a night or the full week in either Winka Cottage with three bedrooms (5 twin beds total), living room, kitchen and two bathrooms, or upstairs in the main lodge with two twin beds per room. Please let us know prior to camp what accommodations you plan to use. Teachers from multiple schools may be required to share housing, depending on numbers.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES AT CAMP

Insight

We will count on you for insight into your students' behaviors, temperaments, strengths, weaknesses, and potential problem areas. Anything that you feel comfortable sharing with us will help.

Discipline Support

We work to structure the camp setting so as to minimize discipline problems. When they do occur, we attempt to deal with most of them and report to you what happened. There are occasions when we will ask you or you may choose to be directly involved in a discipline situation, particularly if the problem has happened repeatedly or is severe. You should also feel free to step into any situation involving one of your own students.

Upon arrival you will be shown the location of the discipline forms and binders. You are welcome to these at any time.

We also reward good behavior with things such as the points system and "thank you dessert". If thank you desserts are being issued during your stay at camp, please feel free to issue them too! When a student does something worth a reward, let the student know they have earned a "thank you dessert". Then please add their name to the list in the dining hall, usually kept in the cupboard near the menu board, so they may claim their dessert later!

Homesickness

Many students experience feelings of "homesickness" during their stay at camp for a variety of reasons. While you are here, we will likely be directing cases of homesick students to you. In the evenings and overnight our dorm staff and night health officer will attempt to handle this issue and report information to you at breakfast. If you are staying overnight, we may call you if the issue has become severe.

Our philosophy is to encourage all students to stay at camp for the full week. We encourage involvement in the activities and looking ahead at the camp schedule. If at all possible, please do not make deals with the student. We discourage student phone calls home. Talking to family nearly always makes homesickness worse and increases the chances of the child going home. Teachers may make a phone call home without the student present. This sometimes does help by either getting more information from the parent or passing along a reassuring, or

sometimes a firm, message from the parent to the student. Further information on homesickness is available in the parent manual, found online.

Management Support

There are many times when we need your help supervising students. Examples include but are not limited to the dining hall, during store times, if clothes need to be changed in the dorm, while a staff member prepares an activity area, or during activities.

On all of our challenge or teambuilding activities, the adults, including the classroom teachers, act as facilitators. In this role, it is important that we give the students all the information they need, and then **step back** and let them do the learning. We should not do anything for them that they can do for themselves, or rescue them from a situation they find uncomfortable. The exception would be if their physical or emotional safety is being compromised.

Throughout all activities, observe the actions and interactions of students. **Please communicate any concerns with our staff.** If you feel they should back off any particular students or are pushing a group farther than they should, please take them aside and share your concern so you may come to a mutual decision. If you feel any students need more of a push, please share that as well.

We **require** your assistance at the High Ropes, Climbing Tower, Wall, Beam, Sherwood Forest, Archery, and Canoeing activities. These activities require a specific number of adults for facilitation and safety reasons.

Spotting

Spotting involves using group members to ensure the safety of other group members. We will ask you to assist in supervising spotting practice and to assist in monitoring and enforcing good spotting during activities. We may ask you to be a back-up spotter or a primary participating spotter.

Processing

Processing is the follow up discussion of a group's experiences at an activity site. Objectives include getting everyone involved, remembering just what they did, explaining why they did what they did, judging the value of what they did, and possibly predicting what they would do in other similar situations. The role of the adults is to point the campers in these directions, but not give answers or even indicate the answers you would like them to give. Adults need to be very open, accepting, and non-judgmental. **You should become as involved as you feel comfortable.** Some of your most important observing may take place during these times.

Emergency Situations

We have two adults present at higher risk activities occurring at isolated locations away from the lodge. Please pay attention to the route taken to activities, especially those more distant from the lodge. If an emergency arises, you may need to return to the health office to summon help while the other adult deals with the emergency. Staff and teachers are also asked to carry cell phones for two way emergency communication.

STUDENT PREPARATION

This section is meant to assist your classroom discussions prior to camp to best prepare students for this intensive weeklong experience.

Physical Preparation

What to Bring

A “What to Pack for Camp” checklist is included in each camp registration packet and online. Please discuss this list with your class and the logic behind each item. If you have questions about any items, please contact the OEC.

Please emphasize the following:

1. Bring old, sturdy play clothes. Long pants are required for all activities.
2. Bring sturdy, comfortable shoes such as athletic shoes.
3. Bring good rain gear. Most activities go on regardless of weather. We do have some ponchos to loan but having your own is preferable. In cooler weather, also bring warm coats, hats, and gloves/mittens.
4. Adhere to the “Do Not Bring” list. If items from this section are brought to camp they will be collected by the camp staff and returned at the end of the week, if appropriate. Bringing certain prohibited items may result in disciplinary action. If students do not turn in food, candy, or gum and camp staff later discover it, it will not be returned.
5. Label all personal belongings, including jackets, shoes, socks, and underwear.

Camp Store

If students choose to bring money, it should be in a labeled envelope with the student’s full name, teacher’s name, and amount of money clearly written on the outside. We do have many items, ranging in price from \$0.25 to \$45.00 but most students find \$5.00 to \$15.00 is sufficient. Students will have one opportunity to shop at the store, generally on the first or second day of camp.

Mental Preparation

A well prepared class will have a higher quality experience at the OEC. The daily living activities (eating, sleeping) encourage students to develop independence by doing them away from home and with other students who they may not know.

If you have selected science or history activities, you may want to let students know how this week will be an extension of or enhancement to their school studies.

If you have selected group building or “adventure” activities, please discuss the concept of “challenge” with your students. All challenges are hard. All of our challenges are also possible. The benefit of a challenge is what you learn from facing it. Therefore we expect every student to try his or her best at every challenge.

You are welcome to give general descriptions of the physical challenges but avoid comparisons and details. It is not important what other classes have done. We are interested in how well *this* group will do when faced with a challenge.

Behavior Expectations

Students need to know that their camp experience is a school function, and as such, the same rules for behavior that apply in school also apply at camp.

We use behavior guidelines called “Six Steps to a Successful Week”. Please preview these with your students.

- YOU ARE A REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR SCHOOL
- BE WILLING TO TRY YOUR BEST
- LISTEN TO AND FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF ANY ADULT
- RESPECT THE FEELINGS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF OTHERS
- THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER IS YOUR HOME FOR THE WEEK
- ALL BEHAVIOUR HAS CONSEQUENCES

The “Battle Creek Outdoor Education Center Code of Conduct” is a behavior contract signed by parents and students which explains our behavior expectations and consequences for inappropriate student behavior. This form is found online with the student registration materials. Use of this form is optional.

The full policy detailing discipline levels 1 through 4 is included at the end of this handbook. The parent handbook, available online, has details of this policy as well.

Dining Hall Guidelines

Students are seated at tables of 5 – 7 students with one adult. Meals are served family style. One student per meal will be the hopper. The hopper is responsible for getting the food for the table and cleaning up after the meal.

Good manners are expected, including:

- remaining seated during the entire meal (no bathroom requests during meals)
- saying please and thank you
- passing food instead of reaching
- using normal or quiet speaking voices
- being silent and listening when an adult calls for attention
- no hats, hoods, or outdoor coats

One adult should sit at each table to model and monitor the above behaviors. We do weigh food waste at the OEC. Any uneaten food **on the students’ plates** is collected and weighed. This is done to encourage students to take only what they are going to eat and to stress the idea of conservation.

Points are awarded at each meal and in the dormitories. These points may earn evening snacks, staff hoppers or other special treats for the last meal.

Dormitory Guidelines

Students are housed in the Boys' Dorm or Girls' Dorm. Each building has 2 dorm staff and holds up to 76 students. Each student sleeps on a twin size bed, either on the top bunk or bottom bunk. Students are NOT permitted to enter the dormitory alone. Dorm staff are in the dorms until the start of breakfast and do not return until the start of rest hour. Students are expected to leave the dorm for breakfast with everything they will need for the day.

Students are expected to shower each evening. In order for proper hygienic washing to take place students are not permitted to wear any clothing in the showers. This means NO SWIMSUITS. We will try our best to alleviate the fears of shy students. Students shower in individual shower stalls. We have found that students who try this arrangement the first night are okay with it the second night. If you think a student may not come to camp because of showers, please call us. Bathrobes, extra large bath towels, and flip-flop type "shower shoes" are all fine.

Some dorm rules include:

- No running or roughhousing.
- Respect others' personal space and property.
- Students are not allowed into wings other than their own.
- Turn off lights and water when not in use.
- Students are responsible for personal belongings and clean-up of own dorm space.

TYPICAL DAILY STUDENT SCHEDULE

7:00 AM	Wake Up
7:40 AM	Table setters go to dining hall
8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Morning block activities
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM	Afternoon block activities
4:00 PM	Dorms open
4:30 PM	Rest Hour
5:30 PM	Dinner
6:30 PM	Evening block activities
8:30 PM	Dorms. Showers and ready for bed.
9:30 PM	Dorm lights out. Quiet time.

ARRIVAL DAY

Registration

When you arrive at camp on Monday, please go directly to the Red Desk (office). Turn in your students' *Registration and Health Information* forms, *Medication Permission* forms, and *Code of Conduct* forms. Let us know if any students are absent, arriving late, or leaving early.

Bring your original *Class Enrollment* form with names alphabetical by gender and with emergency numbers, including area code. Cross out any absent students.

Bring the completed *Teacher Health History Record* if not sent ahead of time.

Medication

Students who have will be taking any medication during camp will see the Health Officer to turn in the meds during move-in time on Monday. If you collect any student medications please turn them in at the Red Desk. Unless a child is not trusted with their medication, it is not necessary to collect medication before coming to camp, though many teachers find it useful to do so.

Remind students and parents that all medications must come in original containers. Prescription medications must have the prescription label and must be in the name of the student.

Teacher Meeting

After the paperwork has been collected, the Program Coordinator will meet with all the classroom teachers. These are the important topics at this meeting:

- Information about students that our staff need to be aware of for medical, emotional or behavioral concerns.
- Assignment of teacher schedule. In your teacher mail boxes is your schedule for the week, as well as a staff evaluation and program evaluation.
- Emergency Contact Phone Numbers. We need contact information in case a problem arises after teachers have left for the evening. If you carry a cell phone, this can also provide a means to contact you in the event of a daytime emergency.

Staff Meeting

While campers are hearing the dining hall rules, we will have a brief meeting with the OEC teaching staff to make introductions and share important information about the students and about the week.

DEPARTURE DAY

Meeting

Prior to your departure, you will have the opportunity to sit with the administrative team and discuss the week. This may take place during part of the breakfast time. Please let us know what you liked and how we may improve.

Evaluation Forms

Feedback forms for staff and for the camp as a whole will be placed in your mailbox early in the week. Please leave the completed forms in your mailbox or turn them in to the administrative team on your final morning. Please include as many details as possible when writing evaluations. We value your input to help us improve.

Departure

After the final meal, we will work to get you and your class on the road. If you are leaving mid-morning you may opt for a sack lunch “to-go” rather than lunch in the dining hall. Student luggage will be loaded up as soon as your bus or truck is ready. Student medications will be given directly to you. Please return these to parents or students at school. You will also be given any confiscated items and lost and found. Change from the camp store is returned to students before final dismissal.

SCHOOL CAMP PROGRAM

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

The Outdoor Education Center is committed to providing a safe, needs-satisfying, growth-oriented experience for every student. We believe discipline is not merely a list of expectations and punishments, but rather an approach to teaching skills in *self-control*, *responsible choice-making*, and appropriate *community participation*. Although a student's encounter with the Outdoor Education Center is brief, we recognize the potential lasting impact that we may have on the student. We believe setting clear expectations is the beginning. The six steps to a successful week states specific behaviors that students should practice to have a successful week at camp. Reviewing these before camp only reinforces the expectations.

The policies and practices which follow are consistent with our philosophy. They are shown here in detail to aid teachers and staff, and to demonstrate compliance with guidelines provided by the Michigan Department of Social Services.

GOALS

- A. Provide an emotionally and physically safe learning and living environment for all participants.
- B. Help students learn aforementioned skills and plan to transfer them into their classroom and home environments.

SPECIFIC PRACTICES

- A. As a means of discipline, no camper shall be:
 - 1. deprived of food.
 - 2. deprived of sleep. A bed and blanket must be provided if the student is removed from their dorm wing.
 - 3. isolated without adult supervision.
 - 4. administered physical punishment.
 - 5. asked to perform physical exercise.
 - 6. subjected to excessive restraint.
 - 7. subjected to ridicule.
 - 8. subjected to threat.
- B. Most student behavioral problems are short in duration and can be resolved or even prevented by appropriate adult supervision.
- C. Effective results may be obtained by confronting the child, discussing what they have done and guiding them to alternative behaviors. Avoid yelling, yet be firm. Make an honest effort to seek out the root of an argument or fight between students. Allow each one to present their side. It usually turns out that both persons are wrong in some way.
- D. No student should be allowed to continually disrupt any activity at the expense of the group's experience. When this occurs, the student should be removed from the group in accordance with our policy.

STANDARD POLICY

A student may progress through four levels. A level may be reached when the student makes a choice that is counter-productive to our expectations regarding self-control and community participation *within* the environment established by the Group Leader, Dorm Staff and Classroom Teacher (even if witnessed by other personnel).

- Level I: The student's behavior warrants a documented warning.
- Level II: Time Out – Time away from activity and a written Time Out Plan completed
- Level III: Referral – A parent and/or principal is notified of the situation and next level of consequence. The teacher will be present or notified. Arrangement of the call shall be a joint effort. Sometimes another Time Out Plan is provided.
- Level IV: The student's behavior warrants dismissal from the camp.

IMPLEMENTATION: There is latitude for discretionary action between levels. Four reprimands do not necessarily equal reaching Level IV. Level I could be the third time that a particular student has been consulted, e.g. the first being a clarification, the second being a one-on-one conference due to the child's specific needs regarding a certain behavior. The student must always be informed of the next sequential level.

PLANS / RESTITUTION

The Standard Policy is not a cut and dry procedure. We recognize that due to the diversity of classes and students we serve, other options must be available if we are to succeed in our purpose of training students to take ownership of their behaviors and act responsibly. OEC Staff and teachers must use their best judgment, as well as their creativity. Students may be limited in their ability to think of natural consequences or specific plans for change. Emphasis should be placed on the student doing the work (plans, restitution), though guidance should be available. For example, some students may require help reading the Plan Form.

Some Examples of Consequences students could choose:

- Personal apology to other students, teachers, OEC staff
- Borrowing lendable items so that they can participate in the activity
- Shadowing teachers
- Sleeping on bed in Dorm Lobby or in Lodge
- Repeated Time Outs
- Eating in brown chairs
- Work detail (dish washing, light and faucet patrol, working at red desk, hauling away ill-sized firewood)

A child might choose to make amends for their wrong doing. This supports our belief that mistakes are learning opportunities and that it is more mature to make restitution than to merely endure guilt, shaming and/or punishment.

TERMS OF IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL

1. Setting fire or pulling fire alarm
2. Possessing weapons
3. Leaving dorm at night without permission
4. Striking or intent to strike an adult
5. Striking a student, premeditated
6. Blatant and flagrant vandalism
7. Possessing illegal substances
8. Verbally abusing an adult
9. Entering the dormitory or washroom of the opposite gender

OEC STAFF/ TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Communicate with teachers/staff regarding individual students, class policy, and teacher level of involvement. Staff, keep in mind teachers are ultimately responsible for their students and may know what works best.
2. Use your best judgment. Get advice if you are unsure. Discipline is not giving out consequences; it is *helping* students learn about their own needs, successful community participation, and making restitution.
3. Document accurately with detail. Anyone making a referral will need accurate details. Please include situations that occur between levels, and consequences that have been decided. Write exact statements made.
4. Communicate with other staff, dorm leaders and teachers about student behavior issues. It isn't fair to us or the student if the consequences and processing are fragmented, untimely, or inconsistent in severity and progressiveness. If a child has made an action plan to improve behavior or make amends our structure must support that.
5. Inform the Director or Coordinator at appropriate places in the process. They are there for support and guidance.