



Cal-Wood Education Center Chaperone Handbook

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Welcome to Cal-Wood!

Cal-Wood's mission is to offer a unique outdoor educational experience to youth and adults. Our founding vision has guided our organization since 1982: to inspire a greater appreciation for the natural world; to offer environmental education to those who would not otherwise experience it; and to provide unique educational opportunities in a special mountain setting.

Cal-Wood Education Center is dedicated to providing a first-class outdoor educational experience for all students. By signing up as a chaperone, you are committing to help us achieve this goal by supervising students and maintaining a positive learning atmosphere. We take this responsibility seriously and ask you to do as well. Your assistance is integral to the quality of our program. Please read through this handbook to get an overview of your roles and responsibilities as a chaperone. More information will be provided upon your arrival.

Thank you for volunteering your time to help us maintain the best learning environment possible for our students. If you have questions about anything in this handbook please do not hesitate to ask any of our program staff when you arrive.

We hope you enjoy yourself and have a fantastic trip!

Thanks again,
Cal-Wood Program Staff

Adult Roles

- **Chaperones** (that's you!) are responsible for student supervision while they are in their cabin groups (during cabin time and overnight) and help Cal-Wood staff supervise students during the learning day and at meals. This handbook will detail your specific responsibilities throughout the following pages.
- **Classroom teachers and administrative staff** from your child's school may also fill the chaperone role. However, unlike parent chaperones, they also retain administrative control of their students including dispensing medication and managing discipline.
- **Cal-Wood Staff**, including Field Instructors, School Programs Manager, and Kitchen and Custodial Staff, will be present for most of the program (but not overnight). We guide learning groups during the day, lead evening programs such as night hikes and campfires, ensure all meals run smoothly, and take care of maintenance issues.

Sample Schedule

Arrival Day		Full Day		Departure Day	
Time	Activity	Time	Activity	Time	Activity
		7:00	wake up	7:00	wake up
		7:30	hoppers	7:30	hoppers
		7:45	breakfast	7:45	breakfast
		8:30	moppers	8:30	moppers
		8:45	prep for learning day	8:45	prep for learning day
				9:00	Learning Day
10:30	arrive			11:30	group closing
	hike up			11:45	lunch
	orientation			12:30	hike to parking lot
30 min	move into cabins and get ready for the day			1:00	depart
		9:00	learning day		
45 min	lunch / recess				
	divide into learning groups				
	head out for Learning Day				
		4:30	B.O.B. time		
5:00	down time	5:00	down time		
5:45	hoppers	5:45	hoppers		
6:00	dinner	6:00	dinner		
7:00	moppers	7:00	moppers		
7:15	prep for evening	7:15	prep for evening		
7:30	Night Hike	7:30	Campfire		
9:00	get ready for bed	9:00	get ready for bed		
9:30	lights out	9:30	lights out		

***arrival and departure times subject to change depending on bus availability**

Specific Supervisory Duties for Chaperones

Morning

Please wake up students at 7:00 am. Students are not allowed to leave the cabins before that time except for a supervised hike or activity. After 7:00 am, students may use downtime areas as long as there is supervision. This is a great time for you to help students get their daypacks ready for the learning day. Please make sure students have everything they need in their daypacks before they leave for breakfast (i.e. water bottle, extra jackets, snow gear, etc.).

Meals

One cabin group per meal will arrive early to serve as the Hoppers. *Hoppers arrive at the dining hall 15 minutes before the meal. (7:30 am for breakfast, 5:45 for dinner).* Please accompany your cabin during their Hopper/set-up duties. One Hopper student will sit at each table. They are responsible for getting seconds for the table and carrying dishes to the dish pit.

Adults should always enter the dining hall first and sit at least one adult per table.

Remind the students that only the hopper is allowed up from the table. (If a student needs to use the bathroom there is a pass by the door and they may be the second person up at that time.) Help students pass food around the table and ensure that they are taking appropriate portions.

Please help keep students quiet while announcements are being made. At the end of the meal, the students will be dismissed one cabin at a time by Cal-Wood staff. One cabin group per meal will stay behind to serve as the Moppers. *Moppers help wipe tables, stack chairs, and sweep the floor.*

Learning Day

At 9am after breakfast, Cal-Wood field instructors assume primary supervision and have prepared a day of creative, engaging, experiential education. Your primary function is to help facilitate the smooth and safe flow of the day. Specific responsibilities include:

- Staying in the back of the line to ensure everyone is keeping up with the group and not wandering off.

- Helping the group respond to instructors' directions, e.g. circling up, drinking water, and listening to lessons.
- *Effective communication with the field instructor about your specific role during learning activities.*

B.O.B. (Body on Bunk) time (4:30-5:00 pm)

After the learning day, students will have either B.O.B. time or cabin time. For B.O.B time, students should be on their own bunk, resting or writing in their journals. Your job is to make sure students are resting and staying quiet.

Cabin time (5:00-5:45/6:00 pm)

Your job is to supervise the students during free time. Your cabin group can either:

- a. Stay at the Cabin - Students can relax, play cards, read, create a skit for campfire, or write / draw in their journals.
- b. Play at the Rec Field- Students can play gagaball, soccer, camouflage, etc. Monitor for safety and please remind students to clean up after themselves before they leave.
- c. Use the Bathrooms- If students are showering, it is a good idea to have a chaperone near the bathroom area to monitor for appropriate behavior and expediency.

Overnight Supervision

Please sleep in the bottom bunk closest to the door in case of emergency. Students have from 9:00-9:30pm to get ready for bed. Remind students to use the bathroom one last time before bed. At 9:30 pm they must be in their cabins for lights out. They may use a flashlight and read quietly on their own bunk if they cannot sleep. Reading to the students is an excellent way to calm them down. Remind students that they have a big day ahead of them and they should try to get lots of sleep. From 9:30 pm to 7:00 am students are not allowed to leave the cabin except to use the bathroom. They should wake up their bathroom buddy, go with their buddy to the bathroom, and tell you when they leave and when they return.

Note: You are the only one allowed to adjust the heaters in the cabin. The adjustment knob is on the back left of the heater. Please do not allow anyone to put anything on the heaters or the brick area. *If the heater isn't working, find a Cal-Wood staff member before 9pm.*

Departure Day

Have students pack everything they do not need for their learning day and put their bags on the front porch before breakfast. Use the time after breakfast to sweep out the cabin. Have students return borrowed Cal-Wood gear to the bins at the bench circle just before departure on the bus.

Discipline

We have two rules here at Cal-Wood:

1. Be Safe-

- Students are walking unless specifically told otherwise
- Only throwing balls at the rec field (not rocks, pine cones, etc.)
- Staying with the group or a buddy

2. Be Respectful-

- Of adults (listening, using manners)
- Of other students (being kind, no fighting or roughhousing)
- Of nature (keeping a safe distance from wildlife, staying on trails)
- Of self (drinking water, eating, trying new things)

If a student breaks a rule during the learning day their field instructor will determine the appropriate consequence. During down times and meals, teachers will take responsibility for the behavior of students. If you have issues with any students, please do not hesitate to ask for assistance from the lead teacher or a Cal-Wood instructor. You are not expected to give out consequences, but please stop any unsafe or inappropriate behavior and a teacher or Cal-Wood staff member can give out the consequences to those involved.

Consequences are typically given in the following order:

- Warning: for the first offense, the student is issued a verbal warning letting them know that a certain behavior is not acceptable here.
- First Strike: if a student persists in poor decision-making, the student must sit out of an activity for 10-20 minutes.
- Second Strike: with continued poor behavior, the student must call home.
- Third Strike: The student's parents/guardians are notified and the student is sent home.

If a student makes a particularly bad decision, such as causing physical harm to a peer, students can skip straight to a more severe consequence. Discipline is handed out on a case-by-case basis by a teacher or Cal-Wood staff member.

Other important notes

MEDICATIONS:

- Cal-Wood staff does not administer any medications of any kind to students. Administration of medications is the sole responsibility of the visiting school.
- There is an emergency/medical room in the lodge across from the bathrooms for first-aid use. This is where students' medical forms will be kept. Please notify the Head Teacher before administering any first aid.
- You may be asked to carry medication for a student in your learning group.
- Instructors are trained in CPR and First Aid (some have a higher medical certification) and are aware of all students' medical conditions.

LEARNING GROUPS:

- We require that parents participate in learning groups other than their child's group (see FAQs for in-depth explanation).
- We encourage adults to remain with the same learning group for the duration of the Cal-Wood visit.

TRANSPORTATION:

- If a student needs to be driven off Cal-Wood's property (medical, behavior, etc.), it is the school's responsibility to provide the transportation. We recommend leaving one car parked at the lodge.
- All other personal vehicles must be kept in the main visitor parking lot by the pond.

COMMUNICATION:

- There is Wi-Fi in the lodge, but be aware that our internet connection can be spotty at times and *we request that you do not use electronic devices in the presence of students*. There is also a guest phone in the office.

FAQs

Will I have any breaks?

During the learning day, you must stay with a group and be present to monitor student safety and behavior. At the end of the learning day, the students have some downtime and must be supervised at all times. However, chaperones may make an arrangement to take turns supervising and taking breaks. For example, if there are four cabins of students at the rec field, two adults could supervise and two could go to the lodge to check their emails or shower.

Why am I not in my child's learning group?

While we appreciate that you have taken time out of your busy schedule to come on this trip with your child, experience has shown that students are much more willing to push themselves outside of their comfort zones and participate as a group when they do not have their parents in the group. You will have meals and time in the cabin to hang out with your child.

How demanding is the hiking?

With 1,200 acres to explore, learning groups have the possibility of covering a significant amount of ground, both on and off trails. Instructors will adapt their hikes to suit the needs of the students, and chaperones are expected to be comfortable at that level. Come prepared to spend 7.5 hours out in the field away from any indoor facilities, hiking on variable terrain, and in changing weather conditions.

Will I have to go to the bathroom in the woods?

Short answer, yes. Long answer, during the second day of your trip you will be away from indoor bathroom facilities for about 7 hours. Instructors will carry toiletries (TP, hand sanitizer, etc.) and have a wealth of experience and information on how to use the bathroom in nature, (or as we call it at Cal-Wood, "chasing a coyote").

Packing List

****Cal-Wood is located at an elevation of 7,800 feet. The weather in the mountains is subject to sudden changes. It is important to be prepared for rain, intense sun, and snow. We recommend that you put your child's name on everything. Please do not buy anything if you are missing items on this list, as Cal-Wood can outfit students from our extensive gear room.****

...in a **daypack**: (school backpack or other similar. 2 thick straps are a must for daily hiking.)

- Sack lunch for the first day
- Water bottle (at least 1 quart/liter)
- Warm layer (wool or fleece is best)
- Sun hat or baseball cap
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher—a MUST)
- Pencil or pen
- Journal or notebook
- Warm gloves and hat
- Extra pair of socks
- Rain jacket or poncho (if poncho, be sure it is durable plastic)



...in a **suitcase or large backpack**: *NOTE: Pack in a manageable bag... students will need to carry all their belongings ¼ mile uphill to the cabins.*

- Hiking boots or sturdy shoes (snow boots recommended Oct-April).
- Sleeping bag & small pillow (packed in stuff sack or bag)
- Full change of clothes- pants/shirt/underwear/socks etc.
- Pajamas
- Socks (long socks are best. Preferably a couple of warm wool pairs)
- Winter coat or jacket
- Long underwear or a base layer
- Plastic bags to pack wet items OR to cover socks in shoes if no snow boots
- Toiletry bag (ziplock or grocery bag is fine) with:
 - Toothbrush & toothpaste
 - Brush or comb
 - Washcloth & towel
 - Soap



OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- Chapstick, bandana, book, camera, flashlight, field guide, binoculars, tissues
- Slippers for lodge (outside shoes are not allowed inside lodge)
- Extra pair of outside shoes in case the first pair gets wet
- Rain pants/snow pants (just in case)



PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

- snacks, junk food, chewing gum, candy (we don't want to attract wildlife to cabins!)
- electronics such as cell phones (there is no reception at Cal-Wood), MP3 players, radios, hand-held video games, curling irons, and blow dryers. Being unplugged is an important part of the experience!
- knives, matches/lighters
- money or anything valuable

Thank you so much for volunteering your time to come with your child to Cal-Wood. The success of our program depends on your energy, enthusiasm, and assistance. It is our hope and goal that the chaperones take as much from this amazing opportunity as our students do. Communication is key here so feel free to talk to any Cal-Wood staff about any issues or questions you may have.

This does not have to be your only visit to Cal-Wood! You can rent our facilities for a weekend retreat or staff training. Also, please note that we are a non-profit and depend on the support of our community! We always accept donations for our scholarship fund and rely on volunteers to help us take care of our beautiful property. To find out more information, please email Alicia our director of programs at alicia@calwood.org.

I have read and understood the Cal-Wood Chaperone Handbook, and I am prepared to take on the responsibilities of being a chaperone.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____