

John T. Baker Middle School Outdoor Education Program 2019-2020



Group 1

Mr. Niswander's Science Classes
Monday - Wednesday
October 14-16

Group 2

Mr. Pekar's Science Classes
Wednesday - Friday
October 16-18

Sixth Grade Team Leader
Bridget Friedman

Bridget_K_Friedman@mcpsmd.org

**Outdoor Ed Coordinator + Parent
Volunteer Coordinator**

Jennifer Tolbert

Jennifer_R_Tolbert@mcpsmd.org

Sixth Grade Administrator

Dr. Vaughn Bradley

Vaughn_M_Bradley@mcpsmd.org



Please join us for a Parent Meeting to discuss any questions/concerns in person:
September 10 @5:30-6:30 pm in Room 201

Overview of the Outdoor Education Program

Outdoor Education can be one of the most beneficial and memorable experiences in your student's middle school career. We shall be working in all subject areas, but plan to emphasize science and social studies by providing learning experiences outdoors that we cannot do in a regular classroom. The sixth grade teachers will be responsible for most of the instruction, but will be assisted by other teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors. Also, an MCPS outdoor education coordinator is assigned to each session. Our coordinator is Courtney Hebert.

To give you a more specific idea of why we expect this experience to be so meaningful, here is a brief listing of some of the things students will be studying.

- local history
- aquatic/watershed studies
- ecological activities
- problem-solving activities
- wildlife studies
- environmental simulation activities
- team-building activities

We feel that these activities can be a vehicle to achieve the following objectives:

1. Provide opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom to authentic situations beyond the classroom.
2. Provide students with direct experiences using science as inquiry, such as identifying an authentic problem, questioning to clarify understanding, formulating and modifying hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, using evidence to support decisions, and creating action plans.
3. Cultivating students' awareness, knowledge, appreciation, and concern for the natural environment, including the effect of people's actions upon it.
4. Instill a sense of understanding and responsibility of environmental problems and the difficulties that exist in seeking solutions while promoting positive actions toward a solution.
5. Motivate students to develop positive attitudes toward learning through varied experiences in the natural environment.
6. Help students learn to live democratically and responsibly for the welfare of the total group.
7. Encourage students to develop, enhance, and maintain good human relations among themselves and with their teachers.
8. Promote students' physical fitness and enjoyment of the outdoors.

Group living in the cabins, dining hall, and elsewhere adds to the value of the experience of living, playing, learning, and working together. Students will be **assigned cabins by their teachers** in order for them to maximize their experience and to meet new friends while at camp.

Required Paperwork and Fees

The following items MUST be returned by Monday, September 30!

- ★ COMPLETED and SIGNED Outdoor Education Permission Slip
- ★ Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication (if applicable)
- ★ Payment of \$86.00 unless you have requested financial assistance
- ★ Signed and Completed Student Form

Explanation of Fees:

The cost of the MCPS Outdoor Education program is \$76 for participation in this 3-day/2-night program. This includes meals, transportation, lodging, and snacks. The extra \$10 includes your child's t-shirt, evening performers, craft supplies and evening activities materials. The total cost is \$86.

This fee can be paid using:

- cash
- a check made out to John T. Baker Middle School - include child's full name in subject line
- online payment made through the link on our website (please note, there is a small extra charge for processing any payments online)

****If you are willing/able to help another child experience this field trip, we welcome any family to pay an extra amount. Any money you contribute above the \$86, will be put towards the expenses for this field trip.***

Outdoor Education is an experience that only comes once in a lifetime. No student will be deprived of this opportunity for financial reasons. The Outdoor Education Program has funds to support those in need of financial assistance. If this \$86 fee imposes a financial hardship on any family, please send a confidential note to your child's administrator, Dr. Bradley, with whatever amount you are comfortable paying, and our program will cover the rest. We are also able to create a payment plan, if you would prefer. We want to have 100% participation! **No child will be deprived of this valuable learning experience for financial reasons.**

Overnight Explanation:

Every child is expected to attend Outdoor Education in its entirety. The team finds that students who spend time together in the cabins have a chance to become closer friends. However, if the overnight portion of the program is a problem for any reason, the student may choose to attend the day portion only. Please contact your child's Science teacher (Joel Niswander or John Pekar) or team leader (Bridget Friedman). We will make the necessary arrangements with your family. Parents would then be required to pick up their child at the end of each day at either 7:00 pm or 9:00 pm and then drop them off at Skycroft at 8:00 am each morning.

Other Important Information

Nurse On Site:

There is a nurse or health technician on duty at the site during the day (from approximately 8:00 am until 5:00 pm). Staff members take care of any health concerns or issues during the evening, consulting with the nurse, health technician, and parents when necessary. This year our Overnight Nurse is John Pekar. He is a retired firefighter and trained EMT.

Medication:

All medications taken by students while at the Skycroft facility must be dispensed by the nurse, health technician, or teacher on duty. **All prescription medications require a separate form to be filled out and signed by the doctor.** Over the counter medications also require an MCPS form 525-13 "Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication to an MCPS pupil while in School" (attached), but only need to be signed by the parents. All medicine must be in an **unopened** container or box. We ask that all medicine that is going with your child to Outdoor Education be turned in with the appropriate paperwork to the school nurse no later than **Wednesday, September 25** so that it may be packaged, documented, and organized for our trips.

Dietary Restrictions:

If your child requires a special diet, please let us know as soon as possible. Also, please note dietary restrictions on the permission form. The kitchen can accommodate most restrictions. In some cases, parents may need to send prepared meals to meet their child's individual needs. The typical menu served at Skycroft is included in this packet for you to check out.

Weather:

Our activities will be carried out in all types of weather. Students must be prepared with appropriate clothing. We suggest using layers that can be added on or taken off for comfort. Please **DO NOT** buy new items or equipment for Outdoor Education. Comfortable, broken-in shoes are the perfect choice. There are emergency plans in place in case of severe weather.

Electronic Devices:

Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices on this trip. This is a participation expectation. All teachers are able to contact parents if the need arises. However, to keep children safe in the cabins, allow them to truly connect with our environment, and participate fully in the activities, these devices must stay at home. **This is the Google Voice Number: 240-745-5987** you can use to get in touch with your child, if needed during this time period. This number allows you to leave a message that will be checked by a staff member. In case of emergency, the phone number for the Skycroft Conference Center is (800) 536-6759.

Send Your Child a Note:

Your child may appreciate receiving a note from home while at camp. If you would like to write, please mail the letter a few days before your child leaves for Outdoor Education so it arrives before your child returns home. The address is:

YOUR CHILD'S NAME
c/o John T. Baker Middle School
Skycroft Conference Center
9621 Frostown Road
Middletown, MD 21769

Day of Departure:

On the day of departure, students do not need to arrive at school until **9:15 am**, **please make a note of the drop off and pick up times**. Staff will not be ready to supervise students until the 9:15 drop off time. ***Please do not arrive at school earlier than 9:15 am.*** When arriving at school, students should put their luggage on the luggage bus, put their bag lunch in a lunch basket, and have a seat under the overhang in the front of the school building. Luggage and lunches will be transported directly to Skycroft on a separate bus. Students will leave their bus one to two miles from the center and hike in to Skycroft. **They should wear shoes that are sturdy and well broken in. They should dress for weather conditions that morning.** It is better to have an extra layer of clothing than not enough in cool weather.

It will be necessary for all students to bring a **bag lunch with them on the day they leave school**. Names should **clearly** be written on the bag as lunches will be boxed and transported on the luggage bus. Proper packing and labeling will ensure that your child receives his/her lunch when we get to camp. All items in the lunch need to be **disposable**. Students are also encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to keep for the entire duration of the program.

Day of Return:

We expect to arrive back at Baker at about **1:00 pm on October 16 and 18th**. **The students are expected to leave upon their arrival, and you need to pick them up at that time.** (You may need to arrange carpools in advance so your child has a ride home on the last day.) It is critical that your child be picked up early. Students are not allowed to transport their luggage home on the regular school buses.

Safety and Discipline:

The primary consideration in the planning and conducting of Outdoor Education is the safety of every child! The entire staff is committed to this objective. It is the responsibility of every student to know and follow all of the rules. Breaking a rule and jeopardizing the safety of a student will not be tolerated. Parents may be called and required to come for the child immediately if a serious infraction occurs (as determined by administrators).

What to Pack:

Your child's clothing and toiletries should be confined to **one** piece of luggage, while blankets, pillow, and a sleeping bag can be brought in an additional piece of luggage. **All possessions should be clearly identified/labeled with a sturdy nametag**, and your child should be able to carry them. A hefty trash bag with clearly labeled masking tape with the student's name works well. It is also helpful to send extra trash bags for students to put their bedding back in after outdoor education and for their dirty/wet laundry. It is not necessary to purchase new clothing. In fact, old, comfortable clothing is more appropriate for most outdoor activities. Clothing should be adequate for a large variation in daytime and evening temperatures. Please do not send a hair dryer, we will provide them in the cabins for the students. **Rain gear of some type is a must.**

Returning Forms:

This permission slip should be filled out and returned to your child's Science Teacher, as soon as possible, but no later than **Monday, September 30**. You should also send in the **\$86 payment** with the forms. We recommend putting everything in an envelope with the child's name on the front. If you have any questions about the outdoor education program, please contact Bridget Friedman, your child's Team Leader.

What to Pack

Essential Equipment	Optional Equipment	Things NOT to bring
sturdy hiking shoes or boots (2 pairs recommended)	binoculars	aerosol sprays
three (3) large LABELED plastic trash bags for sleeping bag/blankets and laundry	Disposable camera LABELED with name	curling iron or hair dryers – hair dryers will be provided for each cabin
hat	compass	knives of any kind
jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt	flip flops – for the shower only	matches or lighters
three (3) pairs of jeans or athletic pants (long pants must be worn at all times when in classes)	athletic sneakers	money
pajamas	lip balm	iPods, e-readers, iPads, Kindles, tablets or electronic games
raincoat or poncho with hood (no umbrellas)	non-aerosol insect spray	sandals for outdoor wear
sheets, blankets, or sleeping bag and pillow	shower cap	cell phones - parents can call the Google number provided to get in touch with their child
long-sleeved shirts (must be worn at all times when in classes)	board games, playing cards for cabin time	Glass bottles
toiletries: bath towel, wash cloth, comb, brush, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste	hand warmers, gloves	Electronic devices-any electronic devices will be confiscated and a parent will have to pick up
socks (you can never have too many)	watch	Any item prohibited by MCPS
underwear (several sets)	book for bedtime	
pen or pencils for journal time		
a pair of old sneakers for stream study		
BAG LUNCH labeled for the first day – no glass bottles – all contents disposable – no coolers or lunch boxes		
Any luggage you bring must be something you can carry YOURSELF.		

Packing Reminders: One suitcase per child, plus sleeping bag. Each child must be able to carry his or her own bag. All bags must be closed. Students must wear close-toed shoes at all times (no Crocs).
Students may not wear shorts at Outdoor Ed outside of the cabins.