



YMCA Camp DeBoer

Residential Outdoor School Information

See inside for Fall 2024 dates available and cost to host
5th and 6th graders for Residential Outdoor School

Our Goals and Objectives

Prior to students arriving at Camp DeBoer, we offer a classroom visit. Once on site, YMCA Camp DeBoer's Outdoor School Program creates an engaging, fun atmosphere where students are given an opportunity to learn in a natural environment. Students may discover more about themselves, their place in the world, and how to better relate to one another. Through place-based, experiential activities, students will marvel at how various elements of the natural world impact each other, and they will grow in awareness of and appreciation for our planet.

Our objectives are for students to:

- Foster an awareness of and appreciation for the natural world.
- Increase their knowledge of ecological concepts.
- Understand and experience the relationship between themselves and the natural world.
- Strengthen social relationships, encouraging cooperation, communication, and respect.
- Expand feelings of personal growth and self-confidence.
- Experience, and help create, a sense of belonging.
- Increase understanding of the effects and consequences of personal choices.
- Find comfort in and enjoy the natural world.
- Integrate the YMCA values of **Responsibility, Caring, Respect, and Honesty.**



Our Approach

Our commitment: In our efforts to engage students and succeed in our goals and objectives, we embrace the concept that engagement and success can look different for every student. We are committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture that integrates a strong sense of belonging, social-emotional growth, and self-care into the Outdoor School experience. Our staff is trained in practices that embrace various learning styles and aim to address individual needs. In community living, it is up to each person to help maintain a healthy, respectful learning environment.

Behavior Management: We believe that every student will be successful if they are able, and that it is our responsibility to ensure that students have what they need to be successful. We focus our behavior management on supporting students to participate constructively, rather than on punishing disruptive behaviors. During activities, disruptive students will be gently redirected. If not resolved, they will be referred to the Outdoor Education Director who will reach out to the teachers/leaders.



Facilities and Meals

Lodge

Completed in 2021, our beautiful lodge has a large dining hall, commercial kitchen, two lounges (one for camp staff and one for teachers/chaperones), restrooms, and an office.

Infirmary

This cabin houses the school's health officer, all medications, and includes a bed for an ill participant.

Teacher Accommodations

Upon completion of cabin lists and assigned chaperones, we will discuss the best options for teacher accommodations. It may be a shared, gender-specific heated cabin or cabinette with comfortable beds. Teachers bring their own bedding. Some bunks are full-sized beds; others are singles.

Meals

All meals and snacks are provided, beginning with lunch when classes arrive and ending with lunch before classes depart. Fresh, delicious, nutritious, kid-friendly meals are prepared in our state-of-the-art kitchen and served buffet style. Hand sanitizer is dispensed for everyone at the door. Teachers will send any dietary restrictions/allergies for adults and students prior to arrival using the form provided. We accommodate vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free diets. If a person's diet is abundantly restrictive, we recommend they bring packaged meals from home in a cooler, which we'll then store in our walk-in and serve at mealtimes.

Mealtimes are opportunities for students, staff, teachers, and chaperones to interact, build community, and nourish ourselves. We plan to have teachers, chaperones, and most staff go first through the line and sit at separate tables in the dining room. At this point the students can fill in where they like, with at least one adult per table. Teachers and chaperones are responsible for students while dining. Seconds can be had once everyone has fixed a plate. We'll have student-led morning meetings and make some announcements about what will follow in the day. Day 3: PJ Breakfast and Critter Dinner!



Student and Chaperone Cabins

There are two villages with 10 student cabins (5 for boys and 5 for girls). Heated cabins have comfortable bunks and private rooms for changing, using the toilet and the shower. Each cabin sleeps a maximum of 14 students. We require two chaperones per cabin, one of whom must be a mature 18+ individual. Teachers will be assigning students to cabins using forms provided. In each cabin, chaperones will find a cabin kit with books, quiet games, art supplies, skit and song ideas, and other helpful materials.



Campus

Our campus is comprised of rustic structures and lesson areas amid a diverse blend of wetlands, lake, and forest ecosystems nestled within the beautiful Fremont-Winema National Forest.



Teacher/Chaperone Lounge

The lodge has two beautiful lounges. The one on the south end is for use by our staff. The lounge on the north end of the building is for teachers and chaperones. This lovely room has Wifi, small tables, chairs, a comfortable couch, fireplace, and a view of the lake. There will be hot coffee and tea available in this room. Teachers and chaperones may wish to hang out here when activities are covered by another adult and they find themselves with some free time!



Field Studies, Availability, and Cost

We aim for a student to instructor ratio of 15:1 - 12:1. Two chaperones are required for each of the seven field study groups for modeling engagement, supervision, restroom breaks, and to help students stay on task. We do encourage teachers to visit each field study during the week.

Warm Up

Welcome to Outdoor School! We'll get our nametags, start our field journal, then jump into a lively intro to the 7 Principles of Leave No Trace! We'll then engage in some fun exercises to tune up our senses.

Towering Trees

Camp DeBoer is covered with giant conifers! We'll use a simple dichotomous key to learn a few of their names, then set out to estimate tree height with a clinometer. Other games and activities included.

Wilderness Skills

Students will discover what belongs in a Ten Essentials Kit and the importance of each item, hear a real-life survival story, discuss survival and signaling strategies, practice building a survival shelter, and try their hand at compass orienteering.

Wetland Wonders

We'll look at the importance and functions of wetlands and riparian areas through interaction with a wet meadow and a large marsh. With low impact in mind, we'll catch and release amphibians and macro-invertebrates. We'll collect data to assess the water quality on our site, and make observations of this ecosystem's plant and animal life.

Tracks, Scat and Skulls

We'll explore mammals by taking a look at skulls, scat, and tracks. Students will enjoy a number of games and activities as we investigate a variety of animal signs, habitat needs and adaptations.



Fire Science

We'll look at the components of wildland fire behavior, then create and burn model forests with matchsticks, doing several variations. We'll apply our new skills and assess the site for fire resiliency (and return home with the ability to assess our homes and schools).

Wrap Up

Students will take time to reflect in their journal and create a memory map of Camp DeBoer as well as a nature poem. We'll then share out things we liked and learned from the week.

Fall 2024 dates available:

Sept 23-27, 2024 and Oct 7-11, 2024

Fall 2024 cost:

3 days/2 nights = \$450 per student

4 days/3 nights = \$600 per student

Funding coordinated through OSU.

Spring 2025 available dates and cost TBD.

Cabin Time, Gathering, Recreation, Evening Program, & Campfire

Except where noted, Camp DeBoer Outdoor School staff will provide materials and leadership for the following activities. Chaperones and Teachers will provide assistance where needed along with student supervision.

Cabin Time

Periodically, students will gather in their cabin for “cabin time.” These times are scheduled after field studies when students may need to change into dry socks or other clothing after exploring the wetlands. We encourage students to use the first part of this time to change, then rest, read, play quiet games, and relax. There will be a kit in each cabin with books, quiet games, and supplies. Chaperones can use the term “feet on bunks” to encourage individual chill time. Students should not be sharing bunks with others or visiting other cabins.

Cabin times are breaks for ODS staff, though we will have times where a few staff will be on rotation to help cabins settle into an activity. At welcome campfire, cabins will come up with a “Cabin Call!” On days two and three, cabin time can be used to develop your skit, song, or talent for the closing campfire!

Gathering

Prior to lunch and dinner, the full ODS community will gather for a few minutes of mindfulness. During this time, we encourage students to check in with themselves, make observations about the natural environment around them, to breathe deeply and relax. This is a rare moment when we are all together – quiet and still. We ask teachers and chaperones to model appropriate participation in these activities.



Recreation

Students will sign up for recreation activities which take place in the late afternoon for about an hour, either indoors or outdoors depending on the activity. Recreation activities usually take place in groups of 15 or fewer and are opportunities for students to follow their interests. Staff will lead activities based on their individual strengths and student interest. Each day, a number of different activities will be offered for students to choose from. These may include: Hiking, gnome and fairy houses, rock painting and other art, friendship bracelets, chalk art, field games, board games, birding, wetland wanders, etc. Teachers and chaperones can be on break during recreation. **In the fall season, weather permitting, we’ll open up our boathouse for lake recreation options – canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, etc.**

Evening Program

We'll gather each evening after dinner for activities like trust falls, team-building games, the great ODS Scavenger hunt, an owl program, Camp Clue, the amazing race, trivia, Dutch auction, and more! Activities and locations will depend on the weather. We may also have a guest speaker or presentation during this time. Teachers and Chaperones will be in charge of supervision and may be asked to help run a rotation station. **We ask that team challenges be taken on by the students and not the adults.** Activities are created to build trust and teamwork and to solve age-appropriate challenges. It is not a competitive atmosphere with winners and losers.



Campfire

Our first night will feature a welcome campfire and our last night will feature a closing campfire. Weather permitting, this will be held in our beautiful outdoor amphitheater while enjoying the views of Lake of the Woods and Mt. McLoughlin (thus the need for **warm layers**). In inclement weather, we'll have an evening program in the lodge in front of our cozy fireplaces. Campfire is an entertaining and fun time for students to sing songs and share in cabin unity. At the beginning of each campfire staff will welcome each cabin and cabins will perform a "Cabin Call." Cabin calls are short songs, phrases, or dances that happen at their bench and are usually performed in unison. After cabin calls, staff will lead loud/active songs. Midway through campfire, staff will lead a transition to slower, quieter songs. To close campfire, staff will sing our goodnight song. During this final song, a staff member will dismiss cabin groups to go get ready for bed.



The second night, we'll be having a cooking fire for making s'mores!

On the last night, we will ask each cabin group to put together a short talent show, song, or skit that totals a few minutes in length. We encourage creativity, humor, props, costumes, and fun! Staff will bring some surprise fun of their own! Teachers and chaperones should be prepared to sit with cabin groups and encourage/model active participation while handling any disruptive behavior.



Sample Outdoor School Schedule (subject to change)

Day 1

Time	Activity	Location	Who's In Charge
7:45am	Staff arrive, set up FS, Rec, Eve	All campus	OED
10:00am	Class arrives, welcome, unload	Drop-off area (pavilion)	Staff then Teach/Chap (T/C)
10:30am	Campus Tours	Around campus	Staff
10:30pm	T/C ONLY: meet with OED	T/C Lounge	OED
10:45am	Orientation	Amphitheater	Staff, help from T/C
11:00pm	Warm Up to Field Studies	Amphitheater	OED, Staff + 2 T/C per group
12:15pm	Gathering	Flagpole circle	OED + staff as they wish
12:30pm	Lunch	Lodge	Staff with help from T/C
1:15pm	Get ready for Field Study (FS)	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
1:30pm	Field Study 1	Around campus	Staff + 2 T/C per group
3:15pm	Students and staff pack up FS	Around campus	Staff + 2 T/C per group
3:30pm	Snack / Cabin Time	Lodge, then cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
4:00pm	STAFF ONLY: huddle	Staff Lounge	OED
4:15pm	Recreation	Pavilion	Staff (T/C on break)
5:00pm	Cabin Time: rest & quiet 20 min.	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
5:45pm	Gathering	Flagpole circle	OED + staff as they wish
6:00pm	Dinner & Dessert	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
6:45pm	Evening program	Lodge/Pavilion/TBD	OED + few staff, help from T/C
7:30pm	Cabin time: dress & rehearse	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
8:00pm	Campfire	Amphitheater	Staff with help from T/C
9:00pm	Bedtime; Lights out at 9:30	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones

Day 2

Time	Activity	Location	Who's In Charge
7:45am	Breakfast	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones (T/C)
8:30am	Morning meetings	Lodge	Staff with help from T/C
9:00am	Brush teeth, get ready for FS	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
9:15am	Field Study 2	Meet at amphitheater	Staff + 2 T/C per group
11:15am	Cabin Time	Cabins	Staff + 2 T/C per group
11:45am	Gathering	Flagpole circle	OED + staff as they wish
12:00pm	Lunch	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
12:45pm	Get ready for FS	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
1:00pm	Field Study 3	Meet at amphitheater	Staff + 2 T/C per group
3:00pm	Students and staff pack up FS	Around campus	Staff + 2 T/C per group
3:15pm	Snack & Cabin Time	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
3:45pm	STAFF ONLY: huddle, prep rec	Staff Lounge	OED
4:15pm	Recreation	Pavilion	Staff
5:00pm	Cabin Time	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
5:45pm	Gathering	Flagpole circle	OED + staff as they wish
6:00pm	Dinner (no dessert, s'mores night)	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
6:45pm	Get ready for Evening Program	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
7:00pm	Evening program w/s'mores	Lodge/Pavilion/Amph	OED + few staff, help from T/C
9:00pm	Bedtime; Lights out at 9:30	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones

Day 3

Time	Activity	Location	Who's In Charge
7:45am	Pajama Breakfast	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
8:30am	Morning meetings	Lodge	Staff, help from T/C
9:00am	Brush teeth, get ready for FS	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
9:15am	Field Study 4	Meet at amphitheater	Staff + 2 T/C per group
11:15am	Cabin Time	Cabins	Staff + 2 T/C per group
11:45am	Gathering	Flagpole circle	Education Director/Staff
12:00pm	Lunch	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
12:45pm	Get ready for FS	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
1:00pm	Field Study 5	Meet at amphitheater	Staff + 2 T/C per group
3:00pm	Students and staff pack up FS	Around campus	Staff + 2 T/C per group
3:15pm	Snack & Cabin Time	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
3:45pm	STAFF ONLY: huddle, prep rec	Staff Lounge	OED
4:15pm	Recreation	Pavilion	Staff
5:00pm	Cabin Time	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
5:45pm	Gathering	Flagpole circle	Education Director/Staff
6:00pm	Critter Dinner & Dessert	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
6:45pm	Evening program	Lodge/Pavilion/TBD	OED + few staff
7:30pm	Cabin time	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
8:00pm	Campfire	Amphitheater	Staff with help from T/C
9:00pm	Bedtime; Lights out at 9:30	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones

Day 4

Time	Activity	Location	Who's In Charge
7:00am	Pack	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
7:45am	Breakfast	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
8:30am	Morning meetings	Lodge	Staff with help from T/C
9:00am	Clean cabins and set out bags	Cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
9:30am	Field Study Wrap Up, ODS Names	Meet at amphitheater	Staff + 2 T/C per group
11:00am	Break	Restrooms	
11:15am	Trash Dash	Amphitheater	Staff + 2 T/C per group
11:30am	Closing Circle	Amphitheater	Staff
12:00pm	Lunch	Lodge	Teachers/Chaperones
12:45pm	Get ready to depart	Move out of cabins	Teachers/Chaperones
1:00pm	Departure	Pavilion	All adults

Ready to sign up or receive additional information?

Contact Karin Onkka, Outdoor Education Director at outdoored@ashlandymca.org

