

The Woods Project

School Partner Memorandum of Understanding

2009/10 Programming

School Name _____ School Contact _____

Email address _____ Phone Number _____

Number of Participating Students Expected—School season programming _____

Number of Participating Students Expected—summer season programming _____

OVERVIEW:

The Woods Project, Inc. partners with schools to provide and/or facilitate wilderness education programming for disadvantaged high school aged youth. The program includes weekend outings to wilderness areas in the spring and fall and a two week summer program for qualified graduates of the fall/spring programming. The summer portion of the program takes place in wilderness areas such as Yosemite National Park, Marin Headlands, and Desolation Wilderness in Northern California.

Using wilderness education as the basis of the program, The Woods Project seeks to develop leadership and life skills in the students that will prepare the students for college and life independent of their families. While we include students of all academic achievement levels, we seek out those who have the maturity to be away from family for an extended period as well as a natural inquisitiveness that will enable them to embrace an environment that is completely removed from the urban settings in which they have been raised.

As The Woods Project is a 100% volunteer run program, we place very strong reliance on our School Partners in the area of student recruiting and qualifying and require that one teacher/administrator from the school take part in the program alongside the youth for each ten participants from the School.

PROGRAM OUTLINE:

The Woods Project will provide at least one weekend event in the fall and one in the spring that will include the opportunity for each of the youth to camp out and the majority to participate in a backpack trip that will be required before they may participate in the summer program. They must have participated in a backpacking trip in the spring or fall in order to qualify to backpack on the summer trip.

Spring and fall event(s) will begin on a Friday evening and conclude at approximately noon on Sunday. The events will take place in a wilderness area within 80 miles of the school and will most likely include a service project. The school will provide the transportation for the students- The Woods Project will absorb all other costs of the weekend programming and all required equipment and food.

The summer event will be a two week event at a wilderness location such as Yosemite National Park, Desolation Wilderness, or other prime wilderness area. The event will include significant physical challenge and classroom settings as well as education in biology, ecology, botany, geology, and wilderness living. Events are built around a program to improve student confidence and leadership and prepare students for living independently in the future.

WOODS PROJECT COMMITMENT:

To provide safe and engaging programming to your students

To provide all equipment other than personal clothing required for the program and transportation to those attending the summer portion of the programming

To provide leaders qualified to work with youth

To have rich programming in a wide range of wilderness education related topics through our leaders and wilderness partners

To manage all logistics for the summer program and all logistics other than student transportation for the fall/spring programming

To provide funding for approximately 75% of the cost of the summer programming and 100% of the cost of fall/spring programming

To communicate effectively with all parties as needed to insure safe and reliable programming

SCHOOL PARTNER COMMITMENT:

To provide one qualified staff person (see required qualifications below) per group of 10 or less students who will take part in each event involving the students in The Woods Project. For instance, a school sending 30 students will provide three staffers to accompany the students on all Woods Project programming and be an integral part of the adult leadership team.

To arrange for recruiting and pre-trip parent meetings with Woods Project staff

To insure that the staff persons assigned to the project are committed to wilderness education, have experience with activities similar to those of The Woods Project and are committed to take an active part in the leadership of the fall/spring and summer programming.

To provide airfare and housing/meal costs for staff members taking part in the summer portion of The Woods Project programming.

To have a coordinator at the School who understands the program parameters and insures that all students are appropriate for the programming and that applications, student and parent liability waivers, health forms, and other required forms are properly filled out and delivered to The Woods Project in advance of the program dates and in accordance with the agreed upon schedules.

To review all Woods Project student applications prior to submittal.

To forward all approved applications to The Woods Project by March 15, 2010.

To provide transportation for fall/spring activities of The Woods Project.

To collect the student and school portions of the programming cost through school accounts or other method and remit same to The Woods Project by check from the School by March 31, 2009.

To communicate effectively with all parties as needed to insure safe and reliable programming.

In the event of a student having to be returned early from an event for any reason, to arrange for and pay the cost of such student to be returned to their family.

To insure that all student and staff post-trip surveys are completed by the students and/or faculty in a timely manner.

REQUIREMENTS OF SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

The staff members taking part in The Woods Project must be:

Committed outdoors persons who have a strong background in such activities as backpacking or camping

Committed to wilderness education and introducing youth to wilderness activities

Able to work well with a team of leaders to provide active guidance and leadership to the youth, both those from your school and other schools who may be taking part in the program

Able to attend at least one meeting of leaders for their specific camp prior to the summer event

Able to deal with disciplinary and other issues effectively, including sending youth home if warranted.

To communicate effectively with all parties as needed to coordinate all aspects of the program

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:

9th graders through seniors qualify for the program (at least rising 10th graders for the summer portion of the program. We prefer a mix of 15-20% alumni of previous Woods Project summer programming and 80-85% new students each year. We also prefer 15% to 20% of the students be rising 11th graders or higher. Students, by the time of the summer portion of the program, must be at least rising sophomores and have expressed a strong interest in being part of THIS program

Each student must:

Have good behavior record and written recommendation of a teacher, endorsed by the School representative taking part in the program, with such recommendations accepted by The Woods Project.

Sign a contract early in the school year governing their behavior and outlining their obligations to The Woods Project.

Be healthy enough to take part in a five mile strenuous hike 9,000 feet above sea level. A student who is unable to run a mile in 10 minutes or less is most probably not fit enough to participate in our program.

Be able to effectively and safely self manage any health issues or conditions such as asthma, ADHD, diabetes, or hypertension and have the maturity to take any required medications without involvement of other persons.

Have the maturity to travel independently, if required.

Take part in pre-requisite activities in the spring and fall in order to participate in the summer program.

Provide all required forms properly executed with complete and accurate information, with signatures as indicated for parents/guardians and students

Provide approximately 25% of the program cost, with full funding to be received by The Woods Project by April 30, 2010. Estimated student cost for the 2010 program is \$425 per student.

The Woods Project 2010 School Partner Memorandum of Understanding

Agreed as of _____ (date) by:

The Woods Project, Inc.

School Partner: _____

by: _____

by: _____

Steve Rosencranz, President

Name: _____

Title: __Principal_____

Responsibilities Acknowledged:

By: _____

Program Coordinator