

## Westminster Woods FAQ's

Updated 10/21/11

Q: When are we going?

A: March 20-23, 2012

Q: Where is Westminster Woods?

A: It is located in the Alliance Redwoods just west of Sebastopol. It is just 4 miles from the town of Occidental. The drive is 1-1/2 to 2 hrs. from Sacramento.

Q: What makes Westminster Woods so great?

A: The goal of this environmental education program is for students to appreciate, understand and care for the Earth. This is achieved through hands on exploration and observation. Teacher naturalists create a physically and emotionally safe and healthy learning environment, which in turn creates an educational atmosphere which includes excitement, learning, relaxation, reflection, and fun. Students will be involved in team building activities, rope courses, a visit to the coast for tide pooling and a visit at Fort Ross to learn about the history of Russian fur trading. The evening includes campfires, a night hike, and lots of fun and learning. Did I mention that the environment is beautiful and peaceful and that the teacher naturalists are absolutely awesome? Let us not neglect to mention that the food is quite tasty and nutritious and one may even go back for seconds!

Q: Who can attend?

A: Any PACT student who is in 2<sup>nd</sup> (7yrs.) through 11<sup>th</sup> grades may attend. Please note that there is a fee for this 4-day and 3-night education program.

Q: What about supervision?

A: Students are never without supervision while at Westminster Woods. It is required that there be one chaperone per every seven students at all times. We provide one chaperone per for every four students. In addition, I am circulating amongst the students and chaperones and am on the premises at all times. The chaperone is in charge of their students during all meals and cabin time and the teacher naturalist and chaperones supervise the teaching groups. There are at least three chaperones assigned to the hour of "free time" duty each day. David Berman, the camp director, is on site and accessible if his assistance is required. Students are given the boundaries at orientation the first day. As you can see, there are more eyes on our students than in everyday life!

Q: Who can be a chaperone?

A: A chaperone must be an adult who possesses patience, enthusiasm, good health, flexibility, and can take directions well. The primary role of the chaperone is to

supervise a group of students, be a positive role model, and ensure safety of the students. Our chaperones are required to get fingerprinted at the Dept.of Justice or UPS in the Safeway shopping Center beforehand, and be cleared through FBI & DOJ in order to be with the students. Once you have done this, you will never have to do it again as long as your student remains at the charter school. You will be given the necessary paperwork once you are signed up as a chaperone.

Q: What does it cost?

A: Student tuition is \$275.00. There is a non-refundable deposit of \$50 for each student due at registration. The deposit will be applied to the tuition. The chaperone tuition is \$200.00. There is a \$50 non-refundable deposit due at registration time that will be applied to the tuition.

Q: What is included in the cost?

A: The cost includes housing for 3 nights, 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 3 dinners. It also provides the excellent teaching staff and educational program that is tailored to meet our needs. It may seem costly, but it is really quite a deal.

Q: Is there a payment plan?

A: Yes, if you choose to pay in installments. Initially, you will pay the deposit at the time of registration. The remainder may be paid in installments beginning December 10. Here is a breakdown of payments due per student & chaperone. (A parent chaperone or a familiar adult is recommended for most 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>-grade students).

<b>Student</b>	<b>Chaperone</b>
<b>Beginning on October 27 – Registration Deposit \$50</b>	<b>Deposit \$50</b>
December 7 (week of) - \$75.00	\$50
January 11 (week of) - \$75.00	\$50
February 8 (week of) - \$75.00	\$50

Q: What is the Scholarship Fund?

A: All students wishing to attend are asked to participate in the See's Candy fundraiser to earn their way to camp. A Scholarship Fund is comprised of donations from PACT families and outside sources as well as from fundraisers to assist students with their tuition. Donors have the option of specifying who they'd like to send to camp.

Q: What is our means of transportation?

A: A chaperone should be able to provide transportation for themselves and preferably for other campers as well. Due to transportation costs, we encourage our campers to carpool and contribute gas money in return. Our chaperone drivers will have to provide

proof of insurance. Whenever possible, chaperones will transport the students in their cabin group. It is up to the chaperone to make pick-up and drop-off arrangements. Chaperones may also be driving to Salt Point and Fort Ross on one of the days. It is about 20 miles to Jenner on the coast. **Carsickness:** If you have a son/daughter who is prone to carsickness, please notify the driver and provide the Dramamine or whatever else works to prevent mishaps. Some of the roads are rather windy.

Q: What will my son/daughter need to pack?

A: Once we have registration out of the way, you will be provided with a detailed information packet. For now I will tell you **what cannot be packed:** Radios, platform shoes, Walkman-type equipment or electronic games, beepers, fishing gear, alcohol/drugs, knives/weapons. Cell phones do not work well at Westminster Woods. There is a pay phone, however.

A chaperone meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-4:30PM

Update & Slideshow: Meeting Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup> from 12:00-1:00pm.