

GR. 5 OUTDOOR EDUCATION – CAMP CASEY

The outdoor education program in the Tahoma School District began over thirty years ago. One class, two teachers, and some parent chaperones spent a weekend at West Cover, Orcas Island. Camp Casey, on Whidbey Island, was the program site chosen in the 1970's and remains home to the outdoor education program today. This year approximately 570 students will attend one of two camp sessions. Session one is Monday through Wednesday. Session two is Wednesday through Friday.

Camp Casey offers a unique environment in which to learn and grow. Students are exposed to a historical part of the state of Washington and given the opportunity to learn the natural environment.

All fifth-grade classes have been scheduled to attend camp for three days the week before spring break in April. Students will leave their school at 8 a.m. on the first day and return on the third day at 2 p.m.

CAMP CASEY FACILITY

Camp Casey is located on Whidbey Island. Students take a 35 minute bus ride to Mukilteo where they then take a 25 minute ferry ride to Whidbey Island. They exit the ferry at Clinton and have a 35 minute bus ride to Camp Casey.

Camp Casey is part of a coastal artillery installation that was built by the U.S. Army to protect Puget Sound. It was eventually sold to Seattle Pacific University and is now rented to groups throughout the year. The facilities currently used at Camp Casey include:

- Five barracks each housing 75 students
- Mess hall
- Auditorium
- Gymnasium
- Teachers' building/nurses quarters
- Cook's quarters
- Oceanography lab
- Craft building
- Basketball and volleyball courts
- Large field for soccer, rocket-launching and kite flying
- Area for campfire

For more information about the facility and grounds, visit the Camp Casey Conference Center website at: www.spu.edu/depts/casey/

CAMP DATES – Classes are assigned to one three day session. They will depart at 8:00 a.m. on day one and return at 2:00 p.m. on day three.

Session One March 26-28	Session Two March 28-30
SL – Lindstrom SL – Williams	SL – Mitchell SL – Heighton SL - White
LW – Cuddie LW – Newbrey, R.	LW – Finch LW – Newbrey, T. LW - Cragar
RC – Cassady RC – Rodriquez RC – Aaby	RC – Lange RC – Johnson RC – Schuster
GP – Blechschmidt GP – Reynoldson GP – Pierce GP - Betlach	GP – Hagen GP – Conklin

CAMP CASEY COSTS

The student cost for this year is \$150. Options for making this payment are as follows:

- One payment of \$150 paid any time prior to March 15, 2012
- Monthly or multiple payments (however it works best for your family). Available October through March 15, 2012

Please make checks payable to your **child's school** or you can pay online using the school district's E-Funds system, which is available through Family Access. You may contact your school office if unfamiliar with Family Access.

If you would like to contribute to a scholarship fund for families who need help with this cost please contact your school's PTSA.

OPTIONAL COSTS FOR CAMP

More information will be sent home in February regarding these optional items:

- Camp Casey T-shirt or sweatshirt: \$15 -\$25
- Rocket kit: \$13-\$17
- Coupeville candy store: \$5-\$15

FOOD

The first day students are asked to bring a sack lunch to be eaten when they arrive at Camp Casey. Cooks and staff from the Tahoma School District prepare 3 meals a day during the camp. Students are given a snack each evening while a movie is shown. If your child has food restrictions due to allergies, please inform the school nurse.

CAMP SET UP AND ACTIVITIES

Fifth grade students are divided into squads of six to eight with a high school counselor in charge. There are generally three squads per floor assigned to each barracks. Students are never to be alone. It is expected that they will be with their squad and counselor at all times.

The fifth-grade camp curriculum is in the process of being planned. Some of the classes that are in place are:

- History of the area (lighthouse and fort)
- Oceanography
- Outdoor art
- Survival
- Kite making
- Town and Museum tour (Coupeville)
- Orienteering (scavenger hunt)

Additional planned activities include:

- Rocket launching
- Postcards
- Evening program and campfire

Other supervised activities:

- Beachcombing
- Fort Casey exploration
- Sports/games

COUNSELORS

Counselors are selected from Tahoma High School. These students must be juniors or seniors and be in good-standing. Over 200 students apply and only 90 are taken to camp (45 for each session). The students fill out an application, have references from three high school teachers, and are interviewed by involved staff members. Input is gathered from the high school administration, counselors and other pertinent staff members before the final selection is made.

A teacher is in charge of overseeing the high school counselors. This is a very important job and we find that the selected high school students take it very seriously. Most of them participated in camp when they were in 5th grade and want make sure that their assigned students have a similar great experience.



Prior to attending camp, the high school counselors attend a Saturday training session and several before-school sessions with our counselor trainers.

The training sessions include:

- Understanding a fifth grade student
- Discipline
- Achieving squad unity
- Teacher expectations
- Dealing with homesickness
- Rules for counselors

HEALTH SUPPORT AT CAMP

Two school district nurses are on site for the entire week. They are able to administer medication and provide health support to students as needed. A parent permission form sent home in February will include a section on medication needs. If a student becomes ill at camp, parents will be contacted and may be asked to pick up their child at camp.

If your student has special considerations, please contact your school nurse for more information on how we can support your child at camp.

STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND CAMP

Camp Casey is considered an integral part of the fifth grade curriculum and every effort is made to take all of our students. If there is a student that would put himself/herself or anyone else at risk, the decision may be made to keep the student home. This is always a last resort. An in-school program will be in place for these students.

If has questions or concerns about their child attending, please contact the outdoor education coordinator or child's teacher. We may be able to come to up with a solution that will work for you and your child. If a parent chooses not to send a child to camp, students are still expected to attend school.

MORE INFORMATION – PARENT MEETING

An *optional* parent meeting for those who would like more information about the 5th grade outdoor education program at Camp Casey is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 15 at 6 p.m. in the Rock Creek Elementary gym**. Topics will include daily schedule, transportation, counselor training, staff supervision, sleeping arrangements, homesickness, and student behavioral and nursing support.

If you have specific questions, please contact Radie Haytack, Outdoor Education Coordinator, 425-413-3313 or email: rhaytack@tahomasd.us