

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 1970s and remains home to the outdoor education program today. About 620 students will attend one of two camp sessions this year. 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 about 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:

- Six barracks each housing 50-75 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 April 2-4	Session Two April 4-6
Lake Wilderness Glacier Park Shadow Lake	Rock Creek Cedar River Tahoma

CAMP CASEY COSTS

The total cost per student to attend camp for the three days is \$200. Thanks to our generous PTSA and PTO groups, they willingly donate up to \$50 of the cost per student, if it is requested by the parent. With PTSA/PTO donating the full \$50, the required payment per student to attend camp is \$150. Note: If parents choose to pay the full amount of \$200, PTSA/PTO will use the \$50 for other programs that benefit students.

Options for making this payment are as follows:

- One payment any time prior to March 16, 2018
- Monthly or multiple payments (however it works best for your family). Available now through March 16, 2018

Please make checks payable to your **child's school** or you can pay online.

For on-line payments, log on to the district home page at <http://www.tahomasd.us>. On the right hand side of the screen under Quick Links select the link to Online Payments. To Log in: User Name and Password are the same as your Skyward Family Access credentials

If you are unable to pay the required payment and your student qualifies for free/reduced lunch, please contact your school social worker or counselor for information regarding a PTSA scholarship.

OPTIONAL COSTS FOR CAMP

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

- Camp Casey 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. The camp caterer prepares 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
- Copper Art Project
- Survival
- Kite making
- Town and Museum tour (Coupeville)

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 220 students apply and only 100 are taken to camp (50 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 fifth 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 you have questions or concerns about your child attending, please contact the outdoor education coordinator or your child's teacher. We may be able to come 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 fifth-grade outdoor education program at Camp Casey is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 7th at 6:00 p.m. at Rock Creek Elementary**. 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