



RIVERSTONE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

2025-26

Riverstone International School

Outdoor Education Handbook 2025-26

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About Riverstone International School

Mission

The mission of Riverstone International School is to inspire courageous journeys of academic and personal exploration that enables our students to lead purposeful lives.

Guiding Principles

Riverstone students are expected to participate in all phases of school life. While inside and outside of school, students are expected to adhere to our Guiding Principles that are based on the IB Learner Profile:

- I will seek understanding
- I will respect others and myself
- I will take action to help my community

These three principles will help students to develop into and demonstrate the characteristics of the IB learner profile:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| • An Inquirer | • Caring |
| • Knowledgeable | • A Risk-Taker |
| • A Global Thinker | • Balanced |
| • A Communicator | • Reflective |
| • Principled | • Inquirer |
| • Open-Minded | |

Five Pillars

At Riverstone, the Five Pillars provide the basis for everything we do.

- Academic Excellence
- Community and Service
- Leadership by Example
- International Understanding
- Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education at Riverstone

Introduction

Outdoor Education plays an integral part in helping create the whole student, leading to self-discovery and character-building through challenging outdoor experiences. Trips are conducted throughout the year and vary by grade level.

Outdoor Education Program Mission

As an extension of the classroom, Riverstone's Outdoor Education Program aims to facilitate personal growth, outdoor skills, and environmental responsibility through meaningful outdoor experiences.

Outdoor Education Program Purpose and Educational Philosophy

The purpose of the Outdoor Education Program is to bridge the gap between the classroom and the natural world by giving students the opportunity to get outside and learn.

Not all classrooms have walls is a common slogan of Riverstone's Outdoor Education Program. It demonstrates how we view the outdoors and nature as an extension of the classroom. We often incorporate classroom curriculum into our outdoor education experiences through meaningful activities and site selection.

Personal growth and character development are also aspects of Riverstone's Outdoor Education Program. We strive to develop leadership skills, communication skills, resiliency, teamwork, and a thirst for adventure.

Outdoor Education Learning Outcomes

Outdoor Skills

Having competent and reliable outdoor skills is essential to running any expedition. From backcountry cooking to map reading; from downhill skiing to rock climbing; these skills are essential to the development of an outdoor enthusiast. Other skills learned in outdoor education contribute to students making healthy lifestyle choices. Students need to be in good physical condition and maintain proper nutrition to exert themselves on outdoor trips.

<i>Leadership Development</i>	Leadership is an important aspect of outdoor education. Students will have the opportunity to develop skills such as judgment and decision making, risk management, communication, teamwork, and problem solving. Students will also develop their own leadership style through observations of trip leaders over the years. Learning about a variety of leadership styles helps mold great leaders.
<i>Environmental Stewardship</i>	Riverstone follows the seven principles of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. By following these guidelines, we ensure our students leave the areas in which we hike, bike, ski, and climb are left in a way in which others can enjoy them. Teaching environmental stewardship instills a sense of place in students, allowing them to cherish our wild places and care for them and their future.
<i>Community Building</i>	We strategically send the Middle & High School out on outdoor trips during the first few weeks of school. This creates an opportunity to build community and teamwork among classes during the beginning of school after a long summer. An essential part of being a student at Riverstone is creating relationships inside and out of the classroom. A cohesive group in the outdoors contributes to the success and goals of the expedition; without positive peer encouragement, the trip will not go as planned.
<i>Self-Discovery and Self-Awareness</i>	An essential part of elementary school, middle school, and high school is discovering one's sense of self. Throughout each Riverstone outdoor experience, students will learn something about themselves—from the effects of nature on their thoughts and feelings to discovering that perceived limits can be nudged with a positive attitude and encouragement from peers. Resiliency is a critical learning outcome of outdoor education, teaching students that anything in life can be accomplished if they put their minds to it.

All learning outcomes that are a product of spending time outdoors, are an important part of being a student at Riverstone. Each learning outcome will not only contribute to students' growth in the outdoors, but can also be transferred to each day spent at Riverstone and beyond. These transferable skills contribute to the development of students as they are led by Riverstone's Guiding Principles.

Positive Learning Environment

Riverstone promotes a positive learning environment and outdoor education experiences are an extension of the classroom. The outdoors is a place where all students should feel included, cared for, supported, and safe. Each student's values and beliefs affect the entire group, and each student is expected to treat others with respect. Therefore, all Riverstone policies and procedures are still applicable during outdoor experiences away from campus; actions that disrupt the positive learning environment could result in expulsion and removal from the field.

2025-26 Elementary School Courses

Grade	Fall	Winter	Spring
Preschool	Rafting – Lower Payette	Learn To Bike Program	Learn To Bike Program
Pre-K	Rafting – Lower Payette	Rock Climbing	Learn to Bike Program
Kindergarten	Rafting – Lower Payette Learn to Bike Program	Rock Climbing	Outdoor Ed at Idaho City
Grade 1	Rafting – Lower Payette	Rock Climbing	Spring Overnight to Castle Rocks State Park
Grade 2	Rafting – Lower Payette	Nordic Ski Lessons (weekly half-day trips)	Overnight Camping at Bruneau Dunes
Grade 3	Rafting – Main Payette	Nordic Ski Lessons (weekly half-day trips)	Two nights at Horsethief YMCA Camp – Water Ecology curriculum (lodge- Based)
Grade 4	Rafting – Main Payette & Three nights at McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS)	SnowSchool – Bogus Basin and Winter Wildlands Association (four day trips)	Oregon Trail Exploration Day
Grade 5	Rafting – Payette & Overnight camping at Intermountain Bird Observatory	Snowshoeing Day Trip in Idaho City	Moab Excursion

2025-26 Middle & High School Courses

Grade	Fall	Winter	Spring
Grade 6	4-day Yellowstone/Eastern Idaho – Lodge Based	Life Sports at Bogus Basin: Ski and Snowboard lessons (4 day trips)	Civil Rights in Southern Idaho Camping Trip
Grade 7	3 Day Owyhee Bike Trip with 1 Day of Mountain Bike Coaching	Life Sports at Bogus Basin: Ski and Snowboard lessons (4 day trips)	3 Day Trip Along the Weiser River Trail
Grade 8	6-day Salmon River Rafting – Camping	Winter Snowshoe/Yurt Trip –Galena Lodge Yurts	5-day Hells Canyon, Idaho/Oregon backpacking trip
Grade 9	3-day backpacking Idaho Mountains	Snowshoeing Day Trip in Idaho City	5-day Grand Gulch/Cedar Mesa, Utah backpacking trip
Grade 10	3-day backpacking Idaho Mountains	Snowshoeing Day Trip in Idaho City	5-day Rogue River Wilderness, Oregon backpacking trip
Grade 11	3-day backpacking Idaho Mountains Northwest College Tour	Winter Camping Trip – Yurt supported, Idaho City	College “Boot Camp”: 4 days at YMCA Yurts, with supplemental outdoor activities
Grade 12	3-day backpacking Sawtooth Mountains	Snowshoeing Day Trip in Idaho City	3-day Senior Climbing Trip to Castle Rocks or City of Rocks, Idaho

Additional Middle and High School Course Offerings

- Wednesday Without Walls Programming - Rock Climbing, Skiing, Snowshoeing, Hiking, Trip Preparation
- Middle School Outdoor Education Elective
- High School Outdoor Education and Leadership Elective
- Introduction to Backcountry Skiing
- Wilderness First Aid Course
- Summer Excursions

Student Equipment and Clothing

Personal Equipment for Outdoor Education Courses

Each trip has a list of specific equipment which the students are required to bring, and will be sent to parents and students weeks ahead of each trip. Proper fit and quality of equipment is essential to comfort and performance during backcountry trips. Below is a list of items that are generally required for Riverstone Outdoor Education trips and a brief description to aid in the appropriate selection of items.

Specific Equipment for Elementary School Courses

Please note that all of the items listed below are not necessary to purchase. The Outdoor Education Coordinator will provide a packing list in advance of Elementary Outdoor trips.

Fall and Spring	Winter
Hiking Day Pack Hiking Shoes Reusable Water Bottle Duffel Bag Sleeping Bag Pillow Headlamp	Hiking Day Pack Snow Boots Insulated Snow Pants Insulated Snow Jacket Waterproof Gloves Wool Socks Wool Hat
See detailed information regarding clothing below	

Equipment for Middle & High School Courses

Purchasing and gathering outdoor equipment for backpacking trips can be daunting. However, there is no need to go out and spend a large amount of money to outfit your growing student. With that said, there are a few items that will be a lifetime investment: a backpack and proper fitting boots could mean the difference between a great trip and a trip filled with sore feet and blisters.

Keep in mind the following when packing and shopping for items:

- o Use what you have already. There is no need to spend lots of money for outdoor equipment if you already own some of these items, especially those made from synthetic material and are appropriate for outdoor use. If you do not have an item on the list, contact friends and family members first to see if you might be able to borrow some items.
- o Next, reach out to Derek Wright, Outdoor Education & Service Learning Coordinator, to see if Riverstone has items for rent. Riverstone has backpacks, sleeping bags, and sleeping pads available on a first-come, first-served basis. We also have an assortment of clothing and boots for students who are in need of specific items. The cost of renting items is included in tuition. Proper care and maintenance of these items are the responsibility of the student when the gear is in their possession; it is the student and family's responsibility to repair (or pay to have repaired) any damages to Riverstone equipment.
- o If you are still in need of gear or clothing, Boise has a wide array of outdoor gear retail stores that have a great selection and knowledgeable staff to help you make the right choices. We recommend that you look at consignment outdoor stores first, as your student may quickly grow out of clothing items, before trying new outdoor gear shops for new retail items.

Used/Consigned Outdoor Gear Shops	New Outdoor Gear Shops
Score Outdoors 10422 Fairview Ave, Boise 208-401-6543	REI 8300 Emerald St, Boise 208-322-1141
Outdoor Exchange 1405 W Grove St, Boise 208-297-7002	Als Sporting Goods 1301 N Milwaukee St. 435-210-5356

- o Think quality over quantity: the list of items below is what one would need for an overnight trip or a week-long trip. The weight of each item is important, as we want to keep our packs as light as possible as we travel for 4-10 miles each day. Spending a little more money on essential items can be a great investment for your student's outdoor career at Riverstone. Quality items are generally lighter and last longer.
- o Essential items: Items that will last a long time and are worth purchasing quality items are Sleeping Bag, Sleeping Pad, and a Backpack. Finding a lightweight sleeping bag that is either down or synthetic can make for a comfortable night's sleep along with a good pad that provides insulation.
- o Boots: Good footwear is essential. We want you to have boots that provide adequate protection for your feet, are able to withstand rugged wear and terrain, and provide reasonable comfort. Many boots on the market do not meet these criteria. Select a pair of boots that will

withstand the rigors of a Riverstone trip. Look for boots with full grain leather upper, a sole that provides good traction, ankle support, and a comfortable fit with your wool hiking socks. Trail runners are not acceptable.

Upper Body Clothing	
We layer our clothing, combining different clothing items to achieve optimum insulation and protection from wind, rain, and snow. We use either synthetic or wool fibers, as it provides insulation when wet. We avoid cotton, as it does not keep us warm when wet.	
Base Layer (mid-weight synthetic)	Mid-weight long underwear top, wool or synthetic
Middle Layer (fleece pullover)	Fleece pullover or expedition-weight top, or a wool sweater
Top Layer (synthetic jacket)	A warm, synthetic fill jacket. A "puffy" that fits over all layers
Wind shirt	A lightweight, breathable, nylon wind shirt that blocks the wind. Pullovers are available, or a Gore-tex rain jacket can double as a wind shirt. Windbreakers are not acceptable
Rain Jacket	A sturdy waterproof jacket that can fit over all your layers. Must have a hood. Has a waterproof finish such as Gore-tex, H2No, Precip, Dry Q
T-Shirt	A lightweight hiking shirt, synthetic or wool t-shirt

Lower Body Clothing	
You will need 1-2 synthetic insulating layers (usually a base layer and, in winter, a pair of fleece pants). All must fit over each other so that they can be worn at the same time. If you tend to get cold easily, feel free to add another layer of midweight bottoms to the base layer and fleece pants.	
Base Layer (mid-weight synthetic)	Mid-weight synthetic or wool bottoms. Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable
Middle Layer (expedition-weight synthetic)	Fleece bottoms that can fit comfortably over the base-layer bottoms
Wind Pants	Nylon shell pants. These should fit over all lower body layers. Running pants are not durable enough. You will most likely be hanging around camp in these and sitting down often during cooking and classroom time.
Rain Pants	Rain pants need to be waterproof, can double as wind pants if they are durable and have a waterproof finish.
Nylon shorts	Loose-fitting hiking shorts that are comfortable to hike in
Nylon hiking pants	<i>Optional</i> , depending on weather, hiking in pants is an option if it tends to be cold or rainy. Usually rain pants can be worn early in the morning to double as pants
Underwear and sports bra	Briefs or boxers must be synthetic, some males forego underwear and wear shorts with a nylon liner. Women can wear what's comfortable; bras must be silk or synthetic

Head, Neck, and Hand Layers	
Baseball cap or wide-brim sun hat	To protect ears and face from the sun
Wool or fleece hat	A warm hat for cool mornings and evenings
Gloves or Mittens	Warm pair of synthetic gloves for mornings and evenings, lightweight gloves can also be used as sun protection

Packs and Bags	
Backpack	Backpack must have an internal frame and a minimum size of 65 liters. When fully packed with personal items, there must be enough room for group food and group gear. Roughly 1 cubic foot must be empty (the size of a basketball).
Small Stuff Sack	<i>Optional</i> , Small stuff sacks are great for smaller items to be kept in such as headlamp, toothbrush, sunscreen, etc. Large ziplocks work as well.
Large Stuff Sack	Large stuff sack must be brought for group food. At the trailhead we divide food up into groups and each group is responsible for carrying their own food. At night, we must keep food off the ground to avoid critters feeding off our food. The sacks also keep everything together and keep food out of our clothes and tents
Large and durable trash bag	This trash bag will be used as a liner in case we encounter rain or water, it will keep the contents of our pack dry.

Sleeping Bags and Pads	
Sleeping Bag	Mummy-style and synthetic bags are best for Riverstone outdoor trips. Synthetic bags keep students warm if the bag gets wet; down does not. A sleeping bag that has 3 pounds of fill and is rated to 10 degrees F is best. All bags must be rated to a maximum of 20 degrees F.
Compression Sack	<i>Optional</i> . Compression sacks are used for sleeping bags
Plastic trash bag	Heavy duty, will help keep sleeping bag dry
Sleeping Pad	Should be closed-cell foam and at least $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick. Used for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. We also recommend self-inflating sleeping pads

Miscellaneous	
Insulated Mug	12-20 oz. insulated mug with a lid for hot drinks in the morning and evening
Bowl	A bowl with a lid is handy to hold snacks and to keep food that you haven't eaten
Spoon	Lexan spoons are lightweight and durable. Plastic utensils do not work well
Water bottle	A 1-liter Nalgene is the most popular choice. Gatorade bottles work well too. You must be able to carry 3 liters of water in your pack. Even if you elect to use a hydration pack such as a Camelbak, you must still have one hard plastic bottle to carry water
Lip balm	SPF 15 and moisturizing
Sunscreen	SPF 30 or greater, 3-6 oz. tube; no spray sunscreen
Bandana	Bandanas are helpful for a variety of reasons, cleaning face and hands, protecting from sun, drying dishes, etc.
Headlamp/Flashlight	Durable and lightweight. Bring spare batteries
Insect repellent	<i>Optional</i> . To keep the bugs off; do not bring aerosol cans

Watch	A watch with an alarm is helpful
Notepad and pencil	Small and lightweight for journaling and sketching
Sunglasses	Good quality sunglasses with UV protection are needed to protect eyes. If you wear prescription glasses, you can get clip-ons or prescription sunglasses
Sunglass retainer	To prevent losing your (sun)glasses. Chums work well
Instant hand sanitizer	Small bottles for keeping hands clean
Trekking Poles	<i>Optional.</i> Trekking poles help keep weight off knees and aid in hiking, must be sturdy and collapsible
Camera	Keep it lightweight and small
Prescription Medication	Prescription medications may be brought on trips with the advice and counsel of parents and doctors. Bring 2 supplies, the trip leaders must carry back-up medications and aid in administering the medications with parental permission. Refrigeration is not available, keep in mind proper storage and transportation. This information should be listed on your medical form, as it is important for trip leaders to know for what and when our students are taking medications. An additional form is required to be filled out prior to each specific trip.
Feminine hygiene products	Although our first aid kit has these items, please bring your own even if you don't expect to be on your menstrual cycle during a trip

Footwear	
Boots	Sturdy backpacking boots with good ankle support and proper fit are critical for hiking on uneven terrain with expedition packs. All-leather or leather and synthetic uppers are fine. The most common mistake is buying boots that are too small. See the note on boots on page 9. Riverstone does have some boots to rent, but it is highly recommended that you purchase good quality boots that will last for a long time
Wool socks	Heavy wool socks or a synthetic blend are necessary for hiking. Cotton socks create too much friction and heat, leading to blisters
Liner Socks	<i>Optional.</i> Liner socks must be lightweight, synthetic, and wicking
Gaiters	<i>Optional.</i> Gaiters are made of synthetic nylon and wrap around your boot and shins. They keep debris out of your boots and prevent scratching from brush while hiking
Camp shoes	<u>Closed toe shoes are required.</u> Flip-flops, Chaco's, or other sandal type shoes are not allowed as camp shoes. Lightweight running shoes work well, or fully enclosed Crocs, though these must have a back to them as well

Clothing for Winter Trips	
Many grades participate in winter trips, from day trips to Bogus Basin to overnight camping trips. Appropriate clothing on winter trips is essential to the comfort and wellbeing of students. Winter clothing can be used in conjunction with the clothing system listed above. Layering is a great way to regulate body temperature during physical output and down times. Below are essential winter clothing items required for winter outdoor courses at Riverstone.	
Snow Jacket and Pants	Waterproof and insulated ski and snowboard jacket and pants. Jackets and pants should keep students warm and dry in adverse conditions. Insulation is required.
Gloves	Waterproof and insulated ski gloves are mandatory. Wool or cotton gloves will not work, as they will not stay dry when students begin to touch snow. Liner gloves are also recommended to wear underneath snow gloves.
Hat	Winter hat should be wool or synthetic, so that it dries quickly. Cotton will not be acceptable as it does not dry quickly or provide warmth when wet.
Heavy Duty or Wool Socks	Winter socks to keep feet warm and dry, wool or something similar works great. They should also go up above the shin to provide additional warmth and sit above winter boots
Goggles	<i>Optional.</i> Goggles protect from wind, snow, and sun. Sunglasses are also a good option to protect from the bright reflection of the sun on snow.
Winter Sports Helmet	<i>Optional.</i> A sports-specific helmet for winter activities is recommended, especially for downhill skiing.
Winter Sports Equipment	<i>Optional.</i> These items include snowshoes, alpine skis, snowboards, cross-country skis, etc. Those who do have their own equipment may bring it with them on their trip. Students who do not will have the option to rent or borrow snowshoes, alpine skis, snowboards, and cross-country skis during their course.

Group Equipment provided by Riverstone

The items listed below are provided by Riverstone and shared among all trip members:

Tents and Shelters	Food storage	Repair Kits
Camp Stoves	Trowels	Spice Kits
Fuel and Fuel Bottles	Maps and Compasses	Water Filtration/Treatment
Pots and Pans	First Aid Kits	

Prohibited Items

Electronic devices, cell/smart phones, non-prescription drugs, alcohol, tobacco are not allowed on any outdoor education courses. Knives, lighters, and weapons are not allowed on campus or on any Outdoor Education courses.

Technology Policy

One of the many benefits of outdoor education is its ability to allow ourselves to disconnect from technology and many stresses of everyday life. It is important for our students to be able to connect with nature and their peers in a meaningful way. Technology is a distraction away from our goals and purpose of being outside. While phones now also serve as cameras, students must leave their phones at home. Bring a digital camera, or our teachers and trip leaders will be happy to snap pictures to send out to the group after the trip. Music and electronic games also take away from the pristine environment we strive to create while out in nature. Listening to music with headphones will not be tolerated as it also distracts from our goal of community building.

Outdoor Education Policy Guide

Meal Planning, Nutrition, and Preparation

Proper nutrition is very important in the backcountry, and our main goal is to replenish energy supplies with food that is high in calories, protein, and fiber. Course menus are planned prior to each trip, giving variety to our food intake with water availability, temperature, and physical exertion taken into account. Generally speaking, we need to eat more during winter camping than we would backpacking in the spring or summer. We will also need to eat more if we have a longer hiking day ahead of us. The meals must taste good, be easy to prepare, and be cooked in one pot. Riverstone aims to provide fresh food options; however, this is sometimes difficult depending on the weather and locations of trips. Food is repackaged at Riverstone to ensure that we take as little waste into the field as possible.

With the supervision of teachers and trip leaders, students do the cooking and cleaning. Students learn how to operate an MSR Whisperlite stove, and how to clean up from meal preparation using *Leave No Trace* guidelines. We always pack out what we pack in. We do not leave food scraps in the field, even when they are biodegradable as introducing local animals and critters to human food can be detrimental to their survival in their natural habitat.

Each Riverstone course starts with a healthy breakfast at home, and a packed-in lunch brought from home on the first day. The sack lunch should be healthy, hearty, and generate as little trash as possible. Snacks are provided on Riverstone trips, however students are more than welcome to bring their own snacks, within reason (i.e., sugar-based foods or foods that can melt easily are not recommended).

Water and Adequate Hydration

Please ensure that your student drinks plenty of water days prior to the trip to ensure proper hydration. Drinking small amounts consistently is how we measure proper hydration in the backcountry. We stop frequently for water breaks, however this should not be the only time your student drinks water. Water intake varies depending on physical exertion, weather, altitude, and temperature. A general rule of thumb is to drink 1 liter of water for every hour of physical exertion such as hiking or biking. Students are required to carry 2-3 liters on their pack, consisting of Nalgene bottles or a combination of bottles and hydration bladders.

Riverstone uses multiple methods of treating water from streams or lakes that allow it to become ingestible. Drinking non-treated water can result in a variety of medical concerns resulting in vomiting and diarrhea. We use three main methods: chemical (AquaMira or Iodine Tablets), filtration (MSR MiniWorks Pump, or gravity filters), or boiling (bringing water to a rolling boil makes water ingestible).

Allergies: Food and Other

Students' dietary restrictions and allergies are factored into our meal planning. Please ensure your student's Health and Consent form is properly filled out with all dietary needs (i.e. vegetarian, vegan, lactose-free). Allergy information also needs to be accurate and listed on school forms (i.e., certain foods, bees, nuts, etc.). It is also important to list the reaction as a result of being in contact with the allergen (rash, hives, anaphylaxis, etc.). It is the responsibility of the student and family to alert the teachers and trip leaders if they have any allergies and their reaction. The best way to do this is to send an email and have a conversation with the Outdoor Education Coordinator. The student and family also need to alert Riverstone staff if they carry an EpiPen. It is highly recommended that the student carries an EpiPen on their person at all times, and the teachers and trip leaders carry a backup for the student. Generic EpiPens are carried in our first aid kits, and teachers and trip leaders are trained in administering the epinephrine auto injector.

Group Selection

All Riverstone outdoor education groups are randomly selected with the intent to create an inclusive and welcoming environment. By randomizing travel, hiking, tent, and bunk groups, we have the ability to build community across grade levels. For Middle & High School trips, the Outdoor Education & Service Learning Coordinator is responsible for assembling these groups, which are subject to review by the appropriate division director and our school counselor. Elementary school teachers are responsible for assembling groups for day trips and overnight trips.

Sleeping Accommodations

Sleeping accommodations vary by trip. When cabins or yurts are utilized, males and females will be housed in separate cabins accompanied by trip leaders or chaperones of the same gender. For trips that require the use of tents; tent groups will be assigned prior to the beginning of the trip. Tents will be provided for each trip and separated into male and female tents. Students are required to sleep in provided cabins, yurts, or tents, and will not be permitted to sleep in their own tent. When tents are utilized, students will not stay in the tent of an adult other than their parent or guardian. See below for our Gender Inclusion Policy for the Outdoor Education Program.

Gender Inclusion

Creating an open and inclusive environment to all students is a top priority of the outdoor education program and Riverstone as a whole. Students who identify as gender expansive may select the gender of the tent or cabin they feel the most associated and comfortable with. All staff, faculty, and trip leaders will respect the student's pronouns and will set a respectful example to all students.

Medical Information Review

All students enrolled at Riverstone are required to fill out the Student Health and Consent Information Form, which is printed out and taken into the field with trip leaders. Prior to each trip, the Outdoor Education & Service Learning Coordinator and relevant Division Director review each student's health history, medications, and make sure emergency treatment consent has been agreed to. Any concerns will be followed up on by contacting parents, possibly leading to a discussion with the student's physician before the student is cleared to participate.

Students with medical conditions which require parent supervision and management may be asked to refrain from a trip. Riverstone does not accommodate parent participation as we focus on our students' quality of experience.

Wilderness First Aid and Medication Use Policy and Procedure

All instructors have a minimum medical training consisting of basic first aid and CPR. At least one trip leader from each group has medical training that includes Wilderness First Aid. Wilderness First Aid training focuses on recognizing and treating common injuries and illnesses that could be encountered in the backcountry, and managing these ailments when the group is more than four hours from a hospital or definitive care.

Each travel group carries a first aid kit that can consist of bandages, medications, and tools in order to treat a variety of injuries and illnesses. Medications are over-the-counter and can be administered depending on symptoms. All

medications are checked for expiration frequently and each kit is restocked after each trip. The kits also contain a generic epinephrine auto injector and can be administered to any individual that is experiencing a severe allergic reaction resulting in anaphylaxis.

Riverstone International School follows the medical protocol set by the Wilderness Medicine Institute of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). The medical protocol outlines recommended treatment and evacuation guidelines should the need arise.

Physical Fitness

Each Riverstone Outdoor Course has an element of physical difficulty. The better your student's fitness level before each course, the more they will enjoy the course. Riverstone promotes active and healthy lifestyles; the many extracurricular activities most students are already involved in are perfect physical preparation for the variety of outdoor experiences they will encounter.

Student to Trip Leader Ratio

Outdoor courses at Riverstone adhere to a supervision policy of 7:1. This means each course will have a minimum of 1 teacher/trip leader to 7 students. Our travel groups generally consist of 2 leaders and 10-14 hikers.

Risk Management Overview

Trips at Riverstone encounter risks each day in the field. We manage these risks through proper training of staff, preparation of students, conducting pre-trip meetings, and going over contingency plans. Risks are an inherent aspect of outdoor education trips which can, also, increase enjoyment and experiences. Each trip is equipped with a risk management plan, which includes a list of risks we may encounter and how to reduce and avoid these risks. These are taken in the field with each trip, copies are also left with the person of contact and Head of School.

Pre-Trip Communication

Pre-trip communication is sent out in the form of a parent's letter no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of each trip. Parents' letters contain a brief overview of the trip, an overview of the itinerary, packing list, and other pertinent information valuable to the student and family when preparing for the trip. Attached to the letters are release of liability waivers for any contracted services we use such as rafting companies, or ski and snowboard lessons. The Outdoor Education & Service Learning Coordinator is available by phone or e-mail should any students or parents have any questions or concerns.

Pre-trip communication letters and grade-level forms will be sent to parents by email, as well as posted on the Riverstone International School's Resource Page.

Departure and Arrival Time for Courses

Departure times and bus load-in locations will be noted in pre-trip communications to parents. Generally, departure times are designated during the school day unless otherwise noted. Bus load-in locations can include: the front of the Elementary School, in front of the South Fork building, or on the north side of the Kennedy Gymnasium.

Approximate arrival times will also be noted in pre-trip communications to parents. Whenever possible, buses plan to arrive on campus before the school day ends (between 3:00 and 3:30 PM, unless otherwise noted). Riverstone utilizes a mass text communication program called BrightArrow, to alert all parents to students' arrival times. (Please ensure that Admissions has a current cell phone number on file for each parent.) Trip leaders are trained to notify the person of contact at Riverstone of their estimated time of arrival (ETA). The person of contact will then send a text message out to all parents of students on the specific trip of the ETA. Parents are asked to pick up their student shortly after arrival back to campus.

Communication During Outdoor Courses

Trip leaders are equipped with backcountry communication devices such as a satellite phone or a two-way texting device. Communication during courses is not constant due to poor satellite signal in some areas. Check-ins are as consistent as possible between the trip leaders and the person of contact at Riverstone, and typically consists of an "all ok." Should any emergency arise (injury, illness, or behavioral issues), trip leaders are instructed to immediately notify the person of contact at Riverstone (including locating an area where they can send and receive satellite signal), following emergency communication with first responders (if necessary).

Because of the remote nature of many Middle & High School outdoor trips, those in the field may not have the luxury of providing constant communication. Therefore parents cannot expect to receive daily communication from Riverstone during their student's trip, but will be informed of emergencies if they arise as soon as possible.

In the event of an emergency at home, parents may need to get information to their children, so please contact the Riverstone Front Desk.

Student Removal or Evacuation from Courses

Although rare, students may be removed from the field for a variety of reasons. Actions that break Riverstone's code of conduct policy may be means for removal from the field.

Injuries and illnesses may also require an evacuation. While there are many scenarios which determine the speed and urgency of an evacuation, proper communication between Riverstone and the student's family will be a priority. Upon the decision to remove a student from the field, parents may be asked to coordinate a pick-up with the assistance of the person of contact. If a medical emergency has taken place, a Riverstone employee will accompany any student to the facility and remain there until a parent or guardian has arrived.

Absence from Trips

Outdoor Education trips and courses are viewed as part of Riverstone's academic curriculum. Students will be documented as absent for every day they miss an outdoor education trip. See student and parent handbook for more information on absences from Riverstone.

Outdoor Education Attendance Policy

Outdoor education trips are treated like school days. All students are required to attend outdoor education excursions as if they were coming to class each day. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration when parents communicate with the Outdoor Education Coordinator. Those that are not able to attend trips due to health, travel, sports, or other reasons will still have to complete an Alternative Experience in order to receive credit for Outdoor Education. See more information below regarding outdoor education credit.

Trip Cancellation Policy

On rare occasions, trips can be canceled due to a number of reasons ranging from weather, wildfires, permit issues, and participation requirements. Student safety and wellbeing is the number one priority. Decisions to cancel are made with the guidance of the Outdoor Education & Service Learning Coordinator, Division Directors, and the Head of School. Families and students will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

Transportation

Travel to and from course locations is done by school or charter bus. Riverstone's transportation capabilities are limited and used as much as possible. When the Riverstone bus is being utilized for other school activities, we use local transportation companies. Students may not use their personal vehicle to transport themselves and others to the course location. All students must travel on the bus to and from courses. No exceptions will be made to this rule.

During Elementary School trips, parents are occasionally asked to use their personal vehicles to transport students to and from course locations. Each parent driving Riverstone students must have a clean driving record, up-to-date registration and insurance, and a valid driver's license. Parent volunteers must also pass a background check noted in the following section.

Should parents or guardians elect to pick up a student early from a course, such as at a trailhead upon completion of the hike, communication with trip leaders, outdoor education coordinator, and divisional directors. Prior written approval of *reasonable accommodations* must be coordinated for a student to leave the field early or be picked up somewhere other than school. Riverstone will no longer be responsible for the student after the exchange has taken place. If the coordinated effort to make such an accommodation fails due to either party missing time and location, Riverstone will not be held responsible for any travel expenses and will continue the planned effort to arrive at Riverstone's campus at the estimated time of arrival. Due to the location of pick up or transfer, cell reception is not always available and should not be relied on for communication.

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are sometimes asked to aid in supervision for trips. Teachers or the Outdoor Education & Service Learning Coordinator will send an email out asking for chaperone sign-ups. Education, discipline, and first-aid treatment will remain the responsibility of the teacher and trip leaders. Should any issues arise with students, parent volunteers must immediately alert the teacher or trip leader. In the event of an emergency, respond if urgency is required before alerting teachers.

Parents or guardians who are interested in volunteering will need to complete a background check with Riverstone International School through our Human Resources Coordinator prior to the course. Parent volunteers will also need to fill out a volunteer agreement form, releasing liability from Riverstone International School. Additional forms may be required from our contracting companies such as Bogus Basin, Cascade Raft and Kayak, or McCall Outdoor Science School.

For more information see: [Chaperone Expectations](#)

Outdoor Education Alternative Experience and Graduation Requirements

Riverstone Alternative Experience

Purpose	
To recognize students who will not be able to attend or participate in Outdoor Education trips due to pre-existing medical conditions, recovery, illness, or any other approved excuse. Outdoor Education is an important pillar of Riverstone International School and achieving the learning outcomes through participation through an alternative experience is important to students not able to attend. Students may complete an alternative experience in order to receive a passing grade for Outdoor Education.	
Excusal Guidelines	
<p>If a student is unable to attend a Riverstone Outdoor Education trip, they will need to receive written approval from the Outdoor Education Coordinator or High School Director. If the student lives in the dorm, approval must also be granted by the Director of Residential Life. Excusals will be examined on a case-by-case basis and may need to include the following documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctors note recognizing participation in physical exertion is not recommended • Documented information from parents/guardians • Travel information 	
Alternative Experience Requirement	
In order to receive the passing grade for Outdoor Education, students must complete ONE or a MIX of the following within 15 days from start of missed trip to meet the total hours per nights missed:	
<p>Service Learning Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 3 hours of documented service/per night missed in the field (ie 3 nights = 9 hours) • Service to the community and cannot be "self-observed". DP students can count as CAS hours, as well. • Complete Alternative Experience: Service Learning form • Photos from service experience • A written reflection of 500 words 	<p>Outdoor Education/Activity Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 3 hours of documented physical activity/per night missed in the field (ie 3 nights = 9 hours). Note: this does not include working out indoors/at the gym. • DP students can count as CAS hours, as well. • Complete Alternative Experience: Outdoor Education form • Photos from each activity • A written reflection consisting of 500 words

Attendance Expectations for Riverstone Outdoor Program

Elementary
Participation in elementary school programs are required by students for all day trips such as rock climbing, snowshoeing, and skiing. Overnight trips are subject to discussion with parents and the coordinator depending on developmental level and social concerns. All students are highly encouraged to attend every outdoor education experience.

Middle School
<p>Middle School overnight trips are mandatory and attendance is expected. The coordinator and a team of educators will work closely with students to make sure this happens by having all students prepared with gear.</p> <p>A "pass/fail" grade will be noted on transcripts for each year, in order to receive a pass, students will have to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Attend all outdoor field days with the exception of excused absences<input type="checkbox"/> Attend all overnight excursions according to grade level.<input type="checkbox"/> Be an active participant in outdoor education and show proper expedition behavior and leadership on all trips.<input type="checkbox"/> Students on Outdoor Education Support Plan will need to fulfill their agreement

High School
<p>High School overnight trips are mandatory and attendance is expected. The coordinator and a team of educators will work closely with students to make sure this happens by having all students prepared with gear.</p> <p>Students will also be eligible for the Outdoor Leadership Certification upon Graduation (See Below)</p> <p>A "pass/fail" grade will be noted on transcripts for each year, in order to receive a pass, students will have to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Attend 75% of outdoor field days<input type="checkbox"/> Attend all overnight excursions according to grade level.<input type="checkbox"/> Be an active participant in outdoor education and show proper expedition behavior and leadership on all trips.

Riverstone International School Outdoor Leadership Certification

The purpose of the Outdoor Leadership Certification is to recognize students who have shown a strong interest in the Outdoor Education program and have demonstrated a commitment to learning outdoor skills and focusing on leadership development. This certification is awarded during graduation, supplementing the Riverstone and IB diplomas.

Earning the Outdoor Leadership Certificate will allow students to stand out among college applicants and demonstrate a love for the outdoors.

Students must complete the following:

- ☐ Outdoor Leadership and Education High School Elective OR
Demonstrated participation in a variety of outdoor activities outside of Riverstone
- ☐ Demonstrated participation in
- ☐ Wilderness First Aid or Higher
- ☐ 100 percent participation in High School Outdoor Education Trips from 9th grade or date of enrollment if starting after 9th grade
- ☐ Participation in 1 Summer Expedition
- ☐ Complete a Riverstone Outdoor Education Trip as a Student Leader
 - ☐ Staff/Faculty Advisor Review
- ☐ 1 Service or Advocacy Related Event
 - ☐ Trail Work
 - ☐ Crag Clean Up

Students must complete one of the following:

- ☐ Introduction to Mountain Biking
- ☐ Introduction to Rock Climbing
- ☐ Introduction to Backcountry Skiing
- ☐ Avalanche Rescue Course or Higher
- ☐ 1 Season of Riverstone Ski Team

Outdoor Education Program Affiliates and Partners

Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics

Riverstone follows the 7 principles of *Leave No Trace*. These 7 principles provide a foundation of environmental ethics for our students and trip leaders. Following the guidelines allows our large travel groups to minimize our impact in the many pristine places we choose as course locations. We are affiliated as an educational partner and are committed to teaching and practicing *Leave No Trace*.

The Association of Experiential Education (AEE)

Riverstone adheres to standards set by AEE to ensure the integrity of our outdoor education program and to maintain a high level of professionalism, quality outdoor education, and credibility. AEE provides numerous resources for outdoor education programs. As an organizational member, we are informed of current industry trends, communication forums, and receive a publication of the Journal for Experiential Education.

Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS)

Riverstone belongs to the NWAIS as an accredited independent school. Through membership, various outdoor education coordinators meet and communicate throughout the year regarding outdoor education programs and curriculum. Schools also assist one another in risk management and policy reviews when necessary.

National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)

NOLS is at the forefront of outdoor education curriculum development, risk management practices, wilderness medicine instruction, and outdoor leadership development. Riverstone frequently attends the Wilderness Risk Management Conference, allowing the school to stay up to date on risk management policies and procedures and current industry standards as they pertain to risk. Riverstone faculty are also trained in wilderness medicine through the Wilderness Medicine Institute. A few of Riverstone staff and faculty have been trained as outdoor leaders and educators through the many courses NOLS offers. Importantly, we follow the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Protocols for all our first aid policies and procedures in the field.

Desert Mountain Medicine

Desert Mountain Medicine is a wilderness medicine school that teaches top level wilderness first responders and wilderness first aid courses. Our teachers will be familiar with the curriculum through biannual training and refreshing of first aid skills commonly practiced in the field. Desert Mountain Medicine also allows Riverstone to teach Wilderness First Aid courses to High School students, certifying them with a nationally recognized wilderness first aid certificate and providing them the skills necessary to manage risk in the backcountry.