

Dear Parent/Guardian(s)

All fifth-grade students are invited to attend an educational trip to the Deer Valley YMCA Camp as part of our environmental L.E.A.F. program. The trip is over two and a half days and takes place during the first nine weeks of the fifth-grade school year. Please see below for additional information:

What and Where is Deer Valley?

Deer Valley is a YMCA Family Camp located approximately eleven miles from Meyersdale, PA. The Penn-Trafford School District rents out the entire camp, and conducts our own educational program for the fifth-grade students entitled L.E.A.F. (Learning about Environment And Friendship). The facilities at Deer Valley provide the district the ability to conduct classes in an environmental setting both indoors and outside. These facilities include two halls, a nature center, lake, archery range, stream, ropes course, dining hall and 35 cabins. In addition, Mt. Davis, the highest point in PA, is located within walking distance.

When is the Trip?

The Annual trip for the fifth-grade takes place during the first nine weeks of the school year. This year's trip will take place from September 23 – 27. Students from Level Green, Sunrise and Trafford will attend the first half of the week Monday, September 23 through Wednesday September 25. The students from Harrison Park and McCullough will attend Wednesday, September 25 through Friday, September 27.

How much will this trip cost?

There is a \$50 fee per student for this trip, which includes all of the student's transportation, meals and lodging.

What is Our L.E.A.F. Program?

The L.E.A.F. program is a multidisciplinary program that is specifically designed to meet the needs and intellectual levels of our fifth-grade students. The program also encompasses the standards required to be taught by the State of Pennsylvania. Classes will be taught by certified teachers from or approved by the district. During the students trip they will participate in the following classes: Archery, Team Building, Climbing a Rock-Wall, Fishing, Stream Studies, PA Wildlife and Ecology Education. As a part of these classes the students will have to use critical thinking skills in order to solve environmental issues. Students will also develop an appreciation and a richer personal appreciation for our environment.

The Penn-Trafford School District is committed to excellence in education and have a steadfast belief that environmental education is important and it is the hope that this program makes a difference in our students lives. It is the goal of the program for students to understand the importance of the environment and the relationship that we have with it is a lifetime commitment.

Parent Volunteers/Chaperones

We encourage parents to volunteer their time for this trip as well. Parent chaperones provide an integral part to the success of the trip. The trip requires parent chaperones to move students from class to class as well as supervising cabins in the evening. Three to five parent chaperones will travel with each group throughout the trip. Students will never be left unattended or unsupervised.

If you are interested in being a chaperone please check the appropriate box in the registration form. A lottery will be held and those selected will be notified. Once notified you will be required to pay \$135 to cover your transportation, meals and lodging for the trip. You will also be required to obtain current clearances for this field trip. Clearances are considered current if they have been obtained within one year of the date of the trip to Deer Valley. Each chaperone will be required to have three clearances for the trip. The required clearances include: Pennsylvania State Police Background Check, Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance and an FBI Fingerprint check. The cost of these clearances is approximately \$30. Once you have obtained your clearances the original needs to be taken to your child's elementary school and presented to the secretary who will make a copy of the original three clearances.

Parents interested in becoming a chaperone for the Deer Valley trip must complete the registration form prior to April 26, 2019.

The lottery will be conducted by building and student need, as each building has specific needs, based on the number of males and females from each building. These numbers dictate how many adult male and female chaperones are needed. When more than one adult in the family is choosing to go as a chaperone, please choose carefully, because only one adult may apply to go. The only exception to this is if the adult is the parent of twins, triplets, etc. (Even then, the twins must be of different sexes in order for both parents to go.)

If a mom or dad is chosen as a chaperone, and they have the opposite sex child, they will travel with the group that their child is in, **but may be a cabin leader of a different group of children**. If the numbers work out correctly, we will use those parents as "Extras" before placing them in that situation. **When a building does not have enough parents to accompany their children, we will fill the need from other buildings attending during the same session.**

We usually take eight extra parents each session in case there is an emergency or cancellation. The Lottery will be held on the week of April 29th and the building principals will call parents selected during the week of May 12th.

Should any cancellations occur, you would be called in the order of selection according to the lottery. Once called by the principals, **you must immediately acquire the necessary clearances to attend the trip. Clearances must be returned to us by June 30th. Do not hesitate, these take time to process and you do not want to be replaced.** Should you have any questions please feel free to contact Mr. Marasti at McCullough Elementary at 724-744-7441.

General Meeting

If you have any questions about this trip, there will be general meeting conducted in the Penn Middle School Auditorium on Monday, April 15, 7:30 PM. This meeting should take less than one hour and will include some snapshots of the complex at Deer Valley. **This meeting is open to all parents and students that will be in fifth grade for the 2019-20 school year.**

Medical Information

Please be sure to complete the medical information portion of the registration form. This is a secure document and only those involved with the trip will be able to view this information. At any time health or medical information changes you can go back into the form and update this information. The information is necessary for student and parent chaperones. This information is what will be taken with us when we attend Deer Valley. If there are any serious medical issues that need to be discussed please contact Mr. Marasti at McCullough 724-744-7441.

What needs to be done to have a child attend this trip?

You will need to log into the family ID website and register your child. During this process you will fill out all of the necessary information. In the process of completing all of the information you will make payments for the trip at this time as well. For some reason should you need to have your child opt out of the trip you will be able to receive a refund up to August 23. After this date no refunds will be possible due to the commitment of payment

Please speak to your child and discuss this trip with them. Then select the either attending or not attending. The registration needs to be completed regardless of whether your student is attending or not. The cost for students to attend is \$50. Since, this trip is designed around the students, it is important to know how many will be attending and how many will be staying at school. It is too difficult to add changes at the very end of this trip. Please respond no later than May 3. We will be planning after this date. Thank You.

What important dates do Parents need to mark on their calendars?

- ❖ General Information Meeting – Monday, April 15, 7:30 PM – Penn Middle School Auditorium.
- ❖ Complete the Parent Chaperone Registration portion no later than April 26, 2019
- ❖ Complete the Student Registration portion and payment no later than May 3, 2019
- ❖ Parent Chaperone Lottery will take place the week of May 6, 2019.
 - If the principal calls you confirming that you are a chaperone, arrange for your clearances **immediately**. Do not delay. Waiting will jeopardize your attendance. This process takes time.

- ❖ Parent Chaperones will be notified of their lottery selection the week of May 13, 2019
- ❖ Parent Chaperone Clearances must be delivered to student elementary school no later than July 1, 2019
- ❖ Last Day to receive a refund for nonattendance August 23, 2019
- ❖ If there is a financial concern, please contact Mr. Marasti or your building principal.

- ❖ Deer Valley will take place the week of September 23, 2019
 - Monday, September 23 – Wednesday September 25
 - Level Green, Sunrise & Trafford Elementary

 - Wednesday, September 25 – Friday, September 27, 2019
 - Harrison Park & McCullough Elementary

Thank you,

Mr. Joseph Marasti, Principal
Mr. Jeffrey Swartz, Principal

Mrs. Karin Coiner, Principal
Mr. Dan DiNapoli, Principal