

# FRESHMAN MINIMESTER

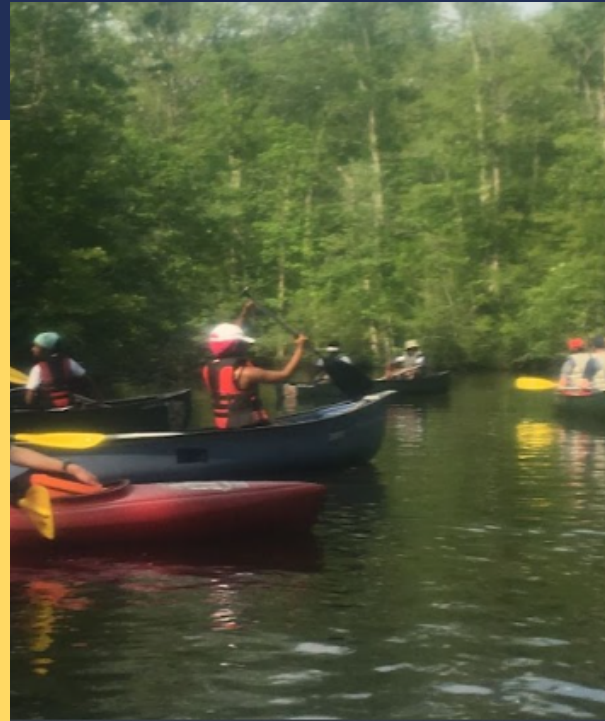
## GETTING OUR FEET WET

The Freshman Minimester is a chance for students to fully immerse themselves in experiential learning! Many of our studies will focus on the marine and freshwater ecosystems around us.



## REMINDER

By now, everyone should have already paid the December 5 deposit of \$75. Everyone should have either paid the Jan 5 payment of \$75 or had a scholarship award pay the Jan payment. PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO GET CAUGHT UP ON ANY MISSED PAYMENTS - we are booking our activities now and need to have these funds in our RCCHS account to pay for things like buses, our campsites, and our canoe trip!



## PADDLING THE POCOMOKE RIVER

The Pocomoke River runs past Pocomoke River State Park, where we will be camping. The 73-mile-long Pocomoke is the easternmost river that flows into the Chesapeake Bay, draining water from Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia on the DelMarVa Peninsula. This tidal river originates in freshwater cypress swamps, and ends as a brackish tributary to the Chesapeake Bay. Campers will be paddling through a winding loop of the upper Pocomoke River, where we will see a fantastic variety of trees and other plants, birds, turtles, insects and fish species!

## SEINING AND SAMPLING: SALT MARSHES AT THE EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge is on the tip of the DelMarVa peninsula. The coastal marsh habitat here provides shelter and food for over 300 species of birds. This area is an important nursery for endangered loggerhead sea turtles and threatened diamondback terrapin turtles; and crabs, shrimp, oysters, and hundreds of fish species make their homes here. Campers will get down and dirty in the marsh as we seine to survey aquatic organisms, and we will do a variety of water chemistry tests here.



## DOLPHINS AND PONIES AND OYSTERS AND EAGLES, OH MY!

Campers will be able to observe the Chincoteague Island ponies, natural and human-built oyster reefs, bottlenose dolphins, and lots of fish and bird species as we cruise the back bay coastline of the Assateague Island National Wildlife Refuge on a pontoon boat.

## SPLASHING AND SWIMMING: CHESAPEAKE BAY AND ATLANTIC OCEAN

We can't truly say we understand the Bay ecosystem without, well, going in the water! Campers will be able to splash and wade, sunbathe, and build sandcastles, on both the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean sides of the DelMarVa peninsula! Kiptopeke State Park provides a great swimming beach with gentle waves on the Bay side, while Assateague Island National Seashore will give us the chance to get wet in both the calm waters of Tom's Cove and the mighty Atlantic Ocean.

