



Long Beach Unified School District

Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes

**Family Information Packet
2025 - 2026**

5th Grade Outdoor Education

YMCA Camp Oakes

Big Bear City, CA



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Office of the Superintendent
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May 2023

Dear Elementary and K-8 School Families:

I am pleased to inform you that as part of the Long Beach Unified School District's curriculum, all fifth-grade students will have an opportunity to participate in a week of outdoor education at Camp Oakes near Big Bear City, California, beginning in the fall of 2023. These field trips will continue a tradition that began in our district in April of 1948 with students attending Camp Hi-Hill each year. Unfortunately, however, in 2010, the camp program had to be closed. I am pleased that our Board of Education has recently approved revitalizing the outdoor education program utilizing the YMCA's Camp Oakes facility.

The outdoor education field trip logistics, including any bus arrangements, will be handled and funded centrally, but you will be asked to provide registration information needed to ensure arrangements are made appropriately for your student. Each school site is scheduled to attend on different dates throughout the school year, so this [Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes Handbook for Families](#) has been developed to ensure the visits are a positive experience for all students and LBUSD teachers and staff who attend. With your support, I am certain these week-long field trips in the mountains will continue to provide our fifth-grade students with meaningful experiences that enhance their knowledge of nature and science, while helping build social skills and positive self-esteem.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jeff Wood, Outdoor Education Program Administrator, in the Expanded Learning Opportunities Programs Office at (562) 997-8000 ext. 447-7680 or jwood@lbschools.net.

Sincerely,

Jill A. Baker, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools





Hi Hill Outdoor at Camp Oakes Field Trip Overview

PURPOSE

The 5th grade field trip to Hi Hill at Camp Oakes is being implemented as part of the Long Beach Unified School District's commitment to giving youth an equitable opportunity to discover the world beyond their communities. This opportunity provides an opportunity for each 5th grade student to live and study outdoors for one school week. Research has suggested that outdoor learning is extremely beneficial in many ways. It can boost self - confidence, self - esteem, social skills, communication, motivation, physical skills, support positive attitude toward learning and increase one's ability to work cooperatively.

WHAT WILL STUDENTS LEARN

Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes provides a special learning opportunity for children to meet and get along with people from varied backgrounds that will be of use to them in the school setting and throughout their lifetime. Living in the outdoor educational environment 24 hours a day, students will have opportunities to grow in understanding and develop feelings of purpose through real life situations. At Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes children assume new responsibilities, respect and appreciation of friendships of their classmates and teachers through experiences in the great beauty and wonder of the outdoors. Students will practice positive social skills, self management and expand their growth mindset through daily living experiences with consideration for others and their own self-care.

At camp, students learn firsthand science concepts including: basic landforms, plants and animals of the forest, geology, rocks and minerals, astronomy, botany, meteorology, water cycle and many other science and social skills concepts through experiential learning opportunities. The curriculum taught is a very important part of your child's science learning experience. Outdoor education takes students from the classroom to a different kind of classroom setting where students study by doing and experiencing everything firsthand. Outdoor school is an exciting and happy learning experience for students. As a result, students learn faster, understand better, and retain more of what they learn.

Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes has many activities for students including but not limited to: archery, arts & crafts, fishing, team games, volleyball, nature exploration, hikes, canoeing, gaga ball, climbing tower, low ropes challenge course, observatory for stargazing, campfire programs with songs and skits and many other activities. These will allow students to expand their knowledge, challenge themselves and work together to learn in the great outdoors.

Many parents and grandparents who attended LBUSD in elementary school still have vivid memories of their week at outdoor education and we know your children will as well.



Hi Hill Outdoor at YMCA Camp Oakes General Information

FACILITY LOCATION

The Long Beach Unified School District's outdoor education program is located at the Long Beach YMCA's Camp Oakes in the San Bernardino Mountains near Big Bear City. It is located on approximately 235 acres in the San Bernardino National Forest at an elevation of 7,200 feet. Camp Oakes is approximately 120 miles from Long Beach or 15 minutes from Big Bear City.

COST

Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes is fully funded by the Long Beach Unified School District. **There is no cost to attend.** Families are responsible for providing appropriate clothing and bedding for their children. Families needing support for clothing or bedding should contact the LBUSD Outdoor Education Program Administrator, Jeff Wood at jwood@lbschools.net or their school principal to discuss their needs.

TRANSPORTATION

The Long Beach Unified School District will provide chartered bus transportation to and from Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes on the day of departure from school and on the day of return at no cost. ***If for any reason a child is required to go home during the week at camp, the parent will be required to pick up the child from camp at their own expense.****

CAMP ACCREDITATION

YMCA Camp Oakes is accredited by the American Camp Association which means it has been evaluated to comply with over 300 industry-established health and safety standards compiled by experts from many fields such as: risk management, child development, aquatics, and health care. The San Bernardino County Health Department and other state/county offices also inspect the camp as required.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

Students' teachers will build gender based cabin groups prior to departure. Teachers will do their best to include at least one friend to be in a student's cabin with them, but there is no guarantee that all friends will be together. Cabins will have students from other classrooms or LBUSD schools attending during the same week, giving students the opportunity to make new friends.

CABIN SUPERVISION:

Cabin groups are supervised by adult counselors with ratios in accordance with American Camping Association requirements. All staff are selected for their ability to work with children and undergo



extensive staff training prior to the students' week of outdoor education. The camp directing staff are dedicated professionals with years of experience working with children at camp. All YMCA Camp Oakes and LBUSD staff are mandated reporters.

CHILD ABUSE:

LBUSD staff are mandated to report any suspected child abuse (including physical, emotional, or verbal abuse and/or neglect) to the appropriate authorities immediately.

HOMESICKNESS:

Being away from home for a week can be a challenging experience for a child of any age. When children are away from home for the first time, they may experience homesickness. We would like to ask for your help in counseling your child prior to camp. Let them know that you have confidence in their ability to cope with the new experiences at camp. Focus on the positive aspects of camp, the new friends, the activities they will enjoy, and how proud you will be of them when they succeed. Once at camp, the staff will apply the greatest homesickness cure known – keeping students busy and having fun. We encourage letters from home. Positive, supportive letters from home allow your child to hear from you in a constructive way. Remember, Camp Oakes has been a positive experience for thousands of children over the years, and we know it will be for your child as well.

PREPARING FOR CAMP

Camp is exciting and a chance for your child to build self-esteem and develop interpersonal skills. This is also where independence and responsibility can be learned. They will be taking care of themselves, making their beds and will be responsible for their belongings. At home, we encourage parents to let them get their own things together and pack using the **Pre-Camp Checklist for Students**. This way your child can begin learning how to care for themselves and it also helps in getting them excited about camp. Students may not pack food and/or candy. Be supportive and concentrate on all of the new and positive things to come. Please be sure you and your child pay attention to NOT bring the following items to Camp Oakes:

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED - DO NOT BRING!

- Electronics of **ANY KIND:**
 - Cell phones or any other communication devices
 - Laptops, Tablets, iPod's, Earbuds, or Smart Watches
 - Hand-Held Game Devices
- Lighters or Fireworks
- Knives or Hatchets
- Firearms
- Tobacco Products
- Illegal Drugs
- Food Items



- Chewing gum or Candy
- Aerosol sprays

Any non-permitted items will be collected, marked with your child's name and kept in the Camp Office until departure. Collected items will be returned, as appropriate, to the school staff or parent upon return from Camp. The LBUSD and/or the YMCA are not responsible for lost or damaged items during this process.

Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes Contact Information

HOW TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOUR CHILD

Families are welcome to mail letters to their child while they are at camp. students appreciate mail; however, please do not dwell on home problems or how much everyone misses them. Stay positive. Mailing letters before the departure date will ensure that your child will receive mail during the week. Sending pre-stamped and addressed envelopes or postcards increases your chance of receiving mail from your student. Keep in mind that camp-time moves slower than city-time; please allow 4 days for mail to be delivered to and from home. **DO NOT** send packages with any food or candy in them. Camp Oakes is located in the mountains, and food is an invitation to insects and wildlife to come eat it.

We suggest parents provide letters to the classroom teacher prior to departure. Teachers will then distribute letters at breakfast meals during the week.

Please address your mail as follows:

If using the US Postal Service:

*YMCA Camp Oakes
student Name-Camp Dates
P.O. Box 452
Big Bear City, CA 92314*

If using UPS or Fed Ex:

*YMCA Camp Oakes
Student Name - Camp Dates
47400 Monte Vista Drive
Big Bear City, CA 92314*



Hi Hill at YMCA Camp Oakes Policies and Procedures

MEDICATIONS AT CAMP

DO NOT pack any medication, including over the counter medicine, in your child's luggage.

All medications (prescription & over-the-counter) must be submitted, with all required documentation, at least one week prior to departure to the school nurse the week before departure.

The nurse will review all medications and reference online registration forms. If your child needs medication while at camp, each medication must have a "Medication at School" form completed by the student's physician. This includes over-the-counter medication. Prescription medication must be in a pharmacy bottle with your child's name on it, and the physician's instructions clearly labeled. All over-the-counter medication must be in the original container marked with your child's name. **NO MEDICATION (including vitamins) is kept in any cabin;** the camp nurse will administer all medication. Please provide 10 days worth of medication so that we are prepared for any potential situation that may arise (inclement weather, etc.) Please see your School Nurse for Medication at School forms and for any questions.

CELL PHONES/COMMUNICATIONS WITH STUDENTS

Please leave all cell phones, tablets and smart watches at home; they are not permitted at camp. Families are encouraged to communicate with letters to their child as outlined previously. Families can also provide letters to their child's teacher to give them at camp just in case mail does not arrive promptly. Please do not mail any food, candy or other prohibited items.

HEALTH CARE

No sick students will be allowed to attend camp. If students do get sick, Camp Oakes has an on-site Health Cottage with a camp nurse. In case of illness, students will be housed in the Health Cottage for a reasonable period of time. If deemed necessary, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child. If your child becomes ill prior to camp, the school nurse will make sure they are fit to attend a rigorous week in the mountains.

Students experiencing certain health conditions including but not limited to: fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, severe itching, have open wounds or lesions and/or lice (nits or live lice) will be excluded from attendance in order to protect the health of everyone.

If an emergency or a special need were to occur, we have access to a doctor and clinic in Big Bear. In the event of an injury while at camp, we will take necessary measures to ensure proper care, which may include - treatment by staff for minor injuries, calling parents/guardians for their instructions, calling local care providers, or transporting to a doctor or emergency care facility. Parents of students with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater will be contacted and may be excluded from camp.



It is very important that you provide complete and accurate emergency contact information during the registration process. If you are traveling on vacation, please list an itinerary and phone numbers where you can be reached. In the event of an injury that requires medical attention, the YMCA Camp Oakes and/or LBUSD staff will attempt to contact you; however, in the event the guardian cannot be reached, permission is granted to the physician selected by the YMCA Camp Oakes and/or LBUSD staff to render medical treatment deemed necessary and appropriate by the physician.

INSURANCE

As the parent or guardian, you are responsible for any medical costs incurred as a result of injury or illness while your child is at camp. Families without health insurance are encouraged to visit www.CoveredCA.com while families desiring optional student accident insurance, at parents' expense, should refer to the LBUSD Guidelines for Parents and Students. I understand that the school district has no insurance covering such medical or hospital costs incurred for my child and, therefore, any costs incurred for such treatment shall be my sole responsibility. Be sure to provide accurate information regarding your insurance coverage on the **Health History Form**.

LOST AND FOUND

The camp experience is an opportunity for a 5th grader to learn responsibility for their personal articles. Please discuss the topic of responsibility and caring for their belongings. LBUSD and the YMCA are not responsible for any lost or stolen items. **Do not send valuables** with your child.

Any lost items found by the camp staff members will be displayed throughout the week for campers to collect. Any items remaining or found after campers have left will be stored at camp for not less than 2 weeks. Reasonable attempts will be made to return lost and found items to the owner. Schools will be asked to assist in reuniting lost items with their owner, if however the lost and found items are not claimed within 2 weeks, they may be given to a local charity. PLEASE MARK ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Students are required to follow all LBUSD, individual school and YMCA Camp Oakes expectations for behavior and safety aligned with Ed. Code 48900. To foster a greater sense of safety and security, students will participate in discussing and establishing cabin rules of behavior. LBUSD teachers and YMCA Camp Oakes staff will promote good behavior through modeling positive reinforcement and other developmentally appropriate techniques.

Camp specific rules will be shared with students upon arrival at camp. The most important rules are **1) Stay Safe at all times** and **2) Have fun!** Camp guidelines supporting these rules include: - be with an adult and your assigned student buddy at all times, demonstrate respect for everyone, everywhere all of the time (this includes other people's items, opinions, nature, wildlife, etc.).



Challenging behavior that does not meet behavioral expectations will be redirected to promote positive behavior, conflict resolution and positive interactions with peers through effective communication skills in order to increase children's self-esteem and ensure all students are able to have a positive camp experience. If a student displays problematic behavior the following steps will be initiated:

Student Conference: *Discuss the rules, reasons for the rules and help the student reflect on the impact of their actions.*

Student Reflection & Redirection: *Cabin leader or camp staff will discuss the behavior, encourage the student to be reflective on their actions and guide the student to the appropriate behavior. Support the student in focusing their attention in an appropriate manner, replacing the undesired behavior. Teachers will be informed of the situation and consulted to help ensure a positive outcome. Teachers may participate and/or assist in these discussions.*

Cooling Off & Make Amends – *Staff will allow the child time to reflect on their behavior or just “cool off” until the situation can be discussed with the child. Staff will support the child in apologizing and make the situation right or return things to the way it was, if possible. Parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Step 2.*

Parent Conference - *Staff will take all possible steps to address student behavior at camp. Parents of students demonstrating lack of response or responsibility may receive a telephone conference with Camp and school staff to address the concerning behavior. Parents will receive a telephone conference with camp and school staff to address the concerning behavior further misbehavior will result in removal from camp. Step 3.*

Take Responsibility for the Action – *Students unable to abide by camp rules, or are adversely affecting the experience of other children may experience a temporary loss of privileges or use of specific equipment. Students continuing to be challenged with following behavior expectations and rules may be denied further participation and sent home. **Parents will be responsible to come to camp and pick up their child.***

CHILD ABUSE

All LBUSD and Camp Oakes YMCA employees are legally mandated to report any suspected child abuse (including physical, emotional or verbal abuse and/or neglect) to the appropriate authorities immediately.



Pre-Camp Checklist for Students

In Advance:

- _____ Complete all online forms and information, including the Camp Questionnaire, student health history and consent forms.
- _____ Monitor student health daily prior to leaving for camp.
Students may be excluded for health conditions specific to residential camping requirements, including undiagnosed rashes, lice/nits, or other communicable diseases.
- _____ **Medications must be provided to the school nurse with the student's name displayed and required documentation the week before camp.**

Day of Departure:

- _____ Bring your packed luggage bag, sleeping bag and equipment clearly marked with the student's name.
- _____ All students will be screened for any possible communicable situations. (Ex. fever, sore throat, rashes, lice/nits.)
- _____ **Medications May Not be packed with student's gear.** All medications must be given to the school nurse the week before departure.
- _____ **Wear long pants** (No Leggings) and sturdy shoes for walking/hiking

Camp Packing List

BE SURE YOUR NAME AND SCHOOL ARE CLEARLY VISIBLE ON ALL LUGGAGE.

Students are allowed up to 3 pieces of luggage:

- 1) Small backpack (drawstring type is perfect) to carry on the bus
- 2) Suitcase or Duffel Bag for the majority of clothing
- 3) Bedroll or Sleeping Bag

Students should be able to carry all 3 pieces from the bus to their cabin in one trip

Luggage #1: Small school type backpack - CARRY THIS WITH YOU ON THE BUS

This backpack should stay with you at all times.

- Water bottle with your name on it
- Small flashlight
- Warm gloves
- Extra Socks



- Warm winter coat
- Long sleeved sweatshirt
- Jacket/Poncho (wind/waterproof)
- Warm winter hat

Luggage #2: Sleeping Bag or Bedroll - ACCESSIBLE AFTER DINNER

One pillow and one sleeping bag placed in a large garbage bag (for weather protection). Label the bag with your name and school. Sheets and warm blankets are acceptable for a bedroll as well.

Luggage #3: Suitcase/Duffle Bag - ACCESSIBLE AFTER DINNER

It is suggested to place toiletry items inside of a large ziploc.

Necessary Items:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| _____ Lip Balm/moisturizer | _____ Sunscreen (non-aerosol) |
| _____ Shoes (2 pairs), must be closed toed | _____ Shower sandals |
| _____ Long Pants (No Shorts or Leggings) (3 pairs) | _____ Sweatshirt, (2) |
| _____ Warm Jacket (1) | _____ Warm Pajamas |
| _____ T-Shirts, (5) | _____ Long sleeved shirt (2) |
| _____ Warm gloves | _____ Underwear, (8 pairs) |
| _____ Beanie type hat(1) | _____ Deodorant (non-aerosol) |
| _____ Socks,(cotton or wool is preferred) (6- 8 pairs) | _____ Hat with brim (1) |
| _____ Toothpaste and Toothbrush | _____ Soap and Shampoo |
| _____ Hair brush or comb | _____ Towel and washcloth |

Optional Items:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| _____ Laundry bag (for dirty clothes) | _____ Books |
| _____ Camera (disposable preferred) | _____ A special stuffed animal |
| _____ Sunglasses | |

It gets very cold at camp sometimes, so we encourage you to focus on several layers of clothing. This method lets you put a layer on when you get cold and take one off when you get hot, avoiding the scenario of "I'm too hot with my jacket on but I'm too cold with it off".

Students should be able to wear up to 5 layers on their upper body (long underwear, long sleeve shirt, sweatshirt, winter coat, waterproof jacket/poncho) and 2 layers on their lower body (long underwear, warm pants).



Please note there is a huge difference between a coat or poncho that is waterproof and one that is just water resistant. If you send your child with a coat that is water resistant, the water will quickly soak through, and they will get cold and wet!

***BE SURE TO WRITE YOUR NAME AND SCHOOL ON EVERYTHING.
LBUSD AND YMCA CAMP OAKES IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS.
WE WILL ATTEMPT TO RETURN ANY FOUND ITEMS.***