

Pocono Environmental Education Center
P.E.E.C. “School in the Woods”

What is P.E.E.C.?

PEEC is a unique place for students to learn about our environment; to learn about group effort and support in solving problems; and to learn to appreciate and better understand the complexities of natural and human-designed environments. PEEC has been a field trip for over 30 years at Murray Avenue. The sixth grade team is joined by other teachers, administrators, and medical personnel and camps together for two and a half days and two nights. Sixth grade students study plants and microscopic organisms in science class and their importance in our world. This field trip supports these units of study. To record all of our PEEC experiences, students will be required to complete a daily journal. They will be submitted to the language arts teachers upon return to school on Monday.

PEEC is located in northeastern Pennsylvania within the boundaries of the Delaware Water Gap and the tri-states monument where New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania meet. Near the town of Dingmans Ferry, the center lies atop Brisco Mountain overlooking the Delaware River Valley.

PEEC’s “classrooms in the woods” consist of approximately 200,000 acres of public lands including forest, fields, ponds, waterfalls, streams, gorges, a fossil slope and diverse natural areas identified by Nature Conservancy as suitable for preservation and study. Fifteen miles of trails wind through the center’s own 38-acre tract and the adjacent National Environmental Study Area.

Field Study Areas

Along with our Murray Avenue faculty, the resident instructors at PEEC hold small group classes involving students in a variety of educational activities including trips to an eco-zone, waterfalls and a confidence trail. Other activities include the study of pond life, team building activities, outdoor science lessons, and a canoeing session.

Daytime Activities

In small activity groups, students will experience different activities throughout the day:

Students will work in small groups for the **team building activity**, fostering reliance on group effort.

In **canoeing**, students learn equipment, safety and rowing techniques and work in groups of three to row across the lake.

Pond study is a hands-on activity which examines pond life through collection and examination of organisms.

Confidence courses provide a base for cooperation, group unity, and self-esteem. Here, groups must help one another succeed.

Eco-zone is a hands-on discovery room! Students will crawl through the bat cave, sit in the eagle's nest, explore the beaver lodge, and more!

Are You Ready for Some Hiking? All groups are scheduled to hike the other two trails: Sensory Trail and Tumbling Waters. The hikes take anywhere from two to three hours to complete because of all the lessons to be learned along the way.

Tumbling Waters is the most scenic and most challenging. This three-mile hike takes three hours to complete because lessons and awareness skills are taught on route. Hikers are rewarded with hiking to the top of Hermit’s Hill where they will marvel at the scenic vistas of the Delaware Valley and the New Jersey Kittatinny

Mountains. The trail then drops into a hemlock forest with a spectacular waterfall.

Sensory Trail is hiked the first two days of the stay. This quarter-mile hike highlights the four senses other than sight.

Optional Hikes: Early bird teachers lead some early-bird hikers on the *Sunrise Trail Hike*. **You must be very physically fit to join this group.** The trail is five miles of oak and hickory forest. The terrain is hilly and your hiking leaders keep this group moving! This hike is open to anyone who can keep up with the very fast pace.

Night Hike: This optional hike takes place before lights out and is a quiet hike around two pond trails with opportunities to appreciate the sights and sounds of nature at night. Students who are interested in going are chosen by lottery. This hike depends upon the weather.

Evening Activities

Scheduled evening activities begin at 7 pm. We meet in the main building classrooms. A presentation by Mr./Mrs. Streeter of the Delaware Valley Raptor Center brings birds of prey that are unable to return to the wild due to injury. This presentation is a powerful lesson on the raptors' place in the food chain and reveals their exceptional abilities. Mr. Streeter and his wife, Stephanie are licensed falconers.

Another evening presentation is by an animal herpetologist. Mr. Zelenka brings a variety of animals to show us first-hand about the wonders of wildlife.

The students perform skits for the adult chaperones and their peers on the second night. Each cabin is responsible for presenting a two to three-minute skit for entertainment. We really look forward to these hilarious spoofs on everything from singing commercials to movies to re-enactments of events at PEEC.

After these activities, we head back to the cabins to write in journals and get ready for bed.

PEEC Store: Students will have one opportunity to visit the small store to buy a souvenir if they would like.

Sleeping Accommodations

There are 35 cabins filled with bunk beds. Each cabin has a private tiled bathroom with a tub and shower. We reserve 16-18 cabins and fill every bunk.

Student Groupings: Students have the opportunity to interact with many different groups of students on this trip. There are cabin groups, activity groups that change daily, and dining room groups. Students are surveyed and groups are made based on this information as well as input from teachers. Please do not request cabin information in advance of the trip. We do not disclose any group information until we are on the bus ride up to PEEC. Each cabin will be supervised by at least one teacher or adult chaperone.

Dietary Information

The food up at PEEC is comparable to the food that is served in our school cafeteria. Breakfast often consists of different kinds of cereals, scrambled eggs, toast, pancakes, orange juice, fruit, and milk.

Lunch is usually hot dogs, pizza, vegetables, salad, apples and oranges, juice, milk and pudding or Jell-o for dessert.

Dinner can be baked chicken, mashed potatoes, vegetables, spaghetti and meatballs, bread, juice, milk, and cake or pie for dessert. ***Please send in a note with any special dietary needs.**

Student Behavior Expectations

Our primary concern is the safety and welfare of all our students. Each student must be responsible, reliable and respectful of the teachers, parents, and PEEC staff members who donate their time and energy to making this trip a meaningful and fun experience. The School Code of Conduct is in effect at PEEC as well as any additional rules required by the PEEC staff. Students who are unable to follow PEEC and/or school rules may be sent home from the trip. If a student needs to be sent home, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to come to pick up their child from PEEC. No refund is issued.

Contacting Home

Students are not permitted to have cell phones on this trip. Cell reception is very poor at PEEC and calls are dropped and often unable to be completed. If a student needs to contact home for some reason, we do this using a landline in the PEEC office. Before the trip, information about how to contact us at PEEC is sent, including emergency contact information for our chaperones during the day and at night.

Trip Information

When: Wednesday, April 26th: We start boarding busses at 6:00 AM and leave MA at 6:30 AM

Friday, April 28: Students return to MA at approximately 12:00 PM (Connect Ed message will be sent if this time would change significantly due to traffic.)

Where: 538 Emery Rd., Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328
570-828-2319 Fax: 570-828-9695
E-mail: peec@ptd.net www.peec.org

Cost: The trip will cost \$230.00. This covers the cost of the motor coach transportation to and from PEEC, lodging, meals and programs. Payment can be made in full or in installments. Contact Ms. Dilks or Mr. Horrell, in writing, if you have a special financial need.

If paying in installments, the first payment is due February, 28, 2017 (\$115.00) and then March 28, 2017 (\$115.00)

If paying in full, the payment is due March 28, 2017 (\$230.00).

Medical Requirements:

Every child **MUST** have a current Health History Update and physical exam on file in the MAS nurse's office. Every child must have a Tetanus vaccination within the last 5 years and a current Meningitis vaccination. This is also required for school for seventh grade. Documentation from your family doctor for the physical exam and for both vaccinations is required by **Tuesday, March 28th**, when the final payment is due.

Any student who is not cleared to participate in Physical Education classes will not be able to participate. Students must be cleared to return to P.E by 4/12/17 to attend this trip.

Students who are wearing an orthopedic boot or who are on crutches may not attend this field trip.

Parent Informational Session:

There will be a PEEC informational meeting on Tuesday, November 22, 2016, at 7:15 pm in the Murray Avenue School cafeteria. We will be presenting a slide show of past trips, explain procedures, and answer questions about this two and a half-day / two-night camping experience.

Please do not bring students to the parent informational session. They have a student presentation at a town meeting during school.