



Trip Coordinator Guide

Welcome to ECOS Institute! This manual will help you plan and organize your school's unique educational experience in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains. Our mission is to grow the knowledge, skills, character and relationships of our participants through purposeful, hands-on outdoor science education - all set within a unique outdoor classroom environment.

Students learn the interdependence of all living things and the importance of caring for the Earth. They will have the opportunity to hike established trails, investigate geological features, observe wildlife and compare plant adaptations. During the evenings, students study the night sky through telescopes, and enjoy skits, songs and stories. Students will spend just a few days in the mountains but the experiences shared leave memories that will last a lifetime!

ECOS Institute operates at multiple sites near Running Springs in the San Bernardino Mountains. At an elevation of 6,500 feet, snow is common in winter. These facilities have comfortable accommodations for students and teachers with indoor bathrooms and central heating in the cabins. Large auditoriums serve as excellent meeting rooms during inclement weather, night time activities, other large group gatherings. ECOS dining halls provide excellent meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

This manual is a valuable aid for preparation to ensure a successful week for you and your students at ECOS Institute. We look forward to seeing you!

Pam Johnson, Executive Director

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office

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ECOS Mailing Address

ECOS Institute
P.O. Box 3048
Running Springs, CA 92382

Physical Address

Camp Cedar Crest
33325 Camp Cedar Crest Rd.
Running Springs, CA 92382

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STUDENT FORMS

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[BEHAVIOR CONTRACT \(ENGLISH\)](#)
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TEACHER FORMS

[TEACHER GUIDE](#)

Coordinator's Timeline & Checklist

<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>
Year Prior (Feb-March)	Register online <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Submit contact information<input type="checkbox"/> Request dates to attend
Year Prior (April-May)	Confirm Dates of Attendance <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Receive Date Confirmation letter<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm Dates (Principal signs and returns letter to ECOS)<input type="checkbox"/> Notify teachers and parents of date<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange bus transportation
Summer (June-August)	Your district returns the signed Contract to ECOS
Beginning of School Year	Communicate with ECOS and Parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Receive Trip Coordinator Email from ECOS<input type="checkbox"/> Distribute information to teachers and parents<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule parent orientation<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct parent orientation<input type="checkbox"/> Open registration for your students and teachers
October	Updated Enrollment (October 1) and Deposit (October 31) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Send ECOS updated projected enrollment (boys and girls)<input type="checkbox"/> 10% Tuition Deposit due on October 31
6 Weeks Prior	Email Six Week Checklist to ECOS <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Indicate updated projected attendance and special needs
2 Weeks Prior	Email Two Week Checklist and Cabin Partners Lists to ECOS <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Indicate updated projected attendance and special needs
1 Week Prior	Final Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Collect and prepare student medications<input type="checkbox"/> Receive email from ECOS (final cabin lists, menu, etc.)
Morning of Departure	Morning of Departure Checklist <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Temperature check for every student (must be under 100.4F)<input type="checkbox"/> Check for signs of contagion, or recent exposure to contagion<input type="checkbox"/> Verify complete registration<input type="checkbox"/> Email completed Morning of Departure Checklist to ECOS
Afternoon of Return	Return medications to your health clerk
30 Days after trip	Remaining Balance due to ECOS

Transportation

Arranging transportation to and from ECOS Institute is the responsibility of the school. **Please arrange transportation well in advance to ensure availability.** Keep in mind that you need to plan for the number of students plus their luggage. Arrival time at ECOS Institute is 11 a.m. on the first day. On the last day buses should arrive by 10:00 a.m. to load and leave by 11 a.m.

WEDNESDAY DEPARTURES ARE AT 10:30AM

Allow more travel time in inclement weather, especially if chains are required. **Buses must carry chains during winter weather conditions. Drivers must be certified to install and drive with chains.**

Teachers may bring their own vehicles if each student bus has at least one teacher aboard. Be aware that weather conditions could change at any time and that chains may be required.

Individual drivers may transport students to and from ECOS Institute if authorized by the school. This is not encouraged due to the possibility of inclement weather. A parent who wishes to pick up their child must make arrangements with the school and ECOS Institute. On the last day, the parent must arrive prior to the bus departure or their child will return on the bus.

Severe Weather Conditions

If roads are closed or are unsafe due to severe inclement weather on a travel day, we will contact your school the day prior or early the morning of departure to discuss the course of action.

Road conditions and chain requirements

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Phone: (800) GAS-ROAD (enter Highways 330 and 18)
Online: <https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov>

Weather forecast

weather.gov – check forecast for zip code 92341

Address and Directions:

Camp Cedar Crest
33325 Camp Cedar Crest Rd.
Running Springs, CA 92382

Directions (*use Google Maps for most accurate route*):

- ➔ From 210 Freeway, take 330 North
- ➔ In Running Springs, continue on Hwy 18 East towards Big Bear
- ➔ Left onto Green Valley Lake Rd (After Blondie's Grille & Bar)
 - ◆ For **Camp Cedar Crest**: after 1 mile, make Right onto Camp Cedar Crest Road

Forms & Distribution

All ECOS forms are included in your Trip Coordinator Email
AND can be found online at www.ecosinstitute.com

Please distribute information as follows:



PARENTS

1. Parent Meeting Slideshow
2. Registration Tutorial Slideshow
3. Parent Guide
4. ECOS Medication Authorization form
 - Required only for scheduled medications at ECOS Institute
5. Release for a Student With a Special Need/Condition form
 - Required only for students with special emotional or physical conditions that require 1-1 assistance and/or present significantly high risk of injury/complication

TEACHERS

1. Teacher's Guide Parent Guide
2. Cabin Partners List
3. Release for a Teacher With a Special Need/Condition form
 - For teachers who are pregnant, under a doctor's care, or have special health concerns

ECOS INSTITUTE COORDINATOR

1. Coordinator's Guide
2. Teacher's Guide
3. Information for Parents brochure
4. Six Week Checklist
5. Two Week Checklist
6. Medication Worksheet
7. Morning of Departure Checklist

Explanation of Forms

STUDENT FORMS

Student Registration - ONLINE

Required of all students attending ECOS Institute. **Without completed online registration, ECOS Institute does not have permission to give medical treatment and the student does not have permission to be on site.**

Medication Authorization (Prescription and Scheduled Over-the-Counter)

Required for ALL medications sent to ECOS. Both the parent and prescribing physician must sign. These forms should be packed with the medication.

Medication Authorization (Over-the-Counter as needed “PRN”) - ONLINE

When registering their child online, parents select over-the-counter medications available at ECOS, and authorize the ECOS nurse to administer as needed. Without authorization, ECOS nurse cannot distribute PRN over-the-counter medications.

Release For a Student With a Special Need/Condition

Required for some students with special needs. Consult ECOS Director to confirm if this form is needed. This document details the inherent risk associated with the environmental conditions, and physical activity requirements, of ECOS Institute.

TEACHER FORMS

Teacher Registration (ONLINE)

Required of all teachers. This includes emergency contact information and relevant health history.

Release For a Teacher With a Special Need/Condition

For teachers who are pregnant, under a doctor's care, or have health concerns. The form must be signed by the teacher's physician and your District risk manager.

Cabin Partners List

Placing students in groups of 2 and 3 allows the flexibility needed to form cabin groups that fit the physical limitations of the cabins and available staff. List boys and girls separately. These lists should be emailed to ECOS two weeks prior to attending.

Explanation of Forms (cont'd)

ECOS INSTITUTE COORDINATOR FORMS

Six Week Checklist

Gives an updated estimate of the number of boys and girls attending, as well as any students with special needs. This allows time for the ECOS Director and nurse to contact the parents of special needs students and make the necessary arrangements. This checklist should be emailed to ECOS Institute six weeks prior to attending.

Two Week Checklist

Gives detailed information which is used to order food, plan staffing, arrange teacher accommodations, and write the schedule for the week. This checklist should be emailed to ECOS Institute, along with the Cabin Partners List, two weeks prior to attending.

Medication Worksheet

Provides a way to check in all medication being sent to ECOS Institute. This list should be sent with the medication.

Morning of Departure Checklist

This checklist must be completed on the morning that you depart from school, and emailed to ECOS Institute prior to your arrival. The Trip Coordinator uses this checklist to verify that:

1. Students temperature does not exceed 100.4F
2. Students do not show signs of contagion
3. Students have not been recently directly exposed to contagion
4. Students are FULLY registered

Special Needs Students

A child with special needs is defined as one who may require individualized care, supervision, and/or medical attention due to an emotional, developmental, or physical condition. Examples include but are not limited to:

- diabetic students
- mobility challenged students
- students who regularly use a nebulizer
- emotionally challenged students
- students with severe learning disabilities
- students with **severe** food allergies
- students with casts (on arms or legs)*

If deemed necessary by the ECOS Director, the parent and child's physician are required to sign the Release for a Student With a Special Need/Condition. The physician's signature is not required if the student is not under a physician's care for the condition (e.g., a student with a 1-1 aide at school for severe autism). The school should notify ECOS Institute six weeks in advance on the Six Week Checklist in order to allow the staff adequate time for preparation. An ECOS Institute staff member will contact the parent to make arrangements to meet each child's unique health, safety, educational, and social needs.

Parents should be aware that access to a physician and/or hospital could be delayed as road closures due to adverse weather conditions are possible, and could make access to a medical facility difficult.

Students with special needs are considered on a case-by-case basis. Complete and timely information will help the ECOS Institute staff make any special arrangements or recommendations. If a student has a full-time aide at school he/she will need an aide at ECOS Institute. Part-time aides are strongly encouraged to attend.

If it is not feasible for a student to attend for the entire week, there are other options. Many special needs students have come for a day trip.

ECOS Institute staff are not trained to work with all special needs students and are not required to assist in areas such as pushing wheelchairs or assisting with bathing and personal hygiene.

The ECOS Institute Director reserves the right to determine whether an aide will be required and whether it is safe for the child to attend ECOS Institute.

Crutches and Casts

CRUTCHES ARE GENERALLY NOT ALLOWED. Students must be able to walk safely over varied terrain in all types of weather, at a normal pace, for extended periods. Steps, long distances on uneven terrain, snow and ice, and steep hills make walking on crutches a safety hazard. **Schools wishing to send students on crutches must arrange for a wheelchair and an aide to push each student.** Students in walking casts, with leg braces, or on crutches for a permanent disability must have a signed special needs form and will be considered case by case.

Wheelchair Accessibility

Some ECOS sites are more accessible than others. All sites have stairs or steps. Trails can be rocky, narrow, and sometimes steep. Sites at higher elevations have longer periods of ice and snow. All sites have wheelchair-accessible buildings, sleeping quarters, and bathrooms. **The school will need to arrange for an aide (district employee) to push each student in a wheelchair.** ECOS Institute staff and other students are not allowed to push wheelchairs.

Special Diet Requests

ALL ECOS INSTITUTE FOOD IS NUT-FREE. During the online registration process, Parents/Guardians can choose **one** of 5 options: pork-free, dairy-free, egg-free, gluten-free, and vegan. (Vegetarians choose the vegan option and can supplement with dairy and eggs from our kitchen as they wish.)

If there is a student with food restrictions that cannot be accommodated by **one** of these options, parents are instructed to contact your school to discuss the possibility of sending supplemental food from home. If you authorize a student to bring supplemental food, parents must adhere to the ECOS Supplemental Food Guidelines (see page 16). Visiting teachers will be responsible for assisting this student with these items at meals. For food storage and preparation, a refrigerator and microwave will be provided in the dining hall at ECOS Institute.

In most cases, students with dietary restrictions will not bring their own food. The sites have a variety of options at every meal: cold and hot cereals are available at breakfast, there is an extensive salad bar at lunch and dinner, and fruit (usually bananas, apples, and oranges) is available at all meals. You will receive the menu, and a list of your school's special diet requests, at least 1 week before the trip to ECOS. Parents of students with highly restrictive diets may request this menu, please remind them that the menu may change.

Teachers With Special Needs

Teachers with a special need/condition (e.g., pregnancy, under a doctor's care, or other health concerns) who wish to attend must fill out a Release for a Teacher With a Special Need/Condition. The form must be signed by the teacher, the teacher's physician. Although some accommodations can be made, the teacher is expected to take an active role in teaching and supervising students. See the Teacher's Guide for an explanation of the teacher's role at ECOS Institute.

Aides

Students in wheelchairs, students who need assistance with eating, showering, dressing, etc., and students who have a full time aide at school will need an aide at ECOS Institute. If a student requires a high degree of assistance, more than one aide may be necessary. Students with special emotional needs may also need an aide. Due to the additional challenges of an overnight experience, students who do not require an aide at school may require an aide at ECOS Institute. Call the ECOS program director for more information.

If an aide is accompanying a student, please give him/her a copy of the Information for Aides prior to your arrival at ECOS Institute. ECOS Institute staff are not trained to work with all special needs students and are not required to assist in areas such as pushing wheelchairs or assisting with bathing and personal hygiene.

Checking Forms

Forms should be collected at least one month before the students attend ECOS Institute. This allows time to check the forms for accuracy and completeness and make any necessary adjustments. Reminders can be sent home with the students. Many schools set up a check off sheet listing the students attending and tracking the incoming paperwork.

From Parents:

Student Registration - ONLINE

- Required of all students attending
- Trip Coordinator can track the registration status of all students, at any time, through account.
- Trip Coordinators can share account login information with other teachers, so that everyone can check the registration status of students in all classes.
- Trip Coordinators will receive automated emails from the online registration system at 6 weeks, 4 weeks, 2 weeks, and every day during the week leading up to the trip. This email indicates registration status, and if parents intend to send medication.
- If parents intend to send medication, they will need an ECOS Medication Authorization form.
- If the child has a special need/condition, they will need a Release for a Student with a Special Need/Condition Form

ECOS Medication Authorization form - HARD COPY

- Required of any student taking prescription medication, or over-the-counter medication on a prescribed schedule.
- **Check for parent's and physician's signature** (the form can be faxed/emailed to the doctor)
- If the parents want their child to carry an inhaler, the consent section must be filled out.
- These forms should be packed with the medication being sent.
- District Medication forms are not sufficient to authorize ECOS staff to administer medication.

Release For a Student With a Special Need/Condition - HARD COPY

- Required of any student with a special need/condition
- **Check for parent's signature** (and physician's signature if under regular care for the need/condition)

From Teachers:

Cabin Partners Lists

- Please compile onto a master list
- Please make a boys and a girls list, with students arranged in groups of 2's and 3's

Teacher Emergency Information Form

- Required of all teachers attending

Release For a Teacher With a Special Need/Condition (if necessary)

- Required of any teacher with special needs wishing to attend

Preparing Medications

All medication should be checked in to the school office. It should be logged in and sent on the bus with the teachers. **There should be no medication in student's luggage** (including items such as vitamins and cough drops). Students with inhalers and Epi-pens should have access to them on the bus ride, and all inhalers and Epi-pens will be given to the ECOS health care team upon arrival.

Complete the Medication Worksheet

Check that each medication (prescription & over-the-counter) is in its **original container**, and the container is clearly labeled with:

- Name of Student
- Name of Medicine
- Dosage

Place the medication(s) for each student in a re-sealable plastic bag or other easily labeled bag. Mark the outside of the bag with:

- Name of Student
- Name of School

All medications must be accompanied by the ECOS Medication Authorization form.

- **Both the parent and the physician must sign the ECOS Medication Authorization form.**
- If a child requires more than one medication, information for several medications can be written on one form.
- Detailed instructions can be attached to the form.

! Medications that are not prescribed by a physician should not be sent. Standard over-the-counter medications listed in the online registration system are available to students upon request, if authorized by parents.

Place the ECOS Medication Authorization form inside the bag with the medication(s).

Place the Medication Worksheet and all medications in a box or large bag with the school's name written on the outside.

Place the box of medications on the bus with the teacher. Please do not send medications with students or in personal vehicles. The ECOS Institute nurse will be there to receive the box upon arrival.

Morning of Departure

Take each student's temperature and check for any signs of sickness or contagion. Students will be excluded from participation for:

- Temperature of 100.4° F or higher
- Signs and symptoms of communicable disease or condition (e.g., flu)
- Temporary physical condition limiting mobility (broken leg, crutches, etc.)

Record each student's temperature and health screening results on the ECOS Morning of Departure Checklist. Also, verify FULL registration status. This form must be received by ECOS Institute prior to your arrival.

Check that students are dressed in long pants, jackets, and sturdy shoes for arrival in the mountains.

Load the following items on the bus :

- Student medications with ECOS Medication Authorization forms
- Any Release for Student w/Special Needs/Condition forms
- Re-sealable bags for motion sickness
- Luggage!
- Students!

Count the number of students on the bus.

- Make sure the total matches the number on your Morning of Departure Checklist.

Verify projected drive time and **11:00am** (on the dot!) arrival with the bus driver.

Call ECOS Institute (949) 298-3267 in the case of significant delay.



Information

VISITORS

Administrators and other school personnel are welcome and encouraged to visit during the week of participation. Schools may consider inviting additional adults such as community leaders or PTA fundraisers. Some hesitant parents may find this comforting and therefore allow their child to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime experience. Please note visitor information on the Two Week Checklist.

Parents are welcome to visit ECOS Institute any time it is in operation except the week their child is attending. Parent visitation is discouraged during the week their child is at ECOS Institute to prevent homesickness and distraction from the program. Visits must be arranged in advance with the ECOS staff. ECOS Institute does not operate on weekends and holidays.

MIDWEEK DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL

Charges for students arriving late or leaving early will be prorated, but a student who leaves and returns to ECOS Institute will be charged the full fee for the week. To fully experience and benefit from the program, it is best that students participate in all of the activities during the week. Parents are encouraged to make alternative arrangements for lessons, team practices, games, and other home activities during the week of ECOS Institute.

ECOS Institute is a residential (overnight) program. Parents are not permitted to drop off students in the morning and pick them up at night, unless it is a single day trip approved by the school.

TELEPHONES

ECOS Institute telephones are reserved for business operations and emergencies. Telephones are not available for parent/student use, and students should not bring cell phones. ECOS Institute or school teachers will contact parents if concerns arise.



Information

BEDWETTING

Every week, ECOS Institute welcomes students with a history of wetting the bed.. The staff is sensitive to the potential embarrassment a student faces if peers discover the problem. If a problem occurs it is handled discreetly; the soiled bedding and clothing is removed, washed, and returned while the students are out on activities. Extra sleeping bags are available, if necessary.

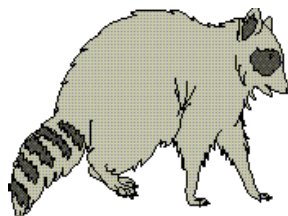
MISSING HOME

The week at ECOS Institute may be the first time away from home for many students. Most are ready for the challenge, but a few will experience separation anxiety. If a student is missing home, the ECOS Institute staff, and visiting teachers, will work with the student and try to make them comfortable. Most students work through their anxiety and have a successful week. If a student continues to have trouble adjusting, ECOS staff or visiting teachers will contact the parents. ECOS Institute staff, visiting teachers, and the parent will make a plan on how to help the student.

EMERGENCIES

ECOS Institute is well equipped to care for students and teachers in the event of an emergency. Staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid, and the nurses (RNs and LVNs) are a valuable resource. Each site has adequate food, water, and supplies to sustain a school group for several days.

We ask that parents direct all phone communication to your school office in the case of an emergency. Site phone lines must be kept open. We will keep each school informed as the situation evolves.



Contract Provisions

1. *What is the 80% clause?*

The enrollment you projected on your school's registration form will be your contract enrollment unless you:

- A. Call to adjust the enrollment before contracts are mailed, or
- B. Call your district office to change the number on the contract before your district signs it.

Once the contract has been signed, your school is financially responsible for at least 80% of the number of students you projected to attend ECOS Institute.

2. *How many teachers should accompany our students?*

There should be one certificated district employee for every 25-35 students. It is preferred, but not required, that the students' own teachers attend. If your school cannot provide the required number of teachers, **one** classified employee may serve as a substitute. The designated substitute would have the same on-site responsibilities as a teacher. If you would like to send more staff than the required ratio, please call the Program Director to make sure accommodations are available. A nominal room and board fee may be charged for each additional staff member.

3. *What is the policy concerning students who leave to attend off-site events?*

Because the curriculum and social activities are designed for cumulative learning, attending off-site activities (e.g., sports, music, drama) during the week is discouraged. However, if an unavoidable conflict does occur, a student may be picked up by his/her parents and returned to the program. Parents should make arrangements with the program director at the site their child is attending. Students who leave and return to ECOS Institute will be charged the full fee.

4. *Are fees prorated for a child who attends a partial week?*

Yes. A detailed fee structure is included in the contract. The proration and the child's name will appear on your billing invoice. Students who leave and return to attend off-site events will be charged the full fee.

Your district office retains a copy of the complete contract.

Supplemental Food

At ECOS Institute, we are pleased to help your child have a pleasant and healthy experience. If your child has special dietary needs (e.g. severe allergies, religious dietary preferences, dietary requirements for diabetics, or a medically prescribed diet), please follow these guidelines:

1. **Submit your special diet request when you register your child. This is a component of the online registration system.**
 - a. All food served at ECOS Institute is nut-free.
 - b. Options are: pork-free, dairy-free, egg-free, gluten-free, and vegan (Vegetarians choose vegan, then can supplement with dairy and eggs if desired). You will be able to choose only **one** of these options.
 - c. The ECOS kitchen will provide necessary substitutions, mirroring the standard menu items, so as to not bring attention to a child's special diet.
 - d. Upon arrival at ECOS, your child will be shown how they will receive their special plate from the service window. All food is served from the same window, so as to not bring attention to a child's special diet.
 - e. If your child's food restrictions cannot be accommodated by **one** of the available special diet options, you can work with your school to arrange for supplemental food to be sent from home, to ensure that your child is eating well during their trip.

2. **IF YOUR SCHOOL AUTHORIZES YOU TO SEND SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD, please adhere to the following guidelines:**
 - a. Send food in a small, soft-sided cooler. (To ensure we can store in refrigerator).
 - b. Per San Bernardino County Health Code, the kitchen staff cannot prepare special meals using ingredients sent by parents.
 - c. In the dining hall, there is a refrigerator for storing perishable items in between meals, and a microwave to heat up items. Your school's teachers will assist your child with the supplemental food you send.
 - d. Food should be ready to eat (e.g., tuna, cottage cheese, crackers and cheese, protein drinks, nut-free granola bars, or items that can be microwaved).
 - e. You may request the menu for the week, to help you prepare and pack items that mirror the ECOS menu. Your teachers will receive this menu at least 1 week prior to the trip. This menu is subject to change.
 - f. Please send only healthy foods and snacks (no candy, chips, sugary cereals, etc.).
 - g. Clearly label food container(s) with your child's name.
 - h. Please do not send any food containing nuts.

3. Give food to your child's teacher to load on the bus.

4. Your items (soft-sided cooler, plastic containers, etc.) will be sent back to your school with your teachers.
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