



# *Coordinator's 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!

Steve Benz, Program Director

## **Contact Information**

### Physical Address – Camp Cedar Crest

33325 Camp Cedar Crest Rd.  
Running Springs, CA 92382

### Physical Address – Green Valley Lake Christian Camp

32355 Green Valley Lake Rd.  
Green Valley Lake, CA 92341

### ECOS Mailing Address

ECOS Institute  
P.O. Box 8517  
Green Valley Lake, CA 92341

Phone: (949) 298-ECOS

Fax: (949) 298-3267

Website: [www.ecosinstitute.com](http://www.ecosinstitute.com)

E-mail: [info@ecosinstitute.com](mailto:info@ecosinstitute.com)

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### COORDINATOR PLANNING FORMS

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INFORMATION FOR AIDES  
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### STUDENT FORMS

PARENT GUIDE  
STUDENT REGISTRATION  
BEHAVIOR CONTRACT  
RETURN TRIP FORM

# Coordinator's Timeline & Checklist

<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>
Year Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> Register online <input type="checkbox"/> Receive confirmation of date <input type="checkbox"/> Return <b>Date Confirmation Letter</b> to us <input type="checkbox"/> Notify teachers and parents of date
September	<input type="checkbox"/> Your district returns the signed contract to us
As Soon As Possible	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange bus transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule parent orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute forms to teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct parent orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute forms to parents
6 Weeks Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <b>Six Week Checklist</b> to ECOS office <input type="checkbox"/> Contact us about special needs students or teachers, special diets, and other concerns
4 Weeks Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect and review student forms
2 Weeks Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <b>Two Week Checklist</b> and <b>Cabin Partners Lists</b> to ECOS office
1 Week Prior	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect and prepare student medication <input type="checkbox"/> Collect teacher forms ( <b>Teacher Emergency Information and Release For A Teacher With A Special Need/ Condition</b> )
Morning of Departure	<input type="checkbox"/> Put student forms and medication on bus <input type="checkbox"/> Take and record student temperatures <input type="checkbox"/> Check and record students for communicable diseases/ conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Count students
Afternoon of Return	<input type="checkbox"/> Return medications to students
Soon After	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <b>Principal Evaluation</b> and <b>Student/Parent Evaluations</b> to ECOS Mailing Address
Soon After	<input type="checkbox"/> We bill your school for charges

# 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.

Allow more travel time in inclement weather, especially if chains are required. **Buses must carry chains during winter weather conditions.**

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)  
(800) GAS-ROAD (enter Highways 330 and 18)  
dot.ca.gov (click “Travel”, then “Highway Conditions”, enter Highways 330 and 18)

## 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

Green Valley Lake Christian Camp  
32355 Green Valley Lake Rd.  
Green Valley Lake, CA 92341

## 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
  - For **Green Valley Lake Christian Camp**: after 2 miles, turn left into camp driveway

# Forms & Distribution

**Please disperse the packet of forms as follows:**

## **PARENTS**

Parent Guide

- To all parents

Student Registration form

- To all parents

Return Trip form

- To all parents

Medication Authorization form

- Required of students taking prescribed medications while at ECOS Institute

Release for a Student With a Special Need/Condition form

- Required only of students with special emotional or physical conditions that require 1-1 assistance and/or present significantly high risk of injury/complication

## **TEACHERS**

Teacher's Guide

Parent Guide

Cabin Partners List and Directions

Teacher Emergency Information form

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**

Coordinator's Guide

Teacher's Guide

Information for Parents brochure

Six Week Checklist

Two Week Checklist

Medication Worksheet

Departure Morning Health Checklist and Proof of Immunization for Participants

# Explanation of Forms

## STUDENT FORMS

### **Student Registration**

Required of all students attending ECOS Institute. **Without a completed and signed form, ECOS Institute does not have permission to give medical treatment and the student does not have permission to be on site.** These forms **must** go on the bus.

### **Return Trip**

Gives consent to treat in the event of an emergency on the return bus trip. They should be kept by the teachers to go home on the bus.

### **Medication Authorization**

Required of students taking prescription and nonprescription medication, herbal/homeopathic remedies, and supplements (including vitamins) on a regular basis. Both the parent and physician must sign. These forms should be packed with the medication. Without a completed and signed form, only the medications listed on the Registration Form can be given to the student (if consent was given).

### **Release For a Student With a Special Need/Condition**

Required for students with special needs. The form informs the parent and physician of the conditions and the possible emergency response times at ECOS Institute. These forms should go up on the bus with the medications and other paperwork.

## TEACHER FORMS

### **Teacher Emergency Information**

Required of all teachers. This shows consent to treat in the event of an emergency. These forms should be sent up on the bus with the medications and other paperwork.

### **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 the district risk manager. This form should be sent up on the bus with the medication and other paperwork.

### **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 the Program Director two weeks prior to attending.

# Explanation of Forms (cont'd)

## ECOS INSTITUTE COORDINATOR FORMS

### **Six Week Checklist**

Gives an initial estimate of the number of boys and girls attending as well as any students with special needs. This allows time for the program manager or health services technician to contact the parents of special needs students and make the necessary arrangements. This checklist should be emailed to the Program Director 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 the Program Director, 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.

### **Departure Morning Medical Checklist**

This checklist (or similar form) must be completed the morning you depart from school by the school nurse. All students must have their temperature taken and recorded along with any signs of nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours or exposure to these symptoms.

# 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 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)\*

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 hard of hearing student). 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 in excess of one hour due to the remote locations of the ECOS Institute site. Road closures due to adverse weather conditions 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 with a parent for a day.

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

\*Students on crutches may not attend.

## Crutches and Casts

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 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. Although all sites have a wheelchair accessible restroom, it may not be located in the student's regular accommodations. **The school will need to arrange for an aide to push each student in a wheelchair.** ECOS Institute staff and other students are not allowed to push wheelchairs.

## **Special Diet Requests**

Parents/Guardians must call ECOS Institute directly, at least 2 weeks before the trip, to describe their child's dietary restriction. We will pass that information along to our kitchen, and they will provide an appropriate option for the student.

In most cases, students with dietary restrictions will not bring their own food. The sites have vegetarian options for every meal, cold cereal is an option at breakfast, there is an extensive salad bar at lunch and dinner, and fruit (usually bananas, apples, and oranges) is available at all meals. Students who are vegetarian or have religious dietary restrictions (e.g., no pork or pork products) can choose the vegetarian option when appropriate.

In the rare instance that the kitchen cannot accommodate a request, The ECOS Director will authorize a parent to send supplemental food, and give them a copy of the Supplemental Food Guidelines. Parents will give this food to the teachers at the school, and it will be passed along to ECOS staff upon arrival. ECOS staff will communicate with the student to ensure they have access to their supplemental food.

- Supplemental food must be authorized by the ECOS Director.

## **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

- Required of all students attending
- Should be filled out completely (front and back)
- **Check for parent's signature at the bottom of the back page!**
- If the child takes medication, they will need a 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

### Return Trip

- Required of all students attending (for the return trip on the bus)
- **Check for parent's signature**
- Can be kept by teachers (not required by ECOS Institute)

### Medication Authorization (if necessary)

- 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 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 (if necessary)

- 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 the ECOS health care team upon arrival.

**Complete** the Medication Worksheet

**Check** that each medication (prescription, nonprescription, supplements, etc.) 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.
- If an inhaler, Epi-Pen, or diabetic supplies is in the possession of a student, please note on the yellow form.

! Medications that are not prescribed by a physician should not be sent. Standard over-the-counter medications listed on the ECOS Student Registration Form are available to students upon request, if authorized by parents on that form.

**Place** the Medication Authorization form inside the bag with the medication(s). Do not put the Student Registration or the Release For a Student With a Special Need/Condition in the bags.

**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 health services technician will be there to receive the box on arrival.

# Morning of Departure

**Take** each student's temperature and check for any unhealthful symptoms. Students will be excluded from participation for:

- Temperature of 100° F or higher
- Signs and symptoms of communicable disease or condition (e.g., lice)
- Temporary physical condition limiting mobility (broken leg, crutches, etc.)

**Record** each student's temperature and health condition on the School Departure Health Checklist or similar form. This form must be faxed or emailed to the ECOS Institute Office

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

**Remember** to load the following items on the bus :

(They can all be placed in the medication box)

- Student Registration forms - **one for each student attending**
- Student medications with Medication Authorization forms
- Special Needs forms
- Teacher Emergency Information forms
- Copy of corrected Cabin Partners List
- Return Trip slips
- Re-sealable bags for motion sickness
- School Departure Health Checklist
- Behavior Contract



**Count** the number of students on the bus.

- Make sure the total matches the number on your Cabin Partners Lists.
- **Call the site to report any changes prior to your departure from school**

# Information

## VISITORS

Administrators, school personnel, DARE officers, and next year's fundraising parents are welcome and encouraged to visit during the week of participation. Schools may consider inviting additional adults such as community leaders or bilingual aides. 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 the program 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 program director. 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.

## TELEPHONES

Each site has a telephone and a fax machine, which are used for ECOS Institute business communications. Telephones are not available for student use and students should not bring cell phones. The ECOS Institute will contact parents if concerns arise. Cell service is decent for most carriers.



# Information

## **BEDWETTING**

Students who wet the bed attend ECOS Institute on a regular basis. 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 to substitute, 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 will work with the student and try to make him/her comfortable. Most students work through their anxiety and have a successful week. If a student continues to have trouble adjusting, the Program Director or Health Services Technician will contact the parents. ECOS Institute staff 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 health services technicians 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.

