



Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Welcome to *A Mountain Classroom*, the Appalachian Mountain Club's residential school program. In operation since 1990, we currently serve more than three thousand students per year with our hands-on, environmental education curriculum. Our program is managed out of the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, in Gorham, NH at the base of Mount Washington. Programs are run at Pinkham, the Highland Center, in the AMC's high huts and at Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH. All are perfect environments to learn about the natural world and about the rewards of hiking.

Our experienced instructors introduce students to watershed and forest ecology and to orienteering. They hike mountain trails and enjoy outdoor experiences with students from all over the Northeast. Instructors are certified in wilderness first aid and trained to manage their groups in wilderness situations.

Your child will be hiking and/or backpacking on the trip. This is a physically demanding but incredibly rewarding experience. The weather in the mountains can be very unpredictable and sometimes winter conditions occur in the spring and fall. Our lessons are geared to the outdoors regardless of the weather. We have included an equipment list of required items for your child to bring. Many of these items can be borrowed. Hiking boots may well be the most important item on the clothing list. Students will be hiking on rocky and potentially wet or snowy trails, which may ascend or descend steeply.

Your child's teacher has chosen the Cardigan Lodge for their program and can explain the trip itinerary.

Cardigan Lodge is located on the Shem Valley Road in Alexandria, NH. It is set back off the main roads in the middle of 1,200 wilderness acres with 50 miles of trails, beautiful streams, a pond, multiple forest types and three distinct mountain summits. The lodge has bunkrooms with two to six bunks and bathrooms with showers located on the second floor of the facility. Meals are served family style, but students make their own trail lunch after breakfast. If your child is staying at this facility, he/she will be going for day hikes.

You have also received a Medical/Release and Acknowledgment of Risk form. **It is absolutely necessary for you to complete these forms for your child to attend.** Please return them to the organizing teacher. Although injuries are rare, there is an inherent risk to outdoor activities. Should a medical emergency arise we will need this information. Also please be advised that your child will be away from immediate hospital access and wilderness evacuations may take hours. If you have any questions about the equipment list or forms, direct them to your organizing teacher who will forward them to us if necessary.

We wish to make your child's trip an exciting learning experience.

Sincerely,

Andrea K. M. Muller
North Country Youth Education Director

Lindsay Watkins
Cardigan A Mountain Classroom Coordinator

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