

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS



Dear Teacher,

Thank you for choosing Sky Ranch as the Outdoor Education experience for your students! Sky Ranch has been in operation for almost 70 years and is recognized as one of Texas' leading summer camps. Serving over 7,000 children each season, Sky Ranch is a long-trusted name in quality programming for children. Sky Ranch School Programs follows the same excellent tradition. The curriculum and staff are outstanding, so you can feel secure about your students participation in this enriching opportunity. An overview of our program can be found on our website here: www.SkyRanch.org/Pages/Schools.

Now that your school has booked your trip, it is time to start the planning process. The purpose of this packet is to provide you with resources to make trip planning as easy as possible. Included you will find:

- Sample Schedule
- Teacher FAQ's and Emergency Contact Information
- Teacher Specific Packing List
- Tips and Tricks for Schools
- Dining Hall Expectations

You will be assigned a Sky Ranch Event Coordinator to plan your trip. About 2 months before your trip, you will receive an email with a form for you to fill out to start the planning process. Your Event Coordinator will be available by phone or email to help in any way leading up to your trip.

If you have any questions regarding your trip, feel free to call Sky Ranch at 800.962.2267. You can also reach our team by emailing SchoolPrograms@SkyRanch.org.

Sincerely,

The School Programs Team

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

SCHOOL NAME

Note: These times and locations are an example. You will receive a customized schedule from your Event Coordinator.

SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY

10:30 am	Arrival	Green Lot
11:40 am	Lunch & Skrazy	Oak Haven
12:40 pm	Classes	
3:45 pm	Class Debrief	
3:30 pm	Recreation Time	
5:50 pm	Dinner Regroup	
6:00 pm	Dinner	Oak Haven
6:45 pm	Night Event	Headquarters
10:00 pm	Lights Out	Cabins

THURSDAY

7:30 am	Morning Meetup	
7:40 am	Breakfast & Skrazy	Oak Haven
8:40 am	Classes	
11:40 am	Lunch & Skrazy	Oak Haven
12:40 am	Classes	
3:45 pm	Class Debrief	
3:30 pm	Recreation Time	
5:50 pm	Dinner	Oak Haven
6:45pm	Night Event	Headquarters
10:00 pm	Lights Out	Cabins

FRIDAY

7:30 am	Morning Meetup	
7:40 am	Breakfast & Skrazy	Oak Haven
8:40 am	Classes	
11:40 am	Lunch & Skrazy	
12:30 pm	Departure	Oak Haven Orange Lot

Everyday
3:30-5:30 pm
3:30:-5:30 pm

The Corner Store
Café Sky

Oak Haven
Legacy Building

TEACHER FAQ

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WILL THERE BE A NURSE PRESENT FOR SCHOOL TRIPS?

To ensure students have immediate medical care available, each school is responsible for bringing a nurse. Should a student need additional medical treatment, you will be given directions to nearby medical facilities. For additional questions regarding medical needs of students, please contact your school's lead teacher for the trip.

HOW DO STUDENTS RECEIVE MEDICATION WHILE ON CAMP?

All medicine will be turned into the school and administered by the school nurse who should be in attendance on the trip. For further questions regarding student medication, please contact your school's lead teacher.

WHAT ACCOMMODATIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR SPECIFIC DIETARY NEEDS?

Our Food Services team provides three meals per day. We are aware that there are many different dietary needs and we strive to accommodate all requests within reason. Our team is accustomed to accommodating dietary needs such as: gluten, dairy, tree nut and peanut allergies, diabetic, vegetarian, and vegan diets, as well as many other less common requests.

To access and submit a dietary needs request form, please visit our website at SkyRanch.org/Food.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at FoodService@SkyRanch.org.

IS SKY RANCH A PEANUT FREE FACILITY?

While Sky Ranch is not peanut free, we have limited the number of peanut products in our food. Menu alternatives can be provided in the case of severe food allergies. For further questions regarding allergies and food safety, please contact us at FoodService@SkyRanch.org.

WILL MY STUDENTS NEED TO SPEND MONEY WHILE AT CAMP? IF SO, HOW MUCH SHOULD PARENTS SEND WITH THEM?

If the school chooses to visit the Sky Café or Sky Ranch Corner Store as a part of their recreational time, we recommend students bring \$5-\$15 cash. Items for purchase range from snacks and milkshakes to basic souvenirs - such as stickers, toys, hats, and t-shirts. Please contact your school's lead teacher to find out if this will be included in the schedule.

TEACHER FAQ

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHAT IS SKY RANCH'S SAFETY POLICY?

Since 1955, Sky Ranch staff members have been trained to evaluate everything we do through the lens of safety. It isn't just in the big things, but also in the small things. We are accredited by the American Camp Association, but more importantly, safety is a part of our culture.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CASE OF BAD WEATHER?

In the case of light rain and colder temperatures, we will continue to hold classes outdoors. In the case of inclement weather, all classes and recreation time will be held indoors. The Sky Ranch leadership team will be tracking potential threatening weather conditions and have plans in place that will be communicated to the school's lead teacher. Sky Ranch provides radios in every cabin to stay in communication, if needed, during nighttime hours.

WHEN ARE WATER ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE?

Weather permitting, water activities are available from April 1st-October 31st. If the air and water temperature do not meet the required safety standard, water activities will be closed for the day. While make-up activities are not guaranteed, your Event Coordinator will communicate with the school's lead teacher to arrange potential make-up activities in the case of inclement weather.

ARE LIFEGUARDS PROVIDED FOR WATER ACTIVITIES?

Yes. Trained American Red Cross Lifeguards are posted at every water activity. Lifeguards are posted per the ratio requirements of the American Red Cross.

DOES SKY RANCH TEACH RELIGIOUS CONTENT?

The Sky Ranch School Programs department exists to support the educational development of all students from our partner schools and their selected educational curriculum. The instructional content is in alignment with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills; therefore, religious content is not incorporated into the curriculum. Private Christian schools may choose to incorporate faith into their programming.

TEACHER FAQ

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHAT ARE THE CABIN ACCOMMODATIONS?

All room assignments will be gender specific and based on the Sky Ranch recommended ratios. The school will provide a set number of adult chaperones to stay in the cabin with your students. All cabin accommodations have heating and air conditioning, as well as indoor showers and restrooms with private changing areas.

WILL MY STUDENTS HAVE TO PARTICIPATE IN HIGH ROPES/CHALLENGE COURSES?

If the school chooses to select it, students will have the option to participate in a range of ropes activities. At Sky Ranch, we operate under the "challenge by choice" mentality. Your students will be encouraged to participate in activities that challenge and push them out of their comfort zone, but only to the degree they desire. Staff leading challenge course activities are trained through an Association of Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) preferred vendor. All challenge course elements and equipment are inspected annually by an Association of Challenge Course Technologies (ACCT) preferred vendor.

WHERE DO TEACHERS STAY WHILE ON CAMP?

Teachers have a few options regarding accommodations. Teachers may stay in the same cabins as their students of the same gender. If teachers are unable to stay with students, there are two options depending on availability. An additional teacher cabin can be provided to schools needing a separate space for teachers to sleep. Teachers and administrators may also opt to stay in our upgraded lodge cabins for an additional fee. Each lodge room features a queen-sized bed, one bunk bed, bedding, towels, a private bathroom, a chair, nightstand, and lamp.

ARE GOLF CARTS AVAILABLE?

Golf carts are available to rent for \$60 per golf cart per day. While golf carts are not a trip necessity, schools tend to enjoy having one for the sake of quick transportation across camp. A release form is required for all participants driving the golf cart.

WHAT IS A LEAD INSTRUCTOR?

Upon arrival, your school will be assigned an Lead Instructor. Your Lead Instructor is one of our trained instructors who will be with your school for the entirety of your stay. He/She will serve as your main point of contact during your trip, checking in with your lead teacher regularly, communicating pertinent information, meeting any needs you may have, and coordinating the details of your trip once you are at camp.

TEACHER FAQ

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHAT IS THE REQUIRED RATIO FOR ADULTS:STUDENTS?

While Sky Ranch does not require a ratio while on camp, we recommend bringing at least 1 adult per 10 students.

WHY IS MY STUDENT NUMBER ON MY INVOICE LOWER THAN MY ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING?

Your contract and deposit invoice are based on a guaranteed minimum that is agreed upon during the booking process. Your numbers typically fluctuate between booking and your actual trip. Your pre-trip invoice will reflect your expected number of students and adults. Your final invoice will reflect the actual number of students and adults you brought on your trip.

WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR A SKY RANCH INSTRUCTOR?

All our instructors are full-time staff members. Through a unique relationship with Dallas Baptist University, some of our instructors will also be receiving a Master's degree after two years of teaching in School Programs. We recruit staff members that are able to deliver educational content to students in a manner that is highly relational and fun. We select individuals who are great communicators, love kids, and know how to have fun.

ONCE ON CAMP, WHEN CAN I MEET WITH MY CHAPERONES?

After your arrival on camp, there will be a designated time for your Lead Instructor to meet with your chaperones and teachers. During this time, they will explain Sky Ranch's rules and expectations, answer questions, and make announcements. This is a great time for teachers to meet with chaperones and make any necessary announcements.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE THE SCHEDULE FOR OUR TRIP?

Approximately 2 weeks before your trip you will receive a preliminary schedule by email from your Event Coordinator. This schedule will reflect the selections made when the lead teacher completed the trip questionnaire. Your schedule is subject to change up until your arrival on camp due to the ever-changing needs of camp, but you will be informed of any and all changes. After your arrival, your teachers and chaperones will receive your school's finalized schedule during the chaperone and teacher meeting with your lead teacher. We will provide all teachers and chaperones with a copy of your finalized schedule.

TEACHER PACKING LIST

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

We recommend that teachers bring comfortable clothes as they will spend much of their time exploring outdoors, hiking, and potentially sitting on the ground. Be sure to pack rain wear and warm layers for the cold nights and mornings, as the students will be outdoors. We always hope for good weather, but during light rain showers and cold weather, we will continue to hold class outside if there is no lightning, strong wind, or freezing temperatures.

PLEASE BE SURE TO PACK:

- Closed toed shoes
- Sleeping bag OR twin sheets & blanket
- Pillow and pillow case
- Towel, hand-towel, and wash cloth
- Raincoat or rain poncho
- Pajamas
- Cold weather layers
- Blue jeans/long pants
- Basic toiletries
- Shorts (if the weather is warm)
- Swimsuit (weather permitting)
- T-shirts or tops
- Fleece hat
- Flashlight
- LABEL EVERYTHING!

FOR CLASS TIME:

- Small Backpack or drawstring bag
- Water Bottle
- Notebook
- Sunglasses
- Extra pencils or pens are always good to have on hand for students

RECOMMENDED BY VETERAN TEACHERS:

- Hand towels or paper towels for bathrooms
- Power strip/extension cord
- Kleenex box

PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

Alcohol, tobacco, guns, weapons, illegal substances, jewelry, game systems, or anything that breaks easily or would cause loss if misplaced. Sky Ranch is not responsible for lost or broken articles.

TEACHER TIPS & TRICKS

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Before you arrive:

- Please let your Event Coordinator know any preferences you may have regarding your trip. We will try to accommodate as many requests as we can.
- Please divide students into letter class groups BEFORE you arrive on camp. (EX: Group A, Group B, etc.)
- Make sure that students and chaperones know what cabin and class group they are in before arriving.
- Make sure all students and adults on the trip have completed their participant agreement form through Smartwaiver.
- Sky Ranch does not collect any medical information forms from schools. The lead teacher or nurse should keep any medical forms in the event of a medical need.
- Have students and chaperones label their luggage before arrival. Label should include name, cabin number, and school name.
- Some schools find it helpful to bring walkie talkies for teachers to communicate with each other. Cell phone service has improved a lot over the recent years, but can sometimes be inconsistent. Walkie talkies allow teachers to communicate more easily.
- Create a group text for chaperones and teachers before arriving to better communicate information to all adults present on the trip. WiFi is available in the main camp buildings if cell service is not excellent.

Journal pages:

- Be sure to have all journal pages printed before your trip for every class your students are taking.
- Sky Ranch updates these journal pages yearly. Please make sure students have the most up-to-date copy.
- Adding page numbers to journal pages can help students find the correct pages more efficiently.
- Placing journal pages in a folder or on a clipboard makes filling out the pages easier.
- Attaching a pencil to the journal with yarn or string camp help students to keep up with their pencil.
- We suggest that each teacher bring a handheld pencil sharpener for their class group.

TEACHER TIPS & TRICKS

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

While at Camp:

- After your arrival to camp, your Lead Instructor will meet with your chaperones and teachers. They will explain Sky Ranch rules and expectations and answer questions. This is a great time for teachers to meet with parents and make any necessary announcements.
- Chaperones must be present during Rec time.
- Students need to be prepared for the day when meeting at Headquarters each morning. They need their class journal pages, pencil, water bottle, close toed shoes, and weather appropriate clothing.
- Chaperones are encouraged to be involved during class time, but to refrain from giving answers to students. Our staff appreciates chaperone support, especially when managing large groups of students.
- Students and chaperones need to be on time when meeting for class, meal times, night events, etc. Being on time helps ensure we follow the schedule allowing students to experience everything Sky Ranch has to offer.
- Ziplines- Please note that ziplining is an additional \$6 fee that will be included on your invoice. If you choose this rec-time activity, we suggest collecting money before arriving to camp. If you don't collect money from students before coming to camp, a teacher or chaperone must be present at the bottom of the ziplines to collect money from students. Bring change if you plan to collect money this way as Sky Ranch staff are unable to provide change or collect money from students. Following your assigned zipline time, money should be turned in to School Programs leadership to be applied to the school's invoice.
- The weight limit guideline for ziplines is 50-250 pounds.
- If you are adding Ranch Life as a class, students must be at least 8 years old to participate.

DINING HALL EXPECTATIONS

SKY RANCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Meals are a very important part of your time at Sky Ranch. To ensure an enjoyable dining hall experience, we have provided the rules and expectations. These will be reviewed with you and your students upon arrival.

- Please be on time for meals. Schools will meet with their instructors at a designated location then be led into the dining hall. Being on time helps us serve all groups in a timely manner.
- The Corner Store is located inside Oak Haven and may be optional for schools during meals. Please let your Event Coordinator know your preference. It will be your responsibility to keep your students from entering, if you do not want to shop during meals.
- Adults will be dismissed to go to meals before students. We ask chaperones to spread out at your school's designated tables. There should be at least one adult per table.
- Food is served cafeteria style in 3 lines.
- Students and adults with dietary needs should inform the dining hall staff of their dietary needs as they go through the special diets line.
- If a guest is providing their own food due to specific dietary needs, a space in the cooler will be provided for storage for the duration of their stay at camp. Dining hall staff will assist in making personal food items available at each meal. Please make sure the cooler is labeled with the person's name, school name, and any special preparation instructions. Please email FoodService@SkyRanch.org to plan these accommodations.
- The dining hall consists of long rectangular shaped tables. One table group is considered any length of rectangular table pieces that are connected. Only 4 students should be up from a table group at a time.
- Fruit and salad bar are available for all guests at each meal.
- Guests may go back to the food line for seconds or thirds.
- Coffee, hot tea and iced tea are available for adults only.
- There will be a 10-minute warning before the end of each meal. Students will be responsible for clearing their own tables at this time.
- After tables are cleared, students and adults should remain seated for announcements and dismissal from the dining hall.