

City Honors School

8TH Grade Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder – Placeholder Form

Please hold a spot for my child to attend the CHS 8th Grade Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder, May 22 to May 25, 2025, Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario.

STUDENT NAME:

(please print)

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME(S), BEST CONTACT PHONE NUMBER, AND EMAIL ADDRESS:

(please print)

(please print)

Parents,

- Are you interested in learning about how you can help with fundraising and events for the class?
- Please contact us about financial assistance for your child to attend the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder if needed.
- Would you like to sponsor a classmate in need of financial assistance to afford the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder?
- Might you be interested in chaperoning the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder?

Questions or Comments:

Please have your child return this form to Mr. Sharratt as soon as possible. Keep all other pages of the newsletter for your information.

Also available at <http://www.cityhonors.org/page/resources-for-parents/>

Dear Parents,

The 8th Grade Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder in Algonquin Park, Canada has become a CHS tradition, but just as importantly it is another way in which we develop students in alignment with the goals of the IB Middle Years Program. This year the trip is scheduled for May 22 to May 25, 2025, pending Board of Education approval.

Planning a trip of this size, approximately 120 students, takes a significant amount of planning and preparation; we begin before the start of the school year. Please complete the placeholder form attached. This form should be turned in to Mr. Sharratt, 8th Grade Class Advisor. All other forms may be retained for your reference and turned in later in the year, if you wish.

The cost of the trip will be \$400, which includes transportation, food, lodging and all camping activities led by the experienced Camp Pathfinder Staff. We are actively fundraising to ensure **all** 8th grade students have the opportunity to participate in a very meaningful experience and make memories that will last a lifetime. The trip is chaperoned by Dr. Kresse and by parent and faculty volunteers.

Schedule of payments:

January 24, 2025 – 1st deposit payment of \$100/student

March 7, 2025 – 2nd payment of \$300/student

We emphasize that we welcome your requests to change these scheduled payment due dates according to your individual family's budgetary needs.

Each year, we benefit from the support of the Buffalo Public Schools, CH/FMP Foundation, CHS PTSCO, the Algonquin Campership Fund, contributions from individual families, and a class fundraiser to ensure that **all families can send their child on this trip regardless of family budget.** **Contact Mr Sharratt by email or phone, financial assistance is readily available – jsharratt@buffaloschools.org 716.440.5122.**

Please refer to the following letter that was kindly submitted by parent chaperones from a previous year regarding the experience of the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder.

Observations of parent chaperones – Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder

Dear Dr. Kresse and Mr. Sharratt,

I wanted to share with you the observations Greg and I made over the course of the long weekend with the CHS 8th-grade Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder in Algonquin Park. While each group rotated through the same or very similar activities, the special skills and knowledge of each counselor made each day group's focus slightly different. We understand that Warren focused a little more on the wildflowers, while our counselor, Aidan, may have emphasized history to a somewhat greater degree. Regardless, I am sure that you and your fellow teachers and administrators will find many echoes of the [IB and BPS curriculum] and other significant education and life-long learning outcomes in these experiences.

In terms of history, the students learned the history of logging and land use in the Park as well as the history of the First Nations peoples of the area. They learned this history in the midst of other lessons about cooking on a fire and environmental impacts. The connection with Buffalo's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century history was made explicit, as many of Buffalo's civic elites and industrialists were involved in the founding of the Park and its early mixed use history of logging, "roughing it," hunting, and fishing. Many of the groups explored the Glen Donald Hotel ruins after canoeing there and using a compass to find some of the old cabin foundations. This hotel was a rustic destination accessible only by train and frequented by wealthy Americans, many of whom were from the Western New York area. This social and transportation history is significant and should have some fruitful comparisons with the history of the railroads and Erie and other canals that students learn.

No history of the occupation and use of the Park can help but lead to a discussion of sustainability and environmental issues. (Even the living environment at the camp – an elaborate human waste management system, composting/garbage/recycling bins at every meal for sorting waste – was a daily reminder of the human impact on the environment.) The Glen Donald site includes a garbage dump with exposed cans, old piping, pot lids, and other remainders and allowed the students to compare and contrast the new and old forms of waste management. The Park itself shows the remnants of the logging industry and the students observed these: a sunken boat left behind when a logging camp closed, the few white pines left behind by loggers sticking up above a deciduous forest, the misshapen white pine that survived the logging on Pathfinder Island. Fireside discussion included the links between logging and vulnerability to fire in the area.

Flora and fauna surrounded the students all day and night. Rare wildflowers like the lady's slipper and the red trillium grew on the island and could be seen on the excursions. Even from the bus on Highway 60 students saw a moose; they later walked through moose scat on the island and a lucky few groups saw a moose and her two calves. Many students for the first time heard the eerie call of the loon and perhaps a few heard the howl of a wolf if they had woken during the night like Greg did. One student caught her first fish – and told the tale around the fire in articulate fashion. Warblers and song birds, ducks, hawks, woodpeckers and their holes were observed and heard.

Students also learned about the geological and climatic factors that make the region unique, including the Canadian Shield, influence of glaciers, and the intersection of the deciduous and boreal forests.

Perhaps one of the loveliest moments came on the last night at camp, when students lay down on the docks to see the stars. Shooting stars, satellites, constellations, the Milky Way – there were students who had never seen the sky without ambient light. What happened after this quiet observation? Parents walked quietly past groups of assembled students and heard them pondering their smallness in the vastness of the universe, asking each other questions about worldly significance and the meaning of human life, discussing whether it's possible that there is no other planet capable of sustaining life. This was not prompted or moderated by adults; this was the spontaneous outpouring of feeling and wonderment in response to the natural world and their intimacy and trust with one another. Is that a specific learning outcome? Hard for me to say – but as a college professor I am quite certain that those students who can let themselves be moved to reflection and even shaken by the world around them make far better college learners than those who do not open their eyes and minds to these sorts of big questions.

The weekend was all about experience – experiential learning, physical activity, fun, problem solving and teamwork, embracing physical and mental challenges, being with friends and making new friends among people they've seen for years. When students were split into teams of two to make fires they were not given a lesson or instructions, just guidance with questions about what wood is good for starting a fire and what wood is good for stoking one to boil water or cook. Aidan referred to an old logger's saying that "only a fool tries to boil water on a cedar fire" and let the students figure out why. They were led through using a compass and topographical map not by a lecture, but by a guided demonstration with lots of questions about degrees and the meaning of the distance between lines on the map. They went out in teams to see if they used the compass correctly. They were given a problem to solve at the ropes course: how to get each member of the team safely across the "molten lava" using only what they were

wearing. Our team came up with using a sweatshirt to snag the hanging rope and then helping each other get on and use it. As the counselor said, “no discounting,” meaning accept as sincere the help, encouragement, and praise of the rest of the team – and give that support to one another for a successful outcome. The teaching style of the counselors was effective in that they made their guiding of students appear effortless, even while many steps were taken to lead the students to a conclusion and an attempt at a new task. The ropes course was a physical and psychological challenge. Many of the students had never been in a canoe yet learned how to paddle and experience the challenge of steering a canoe in a headwind. For the student canoeists to reach their destination, they must work together and communicate or the boat will veer all over the place. In a supportive and safe environment, students could challenge themselves physically and mentally by walking across a log 30 feet in the air, jumping off the top of a 20-foot pole, or scaling a climbing wall. There were abundant opportunities for learning or practicing skills – reading a map, shooting an arrow, using a compass, carrying a canoe. The ball games were fun – and turned the world upside down with campers against staff and parents, girls against boys. Lots of team strategy and support, lots of hand-eye coordination, lots of fun.

Ultimately, on the last morning the students divided tasks among themselves for a fun and raucous race. Again, they had to work together and support one another – the challenge emphasized what was part of life all weekend, like social, racial, ethnic, and gender mixing. Individuals bore responsibilities, but ultimately the team was the focus. Even dining played to this, with each table responsible for clearing and cleaning. While students did spend time with familiar friends, we saw tables, tether ball matches, spontaneous ball games of all kinds that brought the students together by interest, mixing the groups without being required to do so. The students sang and listened to others sing and play. The old-fashioned camp songs pairing campers, with rapid hand movements and much laughter, survived onto the bus ride home. From the back I could hear something about your long-legged life and the long-legged sailor and his long-legged wife.

Getting ready to leave many students said how much they were looking forward to a shower and flush toilet, but qualified those wishes by saying how badly they wanted to stay on the island. The shower was the consolation prize for leaving.

I’m sure that other parents shared some of these impressions, and may also have seen variations based on the groups to which they were assigned. It was a pleasure to work, play, learn, dine, and live with these youth for the weekend.

Yours,
Claire Schen and Greg Cherr

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM – LONG TERM TRAVEL

<i>This section is to be completed by the Teacher in Charge:</i>	
SCHOOL: City Honors School	
TRAVEL DESTINATION: Camp Pathfinder, Algonquin Provincial Park ON	
DATES OF TRAVEL: Thursday May 22 to Sunday May 25, 2025	
TRANSPORTATION: Charter Bus	
TEACHER IN CHARGE: Dr Kresse	
<i>This section is to be completed by the parent/guardian:</i>	
STUDENT NAME:	
STUDENT ADDRESS WITH ZIP:	
DATE OF BIRTH:	PLACE OF BIRTH:
PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) NAME:	
HOME TELEPHONE:	
PARENT(S) WORK TELEPHONE:	
PARENT(S) CELLPHONE:	
EMERGENCY CONTACT/RELATIONSHIP:	
EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE:	

PARENTAL AGREEMENT/RELEASE	
<p>I hereby consent to participation by my child, _____, in the event described above. I understand that this event will take place away from school grounds and that my child will be under the supervision of the designated school District employee on the above stated date(s). Consenting to my child’s participation, I acknowledge my understanding that the school cannot be held responsible in the absence of its own negligence for events over which it has no control, such as, natural disasters, war, including terrorist activity, or the acts or omissions of persons or agencies including companies which it does not control directly. Should this trip involve travel under the sponsorship of a professional travel agency, I further acknowledge that most travel agencies also absolve the tour group from liability as a result of acts over which it has no control, and it is my responsibility to be aware of the terms of my child’s and my contract with the travel agency.</p> <p>Furthermore, the program organizers and/or group chaperones may make reasonable changes in the dates, destinations, or itinerary for the mutual benefit and safety of group participants. In such event, they shall not be liable for any delay, loss, or damage resulting therein. In the event of any illness, accident, or incapacity incurred, the group chaperone may consider my child’s best interests in securing medical treatment, hospitalization, medication, and/or return transportation at my own expense.</p> <p>I certify that I have read and I understand this release and agree to abide by its provisions.</p> <p>Name of Parent/Guardian _____</p> <p>Signature _____ Date _____</p>	

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM – LONG TERM TRAVEL

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT- Student Name _____

I agree to follow the rules and regulations as established in the *Buffalo Public School's Code of Conduct*. I also realize that this trip represents a regular school day, and therefore, is subject to the Buffalo Board of Education rules and responsibilities. I understand that the safety and welfare of the group is the most important consideration. I understand that I am expected to participate in all group activities and to complete all related assignments.

In the event of any infraction of the rules, the chaperones reserve the right of the final decision, and may, if deemed necessary, place a collect telephone call to my parents, and may further send me home at my own expense (or my parent/guardians) as a result of any action deemed to be detrimental to the safety and/or well being of the program and it's participants.

As a representative of the Buffalo Public Schools, I agree to act in a responsible, ethical, and positive manner so as to derive the greatest benefit from this excursion and make a valuable contribution to the District. I also understand that the teacher/administrator in charge is the final authority in all matters pertaining to this excursion.

I, therefore, certify that I have read and understand this behavior agreement and that I agree to abide by its provisions.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the student named above and that I have read the student behavior agreement. I agree to every part of this release and hereby relinquish any claim that I may have against the program organizers, chaperones, and the Buffalo Public School District, both on my behalf and in my capacity as a legal representative, while my child is a participant in this program, during both supervised and unsupervised activities.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM – LONG TERM TRAVEL

STUDENT HEALTH/MEDICAL INFORMATION: Student Name _____

Are there any medical limitations to your child's physical activities? If so, explain:

Are there any medications that your child must take during his/her participation in this excursion? If so, please list the medication name, dosage, and time it must be taken. All medication must be given to the teacher in charge prior to departure in its original, labeled prescription bottle.

Please list any additional medical concerns/issues here:

This health information is accurate and correct insofar as I know. My child has permission to engage in all activities except as noted above. In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, I authorize the school and/or its agents to obtain the proper treatment to assure the health and well-being of my child. This authorization shall also extend to and include hospitalization for first aid where/when necessary.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder

Camper Health Form

Camper Name _____

To be filled out by Parent:

Health history: any hospital admissions, surgeries, serious injuries or illnesses, hot weather injuries, chronic or current injury, illness or condition:

Do you give permission for adults in charge of this school group to administer over-the-counter medications to your child as needed? (e.g. Tylenol, Pepto-Bismol, Calamine, Benadryl)

Yes _____ No _____

In the event you cannot be reached in an appropriate amount of time, do you give permission to the Director of Camp Pathfinder to permit a physician caring for your child to provide necessary care?

Yes _____ No _____

I desire my child to participate in the full camp program and all activities including canoe tripping, unless I advise the camp as to any restriction in writing. In consideration of the acceptance of my child into the camp program, I hereby release Camp Pathfinder, its officers and employees, from all claims arising from my child's participation in camp activities. I authorize the camp to secure medical treatment for my child when appropriate. If for any reason my child requires medical attention beyond that furnished by the camp, I agree to be responsible for any expenses incurred. I acknowledge that the camp activities and any medical treatment will be performed in the Province of Ontario, and that the Courts of Ontario shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any claims, legal dispute, or cause of action arising out of my child's stay at Camp Pathfinder. I hereby agree that if I commence any legal proceedings, they will be held only in the Province of Ontario, and I hereby irrevocably submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Ontario.

Parent signature _____ Date _____

If your child's Pediatrician has any concerns, please consult with them.

Your physician's contact information will be shared with the medical provider at Camp Pathfinder for consultation if needed.

(optional)

To be filled out by Physician:

Please share any health information or concerns for the camper's health and safety
(e.g. headache, ear infection, food or substance intolerance, bloody nose, dizziness, bed wetting, anxiety, situational phobia)

I have examined the camper and reviewed the camper's health history. To the best of my knowledge, the camper is in good health and can participate in an outdoor educational program for four days, including vigorous activities such as swimming, athletics, canoeing, and hiking, except where noted:

Physician signature _____ Date _____

Phone number _____

Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder

Travel Documents

Camper Name _____

Prior to the trip, we secure all student identification for border crossing. This ensures that all children are prepared for international border crossing, and there is no worry of misplaced documents on the morning of departure or during the four days of travel.

Parents, if your child is a US citizen, please return either

- **a photocopy of birth certificate issued by a US state or US territory**
or
- **a photocopy of certificate of US citizenship or naturalization**
or
- **a photocopy of Consular's Report of Birth Abroad with this packet.**

If your child does not have these, then they may need to travel with original issued documents such as a valid US passport (not a copy), a valid US passport card (not a copy) or a US permanent resident card (not a copy). If your child will need to travel with original issued documents, please contact Mr. Sharratt.

Please check below:

___ copy of birth certificate enclosed

___ no copy of birth certificate enclosed, please contact Mr. Sharratt.

Travel document needs are based on current US Customs and Border Protection Identification Requirements US/Canada Border Crossing by land for travelers 19 years of age and younger, traveling with school groups under the written permission of their parent or legal guardian.

Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder

Camper Gear List

Pack all items into one large duffel to stow in bus cargo and one small day pack (drawstring gym bag or equivalent) to take on board bus.

Packing List

- 1 sleeping bag and pillow
 - campers sleep in wood frame, wood floored, double fly canvas roof tents, on clean, durable plastic wrapped mattress. But they need their own sleeping bag and pillow, and warm clothes for sleep.
- 1 flashlight with new batteries
- 1 rain jacket, 1 pair lightweight long underwear or base layer, 4 pair socks, 1 medium weight wicking/insulating layer, 2 pair shorts, 1 pair long slacks (avoid denim), 3 t-shirts, 2 long-sleeved shirts, a warm outerlayer.
- 1 cap or brimmed shade hat, 1 warm hat
- 1 pair light hiking shoes/boots or sturdy sneakers and a 2nd pair of sneakers
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 towel
- personal hygiene kit (the camp provides bio-neutral soaps)
 - include sunscreen
- day pack/gym bag
 - a book to read on the bus
 - a lunch to eat on the bus
 - 1 sanitary reusable drinking water bottle or canteen
- sunglasses

Optional

- camera (not capable of wireless communication)
- binoculars
- natural insect repellent
- playing cards or similar game items
- rugged water shoes with a closed-toe design and secure fastening

Prohibited

- insect repellent with over 50% DEET
- open toed shoes of any kind
- ponchos
- aerosols
- lighters, matches, or fire starting tools or materials
- edged tools or knives
- tobacco, drugs, alcohols, weapons, or inappropriate items that are prohibited by the Buffalo Public Schools.
- electronic communication or electronic gaming devices

Students should not bring watches or timepieces. The camp staff has prompts built into the program that make it unnecessary for students to refer to clock time.

Parents, please contact James Sharratt if you have any difficulty acquiring these items. We can often provide new or gently used items for families who prefer not to purchase items for expected one time use. For any questions pertaining to the list, or for more detail, please contact Mr. Sharratt.

Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder – Payment Receipt Form

Student Name: _____

Enclosed with payment (check one):

\$100 first deposit requested by January 24, 2025

\$300 balance requested by March 7, 2025

\$400 full payment

other amount \$ _____

Make checks payable to “CHS Class of 2029” Submit to Mr. Sharratt during school or mail to:
City Honors School - 8th Grade Class Advisor
186 E. North St.
Buffalo, NY 14204

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