

CHS CLASS OF 2022 NEWSLETTER

September 2017

Sponsored by CHS PTSCO

Parent Representative:

Donna Graham 716-697-1447

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Faculty Advisor:

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This newsletter is updated and available at <http://www.cityhonors.org/page/resources-for-parents/>

Important Dates

- October 12 – Curricular Field Trip to Old Fort Niagara
 - Parent chaperone volunteers needed, please contact Mr. Sharratt.
- November 15 – CHS Rock the Hilltop Concert 6:30PM, CHS Auditorium – 8th Graders perform with the City Honors Community Chorus.
- November 17 – Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder first deposit due.
- November 22 – Due date for Wreath Sale Fundraiser to support the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder.
- January 17 – CHS Winter Vocal Concert 6:30PM, CHS Auditorium – 8th Graders perform with the City Honors Community Chorus.
- February 9 – Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder second deposit due.
- TBD – Performing or Visual Arts Curricular Field Trip
- April 25 – CHS Spring Vocal Concert 6:30PM, CHS Auditorium – 8th Graders perform with the City Honors Community Chorus.
- TBD – Curricular Field Trip to Penn Dixie
- May 31 to June 3 – Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder, Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario – Pending Board of Education approval.
- June 20 – Moving Up Day – Ceremony in CHS auditorium 9AM, Luncheon and Dance at Buffalo Convention Center 11:00AM.

Requested Family Contribution for Planned Events

- \$33 for three curricular field trips, or \$11 each.
 - Payments for field trips are always refundable if your child does not attend, for whatever reason.
- \$40 Class Dues.
- \$400 Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder. Financial Aid available.

We prefer payments to be made by check to “CHS Class of 2022” submitted to Mr. Sharratt during school time or mailed to him at City Honors School 186 E North St, Buffalo, NY 14204. Cash is also accepted. Receipts are recorded for all payments.

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 31st to June 3rd 2018, pending Board of Education approval.

Planning a trip of this size, approximately 120 students, takes a significant amount of organization and we need your help. Please complete the placeholder holder form attached at the end of this newsletter. This form should be turned in to Class Advisor, Mr. Sharratt, by September 29th.

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 parent and faculty volunteers as well as Dr. Kresse.

Schedule of payments:

November 17, 2017 – 1st deposit payment of \$100/student

February 9, 2018 – 2nd payment of \$300/student

We emphasize that we welcome your requests to change these scheduled payment due dates according your individual family's budgetary needs and that we are actively fundraising to make sure all families can send their child on this trip regardless of family income.

Each year, we benefit from the support of CHS/FMP Foundation, CHS PTSCO, the Algonquin Campership Fund, contributions from individual families, and the Zittel's Wreath Sale Fundraiser to ensure that every 8th grader has the opportunity to participate regardless of family budget.

Parents, 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 common core 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

Further Information on the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder

Camp Pathfinder website

<http://www.camppathfinder.com/camp-program/outdoor-ed-school-program/>

Camp Pathfinder Staff information

<http://www.camppathfinder.com/camp-pathfinder-staff/owners/>

CHS Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder – pictures from last year's trip

<https://www.facebook.com/cityhonors/posts/10153448442264455>

Contact Directly:

Donna Graham
Lead Parent Coordinator
716-697-1447

donnamariegraham@mac.com

or

James Sharratt
CHS 8th Grade Faculty Advisor
716-440-5122

jsharratt@buffaloschools.org

City Honors School

8TH Grade Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder – Placeholder Form

Please hold a spot for my student to attend the 8th Grade Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder, May 31st to June 3rd 2018, 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?
- Would you like to learn about scholarship or financial assistance for your child to attend the Class Trip to Camp Pathfinder?
- 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?

If so, we'd like to hear from you! Please contact

Donna Graham
Lead Parent Coordinator
716-697-1447
donnamariegraham@mac.com

or James Sharratt
CHS 8th Grade Faculty Advisor
716.440.5122
jsharratt@buffaloschools.org

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/>

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM – SHORT TERM TRAVEL

This section is to be completed by the Teacher in Charge:

SCHOOL: City Honors School

TRAVEL DESTINATION: Old Fort Niagara, Youngstown, NY

DATE(S) OF TRAVEL: Thursday October 12 2017

TRANSPORTATION: Bus

TEACHER IN CHARGE: James Sharratt

This section is to be completed by the parent/guardian:

STUDENT NAME:

PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) NAME:

HOME TELEPHONE:

PARENT(S) WORK TELEPHONE:

PARENT(S) CELLPHONE:

EMERGENCY CONTACT/RELATIONSHIP:

EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE:

PARENTAL AGREEMENT

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. 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.

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Special Medical Needs (if applicable): _____

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT

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 teacher/administrator in charge is the final authority in all matters pertaining to this trip.

Student Signature _____ Date _____