



# 2023-2024

## Program Guide





# The Summit School Colorado Outdoor Education

## Our Mission

Through scientific exploration and adventure activities in the great outdoors, Summit School invites young people into active and positive relationships with themselves, others, and the environment.

## Our Program

The Summit School is a three-day outdoor experiential education program for 6th-8th grade public school students offered September through May. Through our program, students are led to grow in a deeper appreciation and respect for themselves, others, and the environment. Students will also develop valuable leadership skills, so they are better equipped to serve their communities and families upon returning home.

During the program, students participate in inquiry-based lessons, exploratory day hikes, small-group discussions, fun campfire activities, stargazing, night hikes and more. Located at the base of Longs Peak, the Summit School is a program of Annunciation Heights Catholic Youth and Family Camp in Estes Park, Colorado, two miles north of historic Camp Saint Malo. Our programs enjoy using both beautiful properties, nearby Rocky Mountain National Park trails, and National Forest trails.

## Your 3-Day Program Includes Choice of One Track Option | \$225/student

### Every program includes:

- Lodging & Meals
- Field Instructor for each small group of 10-12 students
- Lessons/Activities
  - Hike (with snowshoes in winter) at Camp Saint Malo or Rocky Mountain National Park
  - Evening Programming (Campfire & \*night lesson according to track)



### Lesson Track Options:

#### **Earth Sciences** (suggested for 6th grade)

Human Wilderness Survival (3 hour)  
Nature Journaling  
Geology and Mining  
Mountain Meteorology  
\*Astronomy

#### **Life Sciences** (suggested for 7th grade)

Forestry  
Elk Ecology & Environmental Stewardship  
Animal Survival  
Botany & Pollination  
Water Conservation & Dynamics  
\*Nocturnal Hunters

#### **Physical Sciences** (suggested for 8th grade)

Archery & Motion Mechanics (3 hour)  
Low Ropes & Leadership (3 hour)  
Orienteering  
\*Night Hike

Ayla Erickson, Director | [ayla.erickson@annunciationheights.org](mailto:ayla.erickson@annunciationheights.org) | 970.586.5689 ext. 111

# ► Summit School Sample Schedule

Time	Activity
<b>Day 1 – Wednesday</b>	
11:00	Arrival, Settle into Cabins
11:15	Group Welcome
11:30	Group Game // Chaperone Meeting
11:45	5 Senses, Sack Lunch, & Small Groups
1:25	<b>Lesson</b>
3:05	<b>Lesson</b> ( <i>new lesson or previous lesson continued</i> )
4:35	Choice Time – <i>Camp Store, Activity Shed, &amp; Mt. Tabor Open</i>
5:30	<i>Dinner in Dining Hall</i>
7:00	<b>Night Activity</b>
8:30	Small Groups
<b>Day 2 – Thursday</b>	
8:30	<i>Breakfast in Dining Hall</i>
9:30	<b>Lesson</b>
11:00	<b>Lesson</b> ( <i>new lesson or previous lesson continued</i> )
12:30	<i>Lunch in Dining Hall</i>
1:30	<b>Hike</b>
4:00	BOB Time in Lodges
4:30	Choice Time – <i>Camp Store, Activity Shed, &amp; Mt. Tabor Open</i>
5:30	<i>Dinner in Dining Hall</i>
7:00	<b>Campfire &amp; S'mores</b>
8:30	Small Groups
<b>Day 3 – Friday</b>	
8:15	T-Shirts & Group Photo
8:30	<i>Breakfast in Dining Hall</i>
9:25	<b>Lesson</b> // Team Lead Meeting with Ayla
11:00	<b>Group Team Building Activity</b>
11:45	Evals, Final Small Group, Sack Lunch
12:30	Departure

## ► Earth Sciences Track

The “Earth Sciences” track is designed with 6th graders in mind. Each lesson invites students to observe and interact with the environment in a new and unique way, invoking wonder and discovery. In the Earth Sciences track, students will build forts and fires, create water-color art, find “gold,” and explore the weather patterns of the mountains.



### **Human Wilderness Survival (3 hour)**

Students will learn how to calmly and methodically assess an emergency situation in the wilderness. Through hands-on activities, students will gain skills for keeping themselves warm and dry, building a shelter, and using available resources to get water and food. This knowledge and these skills are essential for learning and playing outdoors while deepening our respect for the wilderness in the process.



### **Nature Journaling**

It is easy to get caught up in the busyness of the world and miss important details that are often right in front of us. In this lesson, students will be asked to engage in the world around them, using observational techniques. Students will use sketching and watercolors to document their discoveries and develop new creative skills.

## ► Earth Sciences Track (Continued)

### **Geology and Mining**

This. Lesson. Rocks. In this lesson, students will learn to identify igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks and through interactive (and sometimes delicious!) activities, demonstrate how they are formed and related to one another.

### **Mountain Meteorology**

After a yearlong hiatus, Mountain Meteorology is back! Through a series of experiments, students will explore air density and pressure to reveal how the weather around us is formed. Students will then become detectives and figure out what different types of clouds can tell us about the weather to come.



### **Night Class: Astronomy**

With a scavenger hunt of the night sky, this lesson is out of this world! This content will inspire wonder and curiosity about the universe, as students discover the phases of the moon and other cosmic objects through exploration and discussion.

# ▶ Life Sciences Track

The “Life Sciences” track is designed primarily for 7th grade students. During this track, students will explore the environment and connections with the world around them. Throughout these lessons students will learn about various plants, animals, and the ecosystems that shape our environment. Upon leaving Outdoor Lab, students will discuss how they can make a difference and take better care of the environment.

## **Forestry**

Forests are important for a variety of human and ecological needs. How do we sustain a healthy forest over the long term? In this lesson, students learn to identify the important roles each part of a tree plays in our lives and in the life of a forest. Students also learn how to identify various kinds of trees. This leads to an activity about land management issues and how to meet the human need for resources while caring for the forest ecosystem.



## **Elk Ecology and Environmental Leadership**

We have a significant role to play in taking care of the environment! In this lesson, students learn about the characteristics and behaviors of elk and the interplay between food resources and reproduction. Students participate in an activity where they discover their leadership style and how they can use their natural gifts to positively impact groups to which they belong. By combining their knowledge of elk with their understanding of their classmates’ and their own unique leadership styles, students will engage in the process of learning how to solve environmental issues in the Rocky Mountain region.

# ► Life Sciences Track (Continued)

## **Animal Survival**

By investigating various Colorado animal species, students will view nature with new eyes! Skulls, hides, and bones facilitate discovery of local animals' abilities to survive harsh climates. Learning about predators and prey will spark discussion about our human role in the circle of life.



## **Botany and Pollination**

Students' knowledge will bloom as they investigate the inner workings of plants. While dissecting flowers, students will explore the role of pollination and the life cycle and reproduction of plants. In an activity called "BBQ to Bees," students will plan an unlimited BBQ, but their food shopping will be a challenge because bees are being threatened by extinction. Without bees, will there be any food left to eat?

## **Water Conservation and Dynamics (Fall/Spring only)**

Water is a limited and life-giving resource on our planet. Students will learn about water availability, water sources, and water treatment systems through hands-on and critical thinking activities. Students will come away with an understanding of the characteristics of water and how to be good caretakers of this resource.

## **Night Class: Nocturnal Hunters**

Have you ever wondered what it is like to be an owl prowling through the night? Or a tiny mouse hiding in the snow? Take this lesson to learn about Colorado raptors and the adaptations they possess. We will talk about owls and their special abilities to hunt in the dark. We will finish off with a game of "Owl and Mouse" hide and go seek, in the dark!

## ► Physical Sciences Track

In combination with longer, more technical lessons and the undertone theme of leadership, the “Physical Sciences” track is suggested for 8th grade students. While students participate in this track, they will enjoy some of our most popular lessons. Students will learn how to shoot a bow and arrow, navigate through the woods with a compass, and work together as a team to complete a series of challenges while learning their own leadership style.

### **Archery (3 hour)**

In this lesson, students will enjoy learning physics alongside learning how to shoot a bow and arrow. By investigating the fundamental laws that govern our physical world and applying knowledge to Archery, students will gain a greater understanding of what this ancient sport can teach us about, both, physics and virtue. We concentrate on introducing the sport to beginners while helping refine archery skills in those students with more background.





## ► Physical Sciences Track (Continued)



### **Low Ropes and Leadership (3 hour)**

With our unique gifts and abilities, each of us are called to be leaders in this world! Through team building activities, students will be challenged to identify and develop their own leadership style. This lesson will teach group dynamics and communication skills. Watch your students increase in self-knowledge and in the service of others.

### **Orienteering**

Lacking direction? In orienteering, students learn how to navigate the land around them using a map and compass. This lesson sparks an illuminating discussion about how to navigate the twists and turns of life.

### **Night Class: Night Hike and Stargazing**

The night hike is the perfect opportunity to challenge students to disconnect from the distractions of the world and spend some time reflecting on the beauty and goodness found in nature. Students will complete a 1 mile silent night hike and finish off the night with some stargazing in the beautiful dark skies of the Rocky Mountains.

## ► Registration

To register, submit an online Inquiry Form at:  
<https://annunciationheights.org/outdoor-lab/inquiry-form/>

For more information, contact Ayla Erickson, Director of Summit School, via email [ayla.erickson@annunciationheights.org](mailto:ayla.erickson@annunciationheights.org) or via phone (970) 586-5689.



“Everyday that passes, I fall more desperately in love with the mountains...I am ever more determined to climb the mountains, to scale the mighty peaks, to feel that pure joy which can only be felt in the mountains.”

-Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati