# ***A Letter from our Program Director***

Dear Parents,

We are looking forward to your child's upcoming visit to Exploring New Horizons at Sempervirens. Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools provides exceptional outdoor residential education to K-8 students at three unique locations tied to state and national education standards. Your son or daughter is one of over 6,000 students that Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools serves annually from the Greater Bay Area. Your child will be attending a (4- or 5-day) outdoor education experience at our Sempervirens Site in Scotts Valley.

Your child will be hiking and actively engaged in a variety of outdoor settings. They may be hiking on uneven terrain and the weather is likely to be quite variable. We may experience sunny days, dripping fog, chilly evenings, rain, or a combination of them all! Please ensure that your child comes to program well prepared for all types of weather. Clothing that is comfortable, warm and functional is important to a successful Outdoor School experience. Please label all clothing and items with your child's first and last name. It is not important to purchase new items; talk to friends and family if needed to make sure you have jackets, sleeping bags and shoes that will ensure a successful Outdoor School experience. Electronics, cell phones, money, and any valuables should be left at home. Please consult the packing list distributed by the classroom teachers for more details.

Keeping your child safe and healthy at Outdoor School is our top priority. Our teaching staff is trained in First Aid and CPR and provide boundaries and rules to keep them safe during all activities. Due to the close living situation, please do not send a child that has had a fever or illness in the past 48 hours before their trip. If an accident should occur, or your child is not feeling well you will be notified and if needed, your child can be transported to a full-service hospital in nearby Santa Cruz. If your child needs to take medications regularly, please send your child's medications in its original bottle with complete instructions for administration. Please give this medication to your child's teacher prior to departure and review its administration procedure with them. Students will be allowed to keep any emergency medications with them including: asthma inhalers and epi-pens with them or with a responsible adult at all times. All other medication is kept by the Exploring New Horizons Health Care Supervisor and is given to the students as needed. We maintain a fully-equipped first aid facility which also contains basic over-the-counter medications, as listed on the online medical form. Please do not send these types of medications with your child. In the event that your child should need over-the-counter medication, it will be administered by the Exploring New Horizons Health Care Supervisor and we will need your consent on the online medical form. The medications that we have on hand to administer with your permission include Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benadryl, Tums, and Neosporin, Calamine, Robitussin, and Emergency Epi-Pen.

A healthy and happy Outdoor School experience starts at home. Please talk to your child about basic hygiene, such as washing their hands before meals and after they use the restroom. Discuss homesickness and set them up for success by focusing on all of the fun activities they will be participating in and how fast the week will go by. We suggest that parents avoid telling students that they can call home or get picked up anytime. Students can be successful for the entire program with a little encouragement. Talk to them about following the buddy system and to speak to an adult if they are having an issue at camp. Exploring New Horizons staff cannot help unless we know there is an issue so encourage them to speak up if they are uncomfortable in any way. We are here to help!

Your child will be busy and engaged their entire time while at Outdoor School. They will not be able to call you or take calls. You are welcome to write your child a letter if you would like to send your encouraging words. We understand that for many students this is their first time away from home for an extended period of time. We are trained to support homesick students so

know that no news is good news if you do not hear from us. Exploring New Horizons office staff will contact you if medical or discipline issue should occur.

We use a four-step discipline policy (called the Check System) at Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools, which helps each student understand the school rules and the consequences of breaking them.

- **First Check:** The student will lose 15 minutes of recreation time.
- **Second Check:** The student will lose 15 minutes of recreation time as well as have a one on one conversation with the Principal or Assistant Principal in order to fill out a 2nd Check Behavior Contract.
- **Third Check:** The student will lose 15 minutes of recreation time as well as have a conference with the Principal and the classroom teacher to discuss their behavior; a 3rd Check Behavior Contract will be filled out. The parent or guardian will be called to notify them of their child's behavior, how they earned their checks and that a forth check will result in their early dismissal of the program.
- **Forth Check:** The parent or guardian will be called and notified their child has earned a forth check and as a result, has been removed from the program. The program staff will make arrangements with the parent to come and pick the student up. Please understand that a parent is required to provide transportation from Redwood Glen should a forth offense occur.

If your child has specific behaviors or allergies that will impact their stay with us, please make sure you include them on their medical form, or either call us at 831-252-7868 or email us at daniel@exploringnewhorizons.org so we can best plan on how to support your child during their week.

Thank you very much for taking the time to help prepare your child for their experience at Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools. We aim to provide a safe experience for students to learn more about themselves and their connections to each other and the natural world and to take with them memories and lessons that will last a lifetime.
Thank you,

Danny 'Dingo' Beutler
Program Director