

TO: District Superintendents and Principals

FROM: Division of Student Services
Kern Environmental Education Program (KEEP)

SUBJECT: KEEP Policies and Procedures

Thank you for your participation in the KEEP program. We are looking forward to another outstanding year of outdoor science education with your students at our campus. Each year we aim to improve and advance our program, based on our experience and your comments. The following KEEP Policies and Procedures have been prepared for you. This packet has been designed as both a separate reference for school administrators and is at the KEEP web site (www.campkeep.org).

Items covered in this packet include estimates of attendance and billing policies, student health and safety, counselor recruitment, forms, arrival and departure times, teacher responsibilities and scholarship information.

Thank you for your support and involvement in the Kern Environmental Education Program. We look forward to having you and your students attend KEEP this year. If you have any questions, contact Tom Anspach at the KEEP Office at (661) 871-1883. See you there, and happy trails!

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Enc.
(Rev. 07/06)

OFFICE OF LARRY E. REIDER
KERN COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Advocates for Children

KERN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
KEEP
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Section 1. Reservations, Billing Policy and Advance Estimate of Student Numbers.

- A. Reservations and Billing.** Applications to attend KEEP are made during the month of February each year. A cover memo and application form is mailed to every school. These must be sent back to the KEEP office by the end of February. Once the master schedule for each campus has been prepared, you will be sent a written confirmation of your week at KEEP for the following school year. The formal KEEP Agreement will be mailed out to the district office for signature. This agreement forms the contractual basis for your school's attendance at KEEP. The number of students agreed to in the confirmation letter will form the basis for billing. It is KEEP's policy to bill for not less than 90% of this confirmed number of students, plus counselors and teachers. **If your school has more students wanting to attend than what was submitted on the application, or students with special physical health needs, please contact Tom Anspach at (661) 871-1883.** After your week at KEEP, your district office will be billed by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Business Office for the actual number of total participants, including all students, counsellors and teachers, at the standard weekly fee for either a 5-day program or a 4-day program, as appropriate. If actual attendance is below 90% of the agreed student number noted in the spring confirmation letter, billing will be made for **not less than 90%** of this written amount. As an example, if School A

submits an agreed student number in the spring indicating 100 participants, but in fact only brings 85 the next year, then School A will be billed not for 85 but for 90 (90% of their original estimate of 100). Billing is done after the school attends KEEP. There are no prepayments or deposits to attend KEEP.

B. Extra Counselors. Schools may bring two additional counselors (one male and one female) beyond the required ratio at no cost. KEEP will **not** bill your school for these extra persons. KEEP acknowledges that having an additional one or two counselors can be of great assistance. For example, if the required ratio is 1:8 and School A is bringing 80 students, then School A must bring 10 counselors. The school may bring one extra male and one extra female (for a total of 12 counselors), but the billing will still be for 10. Conversely, if your school does not bring the minimum number of counselors to meet your ratio, you will be billed at the minimum ratio number. It will become the classroom teachers' responsibility to supervise students (24 hrs./day) without a counselor.

C. Early Departures. In the event that a student or counselor needs to be sent home due to illness, injury or unforeseen events (*other than disciplinary*), KEEP will bill as follows:

- * If a student or counselor goes home on the first day of the program, a one-day charge will be assessed only.
- * If a student or counselor goes home on the second day of the program, a two-day charge will be assessed only.
- * If a student or counselor goes home anytime after the second day, the full amount of the weekly fee will be billed, with no reduction or refund.
- * If a student or counselor goes home due to *disciplinary* action, there will be **no adjustment** to the billing, i.e., the full amount will be billed, regardless of when the person is sent home.

It is a regular occurrence for ill children to need to go home. Oftentimes parents cannot or will not take responsibility for this. Make advance plans before coming to KEEP that address how your school will transport ill children home. It is highly recommended that your teachers be given a phone number or pager number they can call between 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon and 7:30 a.m. in the morning.

If a student or counselor does need to go home, responsibility for transportation home is assigned in the following order: 1. parent/guardian, 2. school, 3. district. KEEP does not transport students or counselors home. If there is no other option, a charge of \$450.00 will be assessed to the school.

Section 2. Forms. Only the two most commonly used forms are discussed here. The forms are located on the KEEP website (www.campkeep.org). If you need a hard copy of the forms or a Teacher Resource binder please contact Tom Anspach at (661) 871-1883 or e-mail to toanspach@kern.org.

- A. **Student Registration.** Every student attending KEEP *must* have a completed *and* signed registration form. This is mandatory. Please make sure the entire form is completed and signed by a parent or guardian. Note also that KEEP recommends a copy of the parent's insurance card be attached to the form (does not apply if family carries no insurance). KEEP also requires a registration form for all counselors and teachers, too. There are separate forms for these as well.

- B. **Pupil Medication.** If a child is to be given any type of prescription or over-the-counter medication, a Pupil Medication Form must be completely filled out and signed by **both** parent and doctor. A high percentage of Pupil Medication forms are not being filled out properly. Complete instructions are provided on the forms. The three most important points are: 1) prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications **both** require a Pupil Medication form; 2) the doctor's and parent's signature must be on each form; otherwise KEEP will not be able to administer the medications; 3) the medication must be in the original container and labelled with the student's name.

Section 3. Student Health.

- A. **Specialized Physical Health Care Needs Students.** Students with the conditions listed below (*) must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, district employee, or other qualified adult. This person may not be the child's classroom teacher or counselor. This person must be capable and willing to provide the necessary specialized physical health care for the student throughout the week, including all trail hikes. These adults will be allowed to participate without a fee. You must call the KEEP office (661-871-1883) to clear the participation of any student with specialized physical health care needs and accompanying adult six weeks in advance.

(*) These conditions include but are not limited to diabetes, acute sensitivity to insect stings and the requirement to bring an EpiPen injector needle, some types of epilepsy, some types of food allergies, hemophilia, need for assistance with clean intermittent catheterization, or other conditions requiring medical procedures or assistance.

- B. **No Nit Policy.** KEEP has a No Nit Policy regarding head lice. Please have students checked for lice several days prior to arrival. Students with head lice will be sent home unless the classroom teacher, instructional aid or other adult chooses to obtain parent permission and pay for and administer the necessary treatment (i.e., KEEP maintains a small supply of lice shampoo for this purpose).

Section 4. Counselor Recruitment and Forms.

- A. **Counselor Selection.** Your school has the responsibility of selecting the counselors who will be attending with your students at KEEP. These may be high school students, college students, parents, or other known and trusted adults. Most schools recruit high school students (juniors and seniors), others rely on parents; some blend both during the same week. The choice is up to your school. The required ratio of counselors-to-students is 1:7 at KEEP Cambria Pines and 1:8 at KEEP Ocean.

- B. Kern High School District Guidelines.** If your school is a feeder school into the Kern High School District (KHSD) and you elect to recruit high school students, you must follow the written guidelines developed by KHSD. These guidelines provide detailed procedures, contact persons, high school assignments, and maximum counselor numbers. KHSD annually updates these guidelines and disseminates them to all feeder schools. Any questions regarding these guidelines should be directed to Director of Instruction, John Davis, KHSD (661-827-3225).
- C. Counselors Forms.** All counselors (whether high school, college or adult/parent) must complete two important forms prior to coming to KEEP. One is a separate Counselor Registration form and the other is the Counselor Contract. Please insure that your counselors are given these forms and return them completed and signed (parent signature is required for counselors under 18 years of age). Copies of these forms are on the KEEP website (campkeep.org).
- D. Counselors and Cell Phone.** Due to the large number of counselors bringing cell phones to KEEP, it has become necessary to implement the following policies for cell phone use. (The term ‘cell phone’ as used here is meant to encompass cell phones and related wireless communication devices used for talking, text messaging, paging, internet access, or sending digital images.)

Students are never allowed access to cell phones. *Education Code 48901.5(b). Volunteer Counselors will not have access to their cell phones while on duty with students. The KEEP staff will provide counselors a secure location to store their cell phones. Counselors may have a limited time period each day to access and use their cell phones (as defined by the KEEP staff and only at times when they are not on duty with students). Cell phones with digital camera capabilities will not be allowed on trails. Please bring a separate camera.

The KEEP staff appreciates your cooperation and support in this matter. We understand that this policy may inconvenience some counselors, however, the student’s best interests and safety demand focus and dedication.

* **California Education Code**

Section 5. Arrival and Departure Times.

- A. Buses need to arrive at Camp KEEP at 11:30 Monday and Friday.** It is important that your buses arrive right at 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on the day of arrival and departure. Schedules are disrupted and groups are “short-changed” from planned activities if buses arrive early or late. Please do not arrive earlier than these times. This is especially true when two or more schools attend the same week. Notify the appropriate campus two working days in advance if you are unable to keep this schedule. Call the KEEP office at (661) 871-1883 to relay this information.

Section 6. Teacher Responsibilities.

- A. Teacher Responsibilities.** Teachers are required to fully participate in the KEEP program, as described on page 7. Confirm with all teachers their responsibilities. Enthusiastic teacher involvement enhances the quality of the experience for the students. A copy of these requirements is attached.

Section 7. Scholarship Information.

- A. Scholarship Program.** At the beginning of each school year, the non-profit K.E.E.P. Foundation disseminates an application packet describing scholarship funds that are available to eligible schools with qualifying students. You can go to the KEEP website (campkeep.org) for an application and one will be sent to your school site in the beginning of September.

Section 8. Non-Scheduled Participants.

- A. Non-Scheduled Participants.** Participation is limited to registered students, counselors, medical shadows, and teachers. Other schools personnel are encouraged to visit KEEP. Visits must be arranged with the KEEP Director. The KEEP program offers an opportunity for students to grow their independence away from home. It is not anticipated that parents and/or guardians will participate, other than as counselors or medical shadows.

Section 9. KEEP Office Location and KEEP Website.

- A. KEEP Office Location.** The KEEP office is located at the California Living Museum (CALM) in northeast Bakersfield. The director is Tom Anspach. He can be reached as follows:

Kern Environmental Education Program
c/o CALM
10500 Alfred Harrell Hwy.
Bakersfield, CA 93306
(661) 871-1883
(661) 872-2205 (fax)
e-mail – toanspach@kern.org

- B. KEEP Website.** Almost everything you need to know is on the KEEP webpage. Check it out at www.campkeep.org. There are a wide variety of sites and buttons to explore, including our campuses, photos at KEEP, the KEEP sake newsletter, merchandise order forms, frequently used forms including teacher handout forms and teacher curriculum binder.

Classroom Teacher Responsibilities

KEEP is designed to provide the best learning experiences possible for the students. The opportunities for the classroom teacher to observe, learn and grow are infinite.

Your week at KEEP can give you a chance to observe your students in a new physical as well as social environment. Many teachers are surprised to see certain individuals change in ways they never imagined. This week can give you a chance to interact more freely with the students and observe different ways they learn. This week can also give you a chance to learn about the different ecosystems in the area and how we humans interact with our environment.

Since you know the students better than anyone, your expertise may be called upon to provide insight into student behaviours or illness. You can also provide needed encouragement, support and care both on the trail and on campus.

Classroom teacher responsibilities include all of the following:

1. Remain on campus while the students are there.
2. Work with the counsellors on any problems they may be having with one of your students.
3. Remain around the campfire at bedtime to help the staff and counsellors get the students quiet.
4. Take care of any student discipline problems or ill students.
5. Conduct Teacher Hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, 3:30 to 4:30
6. Go on at least one walk with the students sometime during the week.
7. Clean your cabin/trailer on Friday.
8. Meet with a staff member on Friday to evaluate your KEEP week.
9. Come to the campus prepared.