

TO: The Parents of TSA 10th graders

FROM: The Overnight Challenge Team (The OC)

SUBJECT: The Overnight Challenge (The OC) - Dealing with change, adversity and risk.

DATE: March 15, 2017

After a successful first year, we are very excited to again be leading the Overnight Challenge in 2017.

Recognizing that the 10th grade year is an “in between” year (coming after the excitement of the first year of high school and preceding the unique challenges of our junior year) we are offering an overnight, experiential “off-campus” program to help create a sense of purpose, community, adventure and ultimately to give 10th graders something special that makes their year stand out among others.

On Thursday May 4th after the end of the school day, we will head into the woods behind the school with your children to begin a shared experience outside of the classroom.

We will begin by breaking the class into several deliberately chosen groups that they will stay in for the entirety of the experience. These groups will engage in team building challenges used in outdoor education and leadership programs. They will then be given the necessary materials for setting up their camp, locate one of three campsites in the North 80 on the TSA campus, cook dinner together, and then will sleep under tarps and under the stars

On Friday the 5th we will break down camp, enjoy a hearty breakfast and ask these “pioneers” to reflect on these initial steps. This day will end at 1:00pm.

The Sharon Academy firmly believes that respectfully pushing students out of their comfort zone enables them to discover strengths that they might not otherwise know they had and to admire the strengths of their classmates. Our goal is that this experience will increase their confidence in themselves and their understanding of each other. Though our aim is to push their comfort zones and facilitate personal growth and positive group dynamic, safety is our primary concern. They will be supervised throughout the experience by at least six qualified adults, many of whom have professional backgrounds in the outdoor adventure, leadership, and education industry. There will be one supervising adult who is a currently certified Wilderness First Responder through SOLO.

We will be outside at the beginning of of May, so warm clothes are a must. Students should plan to wear wool socks, long underwear, wool sweaters, fleece, jackets, winter hats, gloves/mittens etc. Appropriate hiking footwear is required. They should also bring a sleeping bag, preferably rated 20 degrees or lower. If any student will be unable to bring any of these materials, the school can assist by providing them, and students should contact Tom Canfield immediately to be sure that the necessary gear is ready for use. No student will be excluded for want of equipment or appropriate clothing.

Thank you in advance for supporting this effort.