

Feb. 27, 2019

Dear Ninth Grade Families,

As we battle the cold, wind, and ice, I would like to send along information about our spring Intersession. First, I thought I would share some of the wonderful things that your children will be doing while in the Florida Keys. The days are busy, but the kids seem to have endless energy on these trips.

After landing in Ft Lauderdale, we are renting vans to make our way down into the Keys to our campsites. After setting up our "lodging" for the week, the three groups will rotate between the activities described below.

Each group will have two **community service opportunities**. As you may remember, Hurricane Irma hit the lower Keys hard, so the service component this year is especially important. We will be working in the Key Deer Wildlife Refuge, and at Crane Point Nature Center. Our service will include invasive plant removal and storm debris clean up.

Since the Keys have such a unique ecology, we will **explore a few of these ecosystems** up close. We will embark on a kayak tour of the No Name Key mangroves guided by Bill Keough, the author of the book *The Florida Keys Paddling Guide*. We will also get to explore the coral reef and marine life at Sombrero Reef. Finally, we will have a guided fan boat tour of The Everglades.

No trip to the Florida Keys is complete without a **visit to Key West** for the Sunset Celebration, a nightly arts festival at Mallory Square Docks. Students will get the rare opportunity to see the sunset over the Gulf of Mexico from the East Coast.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone about the important dates and times for our trip. We will be departing from Sandy Spring Friends School (behind the Performing Arts Center) on **Monday, March 18th at 3:00 am**. I know... that is early, but getting 85 people checked onto a flight and through security is a sight to be seen! **We need everyone to take that morning bus.** **Flight info is provided below.** We will be landing at DCA (Reagan National Airport) on **Friday, March 22nd at 10:24 pm**. **If you are planning to pick up your child at DCA and not planning to have your student return to SSFS on the bus, please let us know ahead of time.** This helps us plan our transportation needs. Meet us at the baggage claim for Jet Blue if you are collecting your child at the airport. If meeting your child back at school, we will likely get back between 11:15-11:30 pm.

As always, if you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

In Peace,

Steff Kerr
9th Grade Program Coordinator

Outbound Travel:

Washington, DC (DCA) - Fort Lauderdale, FL (FLL)
Date: Monday, March 18, 2019
Flight: 1279
Depart: 6:20 AM
Arrive: 8:57 AM

Return Travel:

Fort Lauderdale, FL (FLL) to Washington, DC (DCA)
Date: Friday, March 22, 2019
Flight: 2080
Depart: 7:54 PM
Arrive: 10:20 PM

I. Travel Details: We will have transportation available from Sandy Spring Friends School. Two buses will be leaving SSFS at 3:00 am sharp. **All students must go to the airport via these buses.** Students can be picked up at 11:45 PM Friday night at SSFS. Students are welcome to be picked up at the airport (**please pre-arrange with a 9th grade team member if you plan to pick up at the airport**)

II. Identification: It speeds up check-in if the students have their Sandy Spring Friends School student identification card. These will be used at airport security. Students do not need a passport (unless they are international students). Trip leaders will be collecting identification prior to the trip.

III. Food and Souvenir Money: Each student should bring a maximum of \$75 for four lunches and two dinners. In keeping with the Quaker principle of **simplicity**, an important component of the 9th grade intersession, we ask that no student bring an extravagant amount of money for souvenirs or gifts.

IV. Check List

_____ Bag - ONE duffle bag with sleeping bag and pad inside. **Extra bags cost extra**, so it is imperative that this is **one bag**. Fees also apply to oversized bags or bags that are too heavy, so pack wisely.

_____ Identification - ID is not necessary, but the SSFS student ID is helpful to speed up check-in. International students should bring their passports (trip leaders will collect prior to trip).

_____ Money - Food money for four lunches and two dinners (~\$75.00), plus a little for gifts/souvenirs

_____ Food – Bring breakfast and snacks for Monday departure flight

_____ General Supplies - Space will be extremely limited in our vans this year; we need to pack light!

- Personal toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothbrush/toothpaste, washcloth)
- Suntan lotion
- Bug repellent
- 1 long sleeve shirt
- 1 pair long pants (1 pair)
- Shorts, t-shirts, underwear, socks for 5 days
- Swim suit
- Towel
- Lightweight sleeping bag with stuff sack
- Sleeping pad (\$7 foam type is great)
- Sneakers
- Sandals/flip flops
- Lightweight rain jacket or poncho
- Small flashlight
- Water bottle
- Sun, hat, work gloves (for park cleanup)

Note: Most campgrounds have laundry facilities. Electronics such as MP3 players, computer games, i-Pods, cell phones, etc. are NOT ALLOWED on Intersession. Cameras are allowed, but keep in mind that we will be camping in sandy areas. If a student chooses to bring a digital camera, we recommend keeping it in a Ziploc bag.