

Cabin Leader Recruiting

Cabin leaders are volunteers who serve as role models for a group of about eight to ten attending students in their cabin. While having some responsibility during instructional classes and other activities, they are primarily responsible during cabin times and at night. Cabin leaders receive only very short rest and shower breaks during the day, and can expect to be working many hours each day. The energy level of high school and college cabin leaders helps them keep up with this pace, and they benefit from the leadership training and experience. GBOS recruits, screens, and trains high school and college students because they relate well with the attending students and provide good role models for both personal and academic behavior. Cabin leaders expect, encourage, and teach responsible personal and group behavior, and ensure that students are prepared for the program activities. They receive training before they come to the program and additional training on site.

GBOS accepts parents as cabin leaders when the attending school prefers to use parents. When parents volunteer, their own children are given the same opportunity as the other students to build responsibility and independence away from home by having their parents assigned to other cabin groups and trail groups. Parents have time to be with their own children during full group activities. We respect your professional judgment in recruiting the type or mix of cabin leaders that matches your school culture and situation.

Great Basin Outdoor School strongly encourages attending schools to recruit cabin leaders. To assist you in recruitment, we offer the following guidelines.

How Many?

Our target cabin leader to student ratio is 1:8. The lower ratio required by some schools or districts is met by the presence 24 hours a day of classroom teachers, naturalists, and the Program Director. You should try to recruit the correct number of male and female cabin leaders to match the number of male and female students attending. Males will never supervise female cabins. Females may occasionally serve in male cabins when no other reasonable alternative exists. These females will have a high degree of maturity, will be closely supervised, and will be paired with another female if possible so that two cabin leaders are always with the male cabin group.

Who?

Cabin leaders must be at least sixteen at the time of their service. While we occasionally accept “cabin leaders-in-training” who are fifteen, they must be paired with an older one. We seek young adults who are great role models to keep the children safe, happy, and involved.

We recommend that you recruit high school students from among former students of yours with whom you’ve kept touch, from the high school which your school feeds, and among older brothers and sisters of your students. College students are usually best recruited from the department of education by contacting the science methods leader or other professors, or the department of recreation. Parents should be recruited from among those you know and trust. Other adults such as classroom aides and volunteers may also be chosen, if they are well known to you.

Once you have recruited a cabin leader, please keep in contact to ensure their participation and perhaps assist them with any challenges that come up.

Fingerprinting and Background Checks

Cabin leaders must provide references, and those over 18 must be background checked at least six weeks in advance. Those serving WCSD schools will be background checked at no charge by WCSD by presenting a signed WCSD adult volunteer form which we will provide. We will provide standard fingerprint cards for adults serving children from other districts to take to their local law enforcement agency for printing if they have not already been cleared by their local school district. Schools will cover processing charges which are about \$35.

Training

GBOS provides training for cabin leaders at local high schools and colleges, as well as several hours of training once they arrive on site. Special trainings can be arranged at elementary schools for groups of cabin leaders recruited to serve that school. Young adult cabin leaders must participate in training before they may serve at GBOS, the sole exception being those who have interviewed personally with one of the regular GBOS staff.

If you have participated in GBOS programs before, you may also train parents and other adult cabin leaders yourself. Please do not allow them to attend unless you feel sure that they have reviewed and understand their responsibilities as cabin leaders.

Info on the website

The GBOS website has brochures and fliers that can be used to recruit high school and college students, at <http://greatbasin-os.org/cabinleaders/>. The forms all cabin leaders will need to complete can also be downloaded from the website. They are responsible for the completion of all paperwork as required, but you should check for accuracy, completeness, and signatures, just as you would with a student.

Transportation

Cabin leaders will usually ride on the bus with your students to the program site and back. They are responsible for getting to your school and back home, though sometimes it can be arranged to pick up a group of cabin leaders at a high school or other logical meeting place. Cabin leaders joining your class on the school bus should bring a page providing their name, address, emergency phone contact, birth date, and grade level to add to the bus roster.

GBOS Support

If you find yourself unable to recruit enough cabin leaders, don't despair. GBOS has an active cabin leader recruitment and training program intended to supplement those recruited by attending schools. We also keep in touch with past cabin leaders and encourage them to return. GBOS maintains relationships with most high schools fed by attending schools, so the school counselors and perhaps student leaders should already be aware of GBOS and our cabin leader program before you contact them. Thank you for your efforts recruiting outstanding cabin leaders! Keep in touch so we can help as needed.