



2026 Summer Program Report



2026 Program Overview

Adventure Risk Challenge has been facilitating leadership, literacy, and wilderness experiences for high school youth since 2004. In Summer 2026, we ran one Immersive Course (34 days) and two Stepping Stone Courses (11 days) that each integrated rigorous academic instruction and outdoor education.

Summer courses offer an unforgettable multi-day experience, alternating between backpacking expeditions and time at our basecamp at Rideout Elementary School on the West Shore of Lake Tahoe. Students receive hands-on instruction in writing, reading, public speaking, environmental science, leadership, and outdoor skills, all while living with a close-knit cohort of peers and experienced outdoor educators.

Through ARC's programming, students develop positive social and cooperative skills; engage with different types of literacy; navigate social, emotional, and physical challenges; learn about their role in stewardship of our natural environment; and become more engaged members of their communities.

2026 Summer Course Participants

Immersive Course (34 days)

Caleb Alvarado - Dos Palos High School
Mariana Camila Fernandez - Incline High School
Itzayana Martinez Hernandez - Pacheco High School
Enrique Ruelas Jimenez - Atwater High School
Adrian Macias - Hanford West High School

Anahi Parada-Morales - North Tahoe High School
Celestia Petersen - Merced High School
Adeleidy Alonso Ramirez - North Tahoe High School
Ellery Zanto - North Tahoe High School

Stepping Stone A (11 days)

Juan Cervantes Castillo - Delhi High School
Ximena Cuevas - Wooster High School
Angelina Garcia - High Tech High School
Julian Gomez - Livingston High School
Rosemary Gonzales - Hanford West High School
Drew Hansen - Truckee High School

Jolene Hartline - Truckee High School
Landen Lewis - North Tahoe High School
Brian McCormick - Truckee High School
Elijah Thompson - Bear River High School
Joshua Wilson - Hanford West High School
John Zamora Ramos - Yosemite High School

Stepping Stone B (11 days)

Ezequiel Cervantes - Firebaugh High School
Irvynn Gonzalez - Firebaugh High School
Eros Moctezuma Llanez - Firebaugh High School
Helen Murillo-Santillan - Dos Palos High School

Diego Navarro -San Rafael High School
Therson Occeme - Wooster High School
Roberto Ortega Martin - Pacheco High School
Jonathan Sanchez - Firebaugh High School

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

A dedicated team of full-time and seasonal staff run ARC's summer courses every year. In 2026, each course was led by a team of four instructors and overseen by our site manager. Our staff are responsible for the execution of curriculum, facilitation of community living, and holistic safety of participants for the duration of their course. All summer staff are Wilderness First Responder certified and participate in an 11-day hands-on outdoor, curriculum, and policy training.

We train our staff in ARC's literacy, science, and leadership curriculum and they are responsible for student engagement in the following areas:

- **English (Immersive Course):** Instructors facilitate English classes and oversee student progression with outcome goals in mind. They scaffold all steps of drafting and revision for the metaphor poem and the reflection essay writing processes.
- **Language Power (Immersive Course):** Instructors facilitate Language Power lessons on sentence structure, grammar usage, and literacy development.
- **Manifesto (Stepping Stone Course):** Instructors facilitate values exploration lessons and scaffold student writing process for the personal manifesto.
- **Science:** Instructors facilitate place based science lessons, engaging students with the natural world in outdoor classroom settings.
- **Community Conversations:** Instructors actively engage students in exploring issues of identity, community, and leadership, and provide tools to create an inclusive community at ARC and beyond.
- **Outdoor Living:** Instructors teach all aspects of outdoor living to ensure safety and comfort in remote environments.



Curriculum

Course Curricula Overview & Outcomes

In the Immersive Course, youth participated in:

- 34 days of programming
- A daily English Language Arts curriculum aligned with Common Core and the California State University Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum, focused on writing in multiple genres, including an extended metaphor poem, a formal thank you letter, and a thesis-driven reflection essay
- Additional English Language Arts instruction and practice in reading comprehension, building vocabulary, improving grammar, thinking critically, and public speaking
- An environmental science curriculum organized around place-based education standards, introducing students to the natural world and conservation concepts
- Conducting interviews with adult community members
- Performing their metaphor poem at a spoken-word event with a public audience
- Three backpacking expeditions, including a final youth-led expedition and a solo overnight wilderness experience
- Rock climbing and whitewater rafting
- Daily leadership activities integrating identity and community exploration curriculum with ARC's four core values: service, growth, compassion, and determination

In the Stepping Stone Course, youth participated in:

- 11 days of programming
- A values-exploration curriculum with daily journaling exercises designed to build confidence, develop a sense of self, and increase writing fluency
- An environmental science curriculum organized around place-based education standards, introducing students to the natural world and conservation concepts
- Writing and sharing a personal manifesto
- A backpacking expedition
- Rock climbing or white water rafting
- Daily opportunities to express ARC's four core values of service, growth, compassion, and determination individually and cooperatively

Immersive Course Common Core Alignment for Credit

	Anchor Standards for Reading: Literature (RL.9-10)						Anchor Standards for Language (L.9-10)						Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening (SL.9-10)						Anchor Standards for Writing (W.9-10)					
	Key Ideas and Details			Craft and Structure			Conventions of Standard English		Knowledge of Language	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use			Comprehension and Collaboration		Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas			Text Types and Purpose		Production and Distribution of Writing			Research to Build and Present Knowledge	Range of Writing
Instructional Units	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	3	4	5	6	2	3	4	5	6	9	10
Metaphor Poem	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x		x	x	x	x		x
Reflection Essay							x	x	x			x	x						x	x	x	x		x
Interview and Thank You Letter							x	x	x			x	x		x				x	x	x	x		x
Short Story Reading	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x				x							
Language Power	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x							
Environmental Science							x		x			x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Wilderness and Leadership **							x		x			x	x	x			x			x				x

** Wilderness and Leadership includes reading, writing, and speaking components of Leader of the Day, Journalist, and Naturalist responsibilities as well as evening meeting participation.

All Programs Related to State Standards for Literacy Instruction

34-Day Immersive Course		
Course Days	Academic Activity	Time Per Student
Days 1-7 <i>Expedition 1</i>	Writing Reading Activities Environmental Science	21 hours
Days 8-13 <i>Base Camp 1</i>	Language Power Writing Class Reading Comp and Vocabulary Independent Reading Environmental Science Class	17 hours
Days 14-18 <i>Expedition 2</i>	Solo Journaling Assignment Poem Revisions	12 hours
Days 19-24 <i>Base Camp 2</i>	Rock Climbing Journaling Language Power Writing Class Interview Prep, Interview, and Thank You Letter Reading Comp and Vocabulary Independent Reading Environmental Science Class	22 hours
Days 25-28 <i>Expedition 3</i>	Poetry Revision Poetry Reading Practice	2 hours
Days 29-34 <i>Base Camp 3</i>	Language Power Writing Class Reading Comp and Vocabulary Independent Reading Public Poetry Practice and Event Graduation Poetry or Reflection Essay Reading	30 hours
Total Hours Per Student on Literacy-Related Instruction: 104 Hours Total Student Hours on Literacy-Related Instruction: 936 Hours		

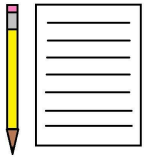
11-Day Stepping Stone Course		
Course Days	Academic Activity	Time Per Student
Days 1-5 <i>Expedition</i>	Daily Journaling Activities Reading Activities Environmental Science	10 hours
Days 8-11 <i>Base Camp</i>	Manifesto Writing Process Manifesto Presentation	12 hours
Total Hours Per Student on Literacy-Related Instruction: 22 Hours Total Student Hours on Literacy-Related Instruction: 440 Hours		

Physical Education Time Record

34-Day Immersive Course		
Course Days	Physical Activity	Time Per Student
Days 1-7 <i>Expedition 1</i>	7 days backpacking	35 hours
Days 8-13 <i>Base Camp 1</i>	Physical Fitness: Running, Sit-ups, Push-ups, Stretching White Water Rafting	13 hours
Days 14-18 <i>Expedition 2</i>	5 days backpacking	25 hours
Days 19-24 <i>Base Camp 2</i>	Physical Fitness: Running, Sit-ups, Push-ups, Stretching Rock Climbing	14 hours
Days 25-28 <i>Expedition 3</i>	4 days backpacking	20 hours
Days 29-34 <i>Base Camp 3</i>	Physical Fitness: Running, Sit-ups, Push-ups, Stretching Culminating 5 mile run	6 hours
	Total Hours Per Student on Physical Education: 113 Hours Total Student Hours on Physical Education: 1017 Hours	
11-Day Stepping Stone Course		
Course Days	Physical Activity	Time Per Student
Days 1-6 <i>Expedition</i>	5 days backpacking	20 hours
Days 7-8	Rock Climbing	12 hours
Days 9-11 <i>Base Camp</i>	Stretching & Walking	3 hours
	Total Hours Per Student on Physical Education: 35 Hours Total Student Hours on Physical Education: 700 Hours	

Summer Course Assessment Data Highlights

29 students across all courses responded to a post-survey at the end of their course to help us understand the impact of our programming in our four pillar areas: literacy development, relationship development, leadership skills, and outdoor experience and connection.



Literacy Development

25 of 29 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement below as a result of participating in ARC:

86% “I feel more confident in the process of writing.”



Relationship Development

27 of 29 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement below as a result of participating in ARC:

93% “I feel more comfortable making new friends.”



Leadership Skills

26 of 29 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement below as a result of participating in ARC:

90% “I take more responsibility for my actions.”



Outdoor Experience and Connection

28 of 29 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement below as a result of participating in ARC:

97% “I gained appreciation for the natural world.”



Congratulations to all the students and staff from Summer 2026!!



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