



“The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don’t tell you what to see.”

-Alexandra K. Trenfor

Fall 2017

Hello, Teachers!

The mornings here at Tremont are growing cooler, cardinal flower is in full red regalia, and there is a hint of fall in the air! We are all busily preparing for our upcoming fall **Teacher Escape Weekends**. Like always, these weekends will be a wonderful time for us educators to gather together to share ideas and experiences with one another.

This year we are excited to share a variety of new aspects of our school and teacher development programming, that I am sure you will be excited about. In addition, we are dedicated to providing you a professional development experience that should leave you energized and inspired for this coming year.

Tremont wants to achieve these results with Teacher Escape Weekend, with YOUR help:

- Enhance ways to transfer the Tremont experience to your classroom
- Share current knowledge and skills with teachers about experiential education
- Help you build support for your Tremont experience
- Develop Tremont’s relationship with you
- Continue to remain relevant to your student’s needs

Come ready to:

- Ask critical questions, invoke dialogue, and learn something new
- Share your story with other teachers who may benefit from your experience
- Experience the benefits of engaging with natural phenomenon
- Network with other professional educators and administrators
- Step out of your comfort zone—try new things to take back to the classroom
- Smile, laugh, and enjoy our time together!

Be sure to bring any helpful resources with you that can be used to share with newer teachers who are developing their methods. If you have videos, materials adapted to standards, ways to get your students engaged, or some tried and true methods for planning a successful Tremont trip, bring them to share. There will be time when we ask our more veteran teachers to step up and share with teachers newer to Tremont. And as always, while you’re here at Tremont we will spend time getting out on the trails, gaining more knowledge, and enjoying the natural beauty of the Smokies!

ARRIVAL: Plan on arriving and moving into the dorm between 7:00-8:00am Saturday, September 16th. Once on campus though, go ahead and settle into a reserved tent or the dorm. Women will be downstairs in the dorm and men will be upstairs on the left. If you arrive after dark be sure to bring a

flashlight; there are no streetlights on campus and you will be walking up a gravel road to access the dorm or tents.

PARKING: Please do not park up the 2nd gravel road nearest to the Activity Center and Kitchen drop-off area (near dumpsters) and remain parked up there – the kitchen staff expect food deliveries throughout the day, and the garbage collector arrives very early in the morning. Please keep that area clear. You may unload your things, and park down on the blacktop for the weekend.

CHECK-IN: Register and pick up materials at the Goliath Table in front of the Activity Center (Cove Room if raining).

PROGRAM BEGINS: We will begin our program promptly at 8:15am in the Council House (located on the field towards the direction of the office – see map link located later in this letter if needed).

Long Drive? Thinking about arriving on Friday, Sept. 15th?

For those of you traveling a far distance, you may arrive Friday evening to spend the night in our dorm (or tent, if you reserved one with Julie Brown, Tremont Registrar). **However, PLEASE let us know if you are planning to arrive Friday, and when to expect you, or we may not be able to accommodate you.** If you arrive before 4:30 pm on Friday Sept. 15th, please check in at the front office. After 4:30pm there will not be anyone on campus to greet you.

(Refer to map and directions at this link: <http://gsmit.org/facilities-and-maps/>)

ACCOMODATIONS: You will be staying in an open-air planned dorm, just like you will when you bring your students back to Tremont. If it's late, please be respectful of others who may already be in the dorm or tents – they will be tired from their journey and turning on the overhead lights will awaken everyone. Quiet time and lights out on campus is 10:00pm every evening. Again, a flashlight or headlamp will be necessary to have with you. Supper is on your own until the breakfast buffet starting at 7:00am Saturday morning. There are a number of places just in town (Townsend – 10 minutes away) but many will close around 9-10pm.

FOOD on CAMPUS: Please note that food is not allowed in the dorm, due to critters; however there is a refrigerator located in the First Aid room and tall metal food storage bins in the Mountain Room (within the Dining Hall) that will be accessible at all times.

SESSIONS: The weekend will end at 1:00pm on Sunday, September 17th. We have exciting activities planned from when you arrive until the end of the workshop that will assist you with making your trip to Tremont an exceptional one. Keep in mind that **in order to qualify for your school's discount later on in the year, you must participate in all activities throughout the entire weekend, and your credit is non-transferable to another teacher.** This is an important part to ensuring our faculty have time to work with each of you as co-teachers before your students arrive later in the year.

NEW things to expect:

- Expect to see some new components to our cadre of lessons, like more all-day options, with more opportunities for more journaling, reflection & group discussions that lead to a higher level of critical thinking and sense of place.
- We will showcase new evening program options.

- We have scheduled Small Group Discussion Sessions, where our faculty will share a topic that could be very pertinent to you and your year-round needs as an educator.
- YOU will meet our newest staff members!
- Learn about new logistics that will enhance your student's experience.
- Prepare to practice and take home new ideas for the classroom.

WEATHER: Weather can vary tremendously, with highs usually in the 80s, lows in the 60s. Many sessions will be outside (rain or shine), so please come prepared with proper clothing:

- A day pack
- A water bottle
- Raingear
- Something to take notes with
- **Remember to bring your own towels and linens – they are not provided**
- Toiletries & Towel
- Shoes for hiking on the trail
- Water shoes – preferably that have a strap on the back and covered toes
- A warm layer for cool mornings and evenings
- Optional: Small reading light for in the dorm after 10:00pm
- Questions and/or curriculum materials to share with other teachers
- Anything else that will make you comfy

Please fill out the Health/Waiver Form and bring it with you to turn in upon check-in. **If you have special dietary needs, please send this form in now so we can notify the kitchen.**

It may also be helpful to bring something to take notes on and a laptop or hand-held device for resourcing. Our activity center does have limited Wi-Fi reception for your use, however, there is no cell service in Walker Valley, and we will ask that participants withhold the use of hand-held devices, other than for notes and photos during teaching sessions, as they may occasionally receive notifications when we are up on certain parts of our trails.

If you have any questions concerning the weekend please email me at jennie@gsmitt.org or Julie Brown at julie@gsmitt.org. I am excited to see all of you soon!



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