

*Battle Creek  
Outdoor Education Center  
Clear Lake Camp*

*Teacher Handbook*



*Updated June 2017*

**BATTLE CREEK OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER, CLEAR LAKE CAMP  
TEACHER HANDBOOK**

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## CAMP PREPARATION TIMELINE

### More than 1 month before camp

- ✓ Send home registration materials including:
  - **Registration and Health Information form** (copy double-sided)
  - **Medication Permission & Medication Information form** (copy together, double sided, on white paper)
  - **What-to-Bring-to-Camp** (copy double-sided)
  - **Challenge Activities Release** (copy single sided)
  - Optional **Code of Conduct** (copy single sided)
- ✓ Inform parents of **www.clearlakecamp.org** and Parent Manual available there.
- ✓ Inform parents of Clear Lake Camp Facebook page.
- ✓ Contact camp if requesting ROV's, canoeing, high ropes, or climbing tower.
- ✓ Contact camp to arrange student and/or parent presentation.
- ✓ Mail, scan and email, or fax planning forms (**School Information, Activity Selections, Class Information**) and **certificate of insurance**. Fax 269-721-1071
- ✓ Contact camp Health Officer about medical and dietary needs. Phone 269-721-8161

### At least 2 weeks before camp

- ✓ Mail, deliver, or scan and email copies of **Registration and Health Information** forms, **Medication Permission** forms, **Challenge Release** forms, **Class Enrollment** forms, and **Teacher Health History** forms. Please sort by class and alphabetize. Please do NOT fax.
- ✓ Prepare your students physically and mentally for their camp experience.

### Arrival Day

- ✓ Be sure all vehicles have accurate directions and camp phone number.
- ✓ Bring originals of all student and teacher forms. Turn in any new forms.
- ✓ Bring updated *Camp Class Enrollment* forms if changes have occurred.
- ✓ If any students are leaving camp early, bring a note from their parent/guardian.
- ✓ Collect student medications and turn in at check-in. We recommend securely transporting medications on the bus with students, especially inhalers and epi-pens.
- ✓ Collect student store money and turn in at check-in.
- ✓ Call us with your estimated arrival time so we are in the parking lot to greet you!

## FORMS

Camp forms are online at [www.clearlakecamp.org](http://www.clearlakecamp.org). Please get new forms from our website each year, as we do make updates often.

Return these Planning Forms as soon as possible via mail, email, or fax.

- The “**School Information**” form gives us expected class sizes, arrival and departure times, and lodging plans and helps us be aware of any medical or food related issues well in advance of your visit. Only one form per school per week is needed.
- The “**Activities Selection**” form lets us build your camp schedule. Please see the Activity Descriptions document for details of each activity. Contact us for more information about any activity. Fill out either one form per class or one per school.
- The “**Classroom Information**” form gives us further insight into your students and helps our staff focus instruction during your visit. The more information you provide, the better we can meet your needs and expectations. Please fill out one per class.

Return these at least 2 weeks before your trip via mail or email. Do NOT fax multiple forms.

- The “**Class Enrollment Form**” is the roster for the class the students will be in at camp. Please list students alphabetically by last name, separated by gender. If you are unsure whether a student will attend camp, please do include their name on the Enrollment form and bring a corrected copy to check-in. Please use our form as we copy the same form for multiple purposes. Please send the Enrollment Form with the Registration forms and Medication Permission forms.
- The “**Teacher Health History**” is required for all teachers or school chaperones attending camp. Please send with the Enrollment, Registration, and Medication forms.
- The “**Registration and Health Information Form**” is required for every child at camp. Please mail double-sided photocopies, or scan and email. Do not fax. Bring originals and any additional forms to check in. Encourage families to answer **all** questions. Please check each form to be sure it is complete and signed on the back. Please copy on white paper.
- The “**Medication Permission Form**” is required in order for us to give ANY type of medication, either prescription or over the counter. This must be signed by both the parent/guardian and a physician. Please mail photocopies, or scan and email, with the Registration and Enrollment forms. Bring the originals and any new forms to check in. Students only need this form if bringing meds to camp. Please copy on white paper. The “Medication Information Form” contains detailed information for parents. We recommend copying this onto the back of the Medication Permission Form. Please emphasize that all medication must be in the *original* container and *unexpired*. ALL medication, including but not limited to prescriptions, inhalers, over-the-counter meds, supplements, vitamins, ointments, etc. requires a doctor’s signature.
- The “**Challenge Release Form**” is **NEW**. It is REQUIRED for all challenge activities, including Teams Course, Sherwood Forest, The Wall, The Beam, Climbing Tower, High Ropes, Canoeing, and Archery. It may NOT be altered. Please check for completeness.
- There is an OPTIONAL “**Code of Conduct**” form available on our website. It is up to you whether to utilize this or not.

## GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS AND CHAPERONES

You are an essential part of your students' camp experience. During your time at camp, you will be able to observe your students learning and interacting in new ways.

**Your Schedule** Your camp day begins no later than 8:00 am at breakfast. You are invited to arrive at the lodge earlier to check in with your students and meet with instructors to plan the day. The dormitory staff will meet with you each morning as soon as they have wrapped up dormitory duties to discuss any problems from overnight.

We strive to have two adults with a class whenever possible, and many challenge or adventure activities require two adults in order to proceed. Please stay for the entire activity block including transitions to and from the classroom, restroom breaks, camp store, journal time, games, dismissal, etc. Afternoon activities will finish by 4:30 pm, and many will finish by 4:00 pm. Students will then have rest hour and teachers have a break time to head back to their lodging before dinner.

Dinner is from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm and evening activities are from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. This is a less structured time beyond regular school hours when behavior problems and homesickness are common. Your help with behavior management and homesickness is invaluable. Please stay for the entire activity block and evening snack time. Students go to the dorm around 8:30 pm. Teachers may then head back to their lodging for overnight. At least one school chaperone must remain on site at all times.

**Meals** Please join your students for meals in the dining hall. We aim to have an adult at each table for each meal to assist with supervision. If you need to bring your own or supplemental food, a refrigerator, microwave, and toaster are available in the dining hall.

**During Activities** We welcome your input and help! Please reinforce concepts that are presented, ask clarifying questions, and add to discussions with connections back to school or to other activities. Point out interesting sights along the trails and help with supervision or entertainment of students during transitions. If at any time your role is not clear, please do ask instructors how you can help during transitions and what role you can take at each activity.

**Team Building** During team building activities in particular, please keep interventions to a minimum unless directly related to student discipline. Try to resist the temptation to give students a solution or point out what they are doing wrong. You **are** invited to add to the processing and debriefing portion with observations or questions. For activities involving spotting, you will be asked to take an active supervisory role.

**Behavior** Please take an active role in managing student behavior. This will help the OEC instructors keep activities moving. When write-ups or phone calls home are necessary, teachers will be involved in this process along with camp staff. The adult who observed and dealt with the student's behavior, whether school personnel or camp staff, should complete a write up and process the incident with the student. If a phone call home is required due to a student's behavior we prefer that teachers make that phone call. If teachers are not available,

a camp administrator will call home. Teachers are also invited to reward individual students who exhibit great behavior with a “Thank You Dessert”. Instructors are happy to show you where to record “Thank You Dessert” recipients in the dining hall.

**Homesickness** Please take an active role in dealing with homesickness. Our camp policy is that students do not call home. It is best if a homesick student is occupied with camp activities or is provided other outlets such as writing a letter home. We can provide paper, pencil, and envelopes. At times it may prove beneficial for an adult to make a call home to gain insight from a parent, but this call is best done without the student present and often without the student’s knowledge. If the homesickness persists or is extreme, it may become necessary for the student to speak with their parents. In most cases this results in the student going home. Any student phone use must be facilitated and supervised by an adult. Students who go home due to homesickness are generally not invited to return later. Please keep camp staff informed about the student’s status and about any communication home.

**Breaks and Overnight** Separate adult restrooms are located upstairs in the lodge. Coffee, tea, and filtered water are available anytime in the dining hall. The “brown chairs” area offers wi-fi and a place to sit. Overnight accommodations are provided in Winka Cottage. Winka has a full kitchen and living room.

After each meal while students are in entertainment or at recess adults may use the restrooms, relax at the “brown chairs”, or help supervise students. Please join your class at the conclusion of entertainment to assist with the transition to the restrooms or classroom.

Teachers are “on-call” while students are in the dormitories at rest hour and overnight. If you will be out on the trails, on the lake, or are leaving camp, please provide a phone number where you can be reached. At least one school chaperone must be on site at all times. Please call the office or personally check-in/ check-out so that we know who is in the buildings and on camp at all times.

**Cell Phone Use** Teachers are encouraged to carry personal cell phones during activity times for taking photos of students and for us to reach you if necessary. Use of cell phones for other purposes such as phone calls or texting during activities, especially while instructors are presenting, is distracting to instructors and students. Your help is needed to keep the group focused and to make connections with the content. Cell phone service can be spotty at camp. The camp phone is available for making calls to students’ families or to your school.

**Clothing** You should prepare yourself with the same type of clothing and footwear as the students. Note that our student dress code requires long pants and closed toe shoes for all activities and prohibits tanks tops. Shorts may be allowed for certain evening activities. In colder weather you will want to dress slightly warmer than the students because you will not be as active as they will. Prepare for all types of conditions, including rain, mud, and snow.

## ARRIVAL DAY

### Arrival

The ideal camp arrival time is between 9:00 am and 10:00 am. Please call camp at 269-721-8161 while en route with an updated arrival time. Camp staff will meet your buses in the main parking lot, give brief directions, and walk students to the lodge. Vehicles carrying luggage will continue down the hill and park between the lodge and dorms. Teachers should park in the main parking lot and walk down the path to the lodge. Students will unload luggage, have a welcome meeting in the rec room, and then go to the dorms for directions. Dorm move-in and unpacking will usually occur before lunch. Large schools arriving after 10:30 am may need to move in and unpack after lunch. If multiple schools are in camp together, students will not go to the dorms until all schools have arrived.

### Check-In

When you arrive at camp, please go directly to the Red Desk (office). We will verify that the paperwork we received is accurate and complete. Please turn in any new or revised *Registration and Health Information* forms, *Medication Permission* forms, *Challenge Release* forms, *Class Enrollment Forms*, or *Teacher Health* forms. Let us know about teachers or students who are absent, arriving late, or leaving early.

Please turn in student medications at the Red Desk, separated by class. We recommend that each student's medications are in a labeled zip top plastic bag. Individual medications should also have the student's full name, not covering any medication information. Prescription medications must have the prescription label and must be in the name of the student. All medications must be in original containers and be unexpired. Students who have brought medication will see the Health Officer during dormitory move-in time. to discuss their meds

Please turn in store money at the Red Desk, separated by class. Store money should be in individual envelopes labeled with the student's full name, dollar amount, and teacher's name.

After the paperwork, medication, and money have been collected, the Program Coordinator will meet briefly with all of the teachers to discuss the following:

- Emotional or behavioral information about students that our staff need to be aware of.
- Teacher mail box drawers, which contain your schedule for the week, staff evaluations, and a program evaluation. The schedule will be reviewed.
- Cell phone or other emergency contact information in case a problem arises after teachers have left for the evening or while you are out in the field during the daytime.
- Location and use of behavior logs and time out plans.

Once teachers are finished checking in and have met with the Program Coordinator, teachers will then have time to move in to Winka or the lodge and to visit with students prior to lunch.

## **Staff & Teacher Meeting**

At the start of lunch on arrival day, while campers are hearing the dining hall rules, all teachers and OEC instructors will have a brief meeting at the brown chairs to make introductions and share important information about the students and the week.

## **DEPARTURE DAY**

### **Meeting**

Prior to your departure, you will have the opportunity to sit with the administrative team and discuss the week. This usually takes place in the office or a classroom during the later part of breakfast. Let us know what you liked and how we may improve. Please completely move out of Winka cottage or the lodge rooms prior to breakfast so that we have time to meet without taking you away from activities.

### **Feedback and Evaluation Forms**

Feedback and evaluation forms for staff and for the camp as a whole will be placed in your mailbox drawer early in the week. Please leave the completed forms in your mailbox drawer or turn them in to the administrative team before you leave camp. Please include as many details as possible when writing evaluations. We value your input to help us improve.

### **Departure**

Typical departure time is 1:00pm to 1:30pm, after the final lunch. If you require an earlier departure time you may either opt for a sack lunch to-go or we will need to serve lunch early. Please let camp know in your planning paperwork if you need either of these options. Lunch is generally not scheduled earlier than 10:30 am. Departure is no less than 1 hour after lunch begins. If two schools are attending camp at the same time, lunch is usually scheduled to accommodate the earliest departure time.

Student luggage will be loaded up as soon as your luggage bus or other vehicle is ready. If you bring a separate luggage vehicle, such as a U-Haul truck that remains at camp, luggage will be loaded when students move out of the dorms before breakfast.

Student medications will be returned after lunch directly to you, not to students. Please return these to parents or students at school. You will also be given any confiscated items and lost and found objects. If multiple schools are in camp together, we will instead bag and label lost and found items and store them here at camp.

Change from the camp store is returned directly to students immediately before final dismissal.

## STUDENT PREPARATION

This section is meant to assist your classroom discussions prior to camp to best prepare students for this intensive weeklong experience.

### What to Bring

A “What to Pack for Camp” checklist is provided online. Please send this two page document home with students and discuss the list with your class and the logic behind each item. If you have questions about any items, please contact the OEC.

Please emphasize the following:

- Bring old, sturdy play clothes. Long pants are required for all daytime and most evening activities. Students may wish to bring ONE pair of shorts in the chance the weather is hot and we allow shorts for one evening activity.
- Bring sturdy, comfortable shoes such as athletic shoes.
- Bring good rain gear. Most activities go on regardless of weather. We do have some ponchos to loan but having your own is preferable. In cooler weather, also bring warm coats, hats, and gloves/mittens.
- Adhere to the “Do Not Bring” list. If items from this section are brought to camp they will be collected by the camp staff and returned at the end of the week, if appropriate. Bringing certain prohibited items may result in disciplinary action. If students do not turn in food, candy, or gum and it is later discovered by camp staff, it may not be returned.
- Label all personal belongings, including jackets, shoes, socks, and underwear.

### Camp Store

If students choose to bring money, it should be in a labeled envelope with the student’s full name, teacher’s name, and amount of money clearly written on the outside. It is best if teachers collect these envelopes prior to arrival at camp and turn in money at check-in. We have many souvenir items ranging in price from \$0.25 to \$45.00 but most students find \$5.00 to \$15.00 is sufficient. Students will have one opportunity to order from the store, generally on the first or second day of camp. Purchases are delivered to students on the final evening.

### Mental Preparation

A well prepared class will have a higher quality experience at the OEC. The daily living activities (eating, sleeping) encourage students to develop independence by doing them away from home and with other students who they may not know. The dorms, evening all-camps, meal clean up, and entertainment are all good opportunities for meeting new students.

If you have selected science or history activities, you may want to let students know how this week will be an extension of or enhancement to their school studies.

If you have selected group building or “adventure” activities, please discuss the concept of “challenge” with your students. All challenges are hard. All of our challenges are also possible. The benefit of a challenge is what you learn from facing it. Therefore we expect every student to try his or her best at every challenge. You are welcome to give general descriptions of the group building or adventure challenges but please avoid comparisons and details. It is not

important what other classes have done. We are interested in how well *this* group will do when faced with a challenge.

### **Behavior Expectations**

Students need to know that their camp experience is a school function, and as such, the same rules for behavior that apply in school also apply at camp.

We use a Full Value “Five Finger” Contract to outline some basic values which we expect of all students and staff. Our hand serves to help us remember each value.

- Pinkie Finger: **Safety** of ourselves and others; emotional and physical
- Ring Finger: **Commitment** to be a part of the group, to do our best, to try new things
- Middle Finger: **Respect** for ourselves, others, places, and belongings
- Pointer Finger: **Responsibility** for our own actions, words, and well being; for being a part of the community
- Thumb: Once we have the other four in our grasp, we can begin to have **Fun!**

The “Battle Creek Outdoor Education Center Code of Conduct” is an **optional** behavior contract signed by parents and students which explains our behavior expectations and consequences for inappropriate student behavior. If you would like to use the “Code of Conduct”, it is found online with the student registration materials.

The full policy detailing discipline levels 1 through 4 is included at the end of this handbook. The parent handbook, available online, has details of this policy as well.

### **Dining Hall Guidelines**

Students are seated at tables of 5 – 7 students from the same class. Students remain at the same tables all week. One adult should sit at each table to model and monitor the expected behaviors. Meals are served family style. One student per meal will be the hopper and is responsible for getting the food for the table and cleaning up after the meal. One student per meal will be the scraper and is responsible for scraping off the plates at the end of the meal. Each student is expected to take on each of these jobs during the week.

We do weigh food waste at the OEC. Any uneaten food **on the students’ plates** is collected and weighed. This is done to encourage students to take only what they are going to eat and to stress the idea of conservation.

Good manners are expected in the dining hall, including:

- remaining seated during the entire meal (no bathroom requests during meals)
- saying please and thank you
- passing food instead of reaching
- using normal or quiet speaking voices
- being silent and listening when an adult calls for attention
- no hats, hoods, or outdoor coats

Points are awarded at each meal and in the dormitories. These points may earn chocolate milk staff hoppers or free sit for the last meal.

### **Dormitory Guidelines**

Students are housed in the Boys' Dorm or Girls' Dorm. Each building has 2 dorm staff and holds up to 66 students. Each student sleeps on a twin size bed on either the top or bottom bunk in a wing of 20 to 26 students. Top bunks have side rails. Students are NOT permitted to enter the dormitory alone. Dorms are staffed from rest hour through breakfast and are closed during the day. Students must leave for breakfast with everything they will need for the day.

Students are expected to shower each evening. In order for proper hygienic washing to take place students are not permitted to wear any clothing in the showers, including swimsuits. Students undress in their dorm wing, wrap in a towel or robe to walk to the bathroom, shower in individual shower stalls, and then return to their dorm wing to dress. We will do our best to alleviate the fears of shy students. If you think a student may not come to camp because of showers, please call us. Bathrobes, extra large bath towels, and flip-flop type "shower shoes" are all fine.

Based on information from the Registration forms, students who may sleep walk or wet the bed are assigned a bottom bunk. Students are also assigned a bottom bunk if the bed wetting or sleep walking question was left blank on the registration form. Please keep this in mind if you choose to arrange bunk partners at school. Our preference is for students to simply choose bunkmates at camp so that any bottom bunk requirements can easily be worked out.

Our staff is sensitive to the possible embarrassment for a child who wets the bed. If requested, dorm staff will wake children during the night for bathroom use. Soiled sleeping bags and pajamas are washed and returned discreetly. Parents of students bringing pull-ups for nighttime use should inform the camp so that dorm staff will know to discuss private changing and disposal options with those students.

Some dorm rules include:

- No entering other wings (bedrooms)
- No running or roughhousing.
- Respect others' personal space and property.
- Turn off lights and water when not in use.
- Students are responsible for personal belongings and clean-up of own dorm space.

### **Typical Daily Student Schedule**

		4:00 PM	Rest Hour begins in dorms
7:00 AM	Wake Up	5:20 PM	Students to lodge classrooms
7:40 AM	Table setters to dining hall	5:30 PM	Dinner
7:50 AM	Students to lodge classrooms	6:30 PM	Evening block of activities
8:00 AM	Breakfast	8:20 PM	Snack
9:00 AM	Morning block of activities	8:30 PM	Dorm time, showers, and ready for bed
12:00 PM	Lunch		
1:00 PM	Afternoon block of activities	9:30 PM	Dorm lights out and quiet time

# SCHOOL CAMP PROGRAM

## DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### PURPOSE

The Outdoor Education Center is committed to providing a safe, needs-satisfying, growth-oriented experience for every student. We believe discipline is not merely a list of expectations and punishments, but rather an approach to teaching skills in *self-control*, *responsible choice-making*, and appropriate *community participation*. Although a student's encounter with the Outdoor Education Center is brief, we recognize the potential lasting impact that we may have on the student. We believe setting clear expectations is the beginning. The six steps to a successful week states specific behaviors that students should practice to have a successful week at camp. Reviewing these before camp only reinforces the expectations.

The policies and practices which follow are consistent with our philosophy. They are shown here in detail to aid teachers and staff, and to demonstrate compliance with guidelines provided by the Michigan Department of Social Services.

### GOALS

- A. Provide an emotionally and physically safe learning and living environment for all participants.
- B. Help students learn aforementioned skills and plan to transfer them into their classroom and home environments.

### SPECIFIC PRACTICES

- A. As a means of discipline, no camper shall be:
  - 1. deprived of food.
  - 2. deprived of sleep. A bed and blanket must be provided if the student is removed from their dorm wing.
  - 3. isolated without adult supervision.
  - 4. administered physical punishment.
  - 5. asked to perform physical exercise.
  - 6. subjected to excessive restraint.
  - 7. subjected to ridicule.
  - 8. subjected to threat.
  - 9. subjected to hazing
- B. Most student behavioral problems are short in duration and can be resolved or even prevented by appropriate adult supervision.
- C. Effective results may be obtained by confronting the child, discussing what they have done and guiding them to alternative behaviors. Avoid yelling, yet be firm. Make an honest effort to seek out the root of an argument or fight between students. Allow each one to present their side. It usually turns out that both persons are wrong in some way.
- D. No student should be allowed to continually disrupt any activity at the expense of the group's experience. When this occurs, the student should be removed from the group in accordance with our policy.

## STANDARD POLICY

A student may progress through four levels. A level may be reached when the student makes a choice that is counter-productive to our expectations regarding self-control and community participation *within* the environment established by the Group Leader, Dorm Staff and Classroom Teacher (even if witnessed by other personnel).

- Level I: The student's behavior warrants a documented warning.
- Level II: Time Out – Time away from activity and a written Time Out Plan completed
- Level III: Referral – A parent and/or principal is notified of the situation and next level of consequence. The teacher will be present or notified. Arrangement of the call shall be a joint effort. Sometimes another Time Out Plan is provided.
- Level IV: The student's behavior warrants dismissal from the camp.

IMPLEMENTATION: There is latitude for discretionary action between levels. Four reprimands do not necessarily equal reaching Level IV. Level I could be the third time that a particular student has been consulted, e.g. the first being a clarification, the second being a one-on-one conference due to the child's specific needs regarding a certain behavior. The student must always be informed of the next sequential level.

## PLANS / RESTITUTION

The Standard Policy is not a cut and dry procedure. We recognize that due to the diversity of classes and students we serve, other options must be available if we are to succeed in our purpose of training students to take ownership of their behaviors and act responsibly. OEC Staff and teachers must use their best judgment, as well as their creativity. Students may be limited in their ability to think of natural consequences or specific plans for change. Emphasis should be placed on the student doing the work (plans, restitution), though guidance should be available. For example, some students may require help reading the Plan Form.

Some Examples of Consequences students could choose:

- Personal apology to other students, teachers, OEC staff
- Borrowing lendable items so that they can participate in the activity
- Shadowing teachers
- Sleeping on bed in Dorm Lobby or in Lodge
- Repeated Time Outs
- Eating in brown chairs
- Work detail (dish washing, light and faucet patrol, working at red desk, hauling away ill-sized firewood)

A child might choose to make amends for their wrong doing. This supports our belief that mistakes are learning opportunities and that it is more mature to make restitution than to merely endure guilt, shaming and/or punishment.

## **TERMS OF IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL**

1. Setting fire or pulling fire alarm
2. Possessing weapons
3. Leaving dorm at night without permission
4. Striking or intent to strike an adult
5. Striking a student, premeditated
6. Blatant and flagrant vandalism
7. Possessing illegal substances
8. Verbally abusing an adult
9. Entering the dormitory or washroom of the opposite gender

## **OEC STAFF/ TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Communicate with teachers/staff regarding individual students, class policy, and teacher level of involvement. Staff, keep in mind teachers are ultimately responsible for their students and may know what works best.
2. Use your best judgment. Get advice if you are unsure. Discipline is not giving out consequences; it is *helping* students learn about their own needs, successful community participation, and making restitution.
3. Document accurately with detail. Anyone making a referral will need accurate details. Please include situations that occur between levels, and consequences that have been decided. Write exact statements made.
4. Communicate with other staff, dorm leaders and teachers about student behavior issues. It isn't fair to us or the student if the consequences and processing are fragmented, untimely, or inconsistent in severity and progressiveness. If a child has made an action plan to improve behavior or make amends our structure must support that.
5. Inform the Director or Coordinator at appropriate places in the process. They are there for support and guidance.