

MAINE COAST SEMESTER at CHEWONKI



Life-Changing Learning in Nature

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ADMINISTRATION

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OUR MISSION

Chewonki inspires transformative growth, teaches appreciation and stewardship of the natural world, and challenges people to build thriving, sustainable communities throughout their lives.

ACCREDITATION

Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and is approved by the State of Maine Department of Education and is an associate member of The Association of Boarding Schools.



National Association
of Independent Schools

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CEEB Code 201-122

ACADEMIC PROFILE 2025-2026

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Located on a 400-acre saltwater peninsula, Maine Coast Semester at Chewonki is an academically rigorous, place-based school community, which is made available to a select number of 11th- and 12th-grade students for one semester (fall or spring). Recognized as a highly competitive program, Maine Coast Semester provides intellectually curious juniors and seniors with an engaging, interdisciplinary curriculum delivered through student-centered instruction, as well as field studies and residential learning experiences, which foster creative thinking and independent problem-solving. The Semester school's curriculum is carefully aligned with established college preparatory coursework and serves to complement the program of study at a wide variety of sending schools. In addition to their academic studies, students participate weekly in a variety of work programs that introduce the principles of environmental stewardship and community building.

OUR VISION

We choose to approach rigorous academics, physical work, and everyday living with responsibility and joy. Whether engaging in a spirited classroom discussion, harvesting tomatoes for our table or planning Saturday night's activities, we live each day deliberately with an eye toward connecting the individual to a larger community. Our students leave Chewonki with strengthened ownership for their education, an awareness of their place in nature, and an understanding that they can make a positive difference in their world.

GOALS FOR GRADUATES

We work to manifest our mission to inspire transformative growth, teach appreciation and stewardship of the natural world, and challenge people to build thriving, sustainable communities throughout their lives. Our Goals for Graduates were crafted using the lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, giving students the opportunity to develop empathy and awareness as they grow in the following areas.

ENGAGED LEARNING: Students learn in a holistic way and address complex issues with humility, critical thinking, and creativity.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: As responsible community members, students intentionally engage with a breadth of perspectives to promote social and environmental justice within and across communities.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: Students listen with openness and discernment and communicate ideas with clarity, creativity, and an awareness of impact.

SENSE OF PLACE: Students build an understanding of their reciprocal relationship with the natural world through focused observation and reflection.

SENSE OF SELF: Students explore and affirm their identities, strengths, and areas for growth, and understand how these impact the various communities of which they are a part.

SENDING SCHOOLS

More than 2,600 students from over 400 sending schools have attended Maine Coast Semester. In a typical semester, students come from 38 high schools and 14 states. It is common for international students to attend as well. Forty percent of students have come from public schools and sixty percent have come from independent schools. Ten percent have come from Maine. Some of our most common sending schools include:

West Coast & Mountain West

Berkeley High School (CA)
Boulder High School (CO)
Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences (CA)
Crystal Springs Uplands School (CA)
Harvard-Westlake School (CA)
Lakeside School (WA)
Menlo School (CA)
Santa Fe Preparatory School (NM)
St. Margaret's Episcopal School (CA)
The Thacher School (CA)

Midwest & South

Charlotte Country Day School (NC)
Francis W. Parker School (IL)
Greenhill School (TX)
Greensboro Day School (NC)
St. John's School (TX)
St. Paul Academy & Summit School (MN)
The Lovett School (GA)
The Westminster Schools (GA)
Webb School of Knoxville (TN)
YES Prep Public Schools (TX)

East

Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (MA)
Ethical Culture Fieldston School (NY)
Milton Academy (MA)
Noble and Greenough School (MA)
Princeton Day School (NJ)
Shady Side Academy (PA)
Sidwell Friends School (DC)
The Dalton School (NY)
The Nightingale-Bamford School (NY)
Waynflete School (ME)

FACULTY

The Maine Coast Semester faculty includes eleven core academic teachers, four teaching fellows, three adjunct teachers, and four farm staff/educators.

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND CLASSROOM TIME

The fall semester is 14 weeks and the spring semester is 15 weeks in length. All academic classes meet for the equivalent of 3.5 hours per week except science, which meets for approximately 6-7 hours per week, and includes a weekly 4-hour field lab. Classes meet in 45- and 70-minute blocks. Academic classes are held Monday through Friday.

GRADING

Maine Coast Semester uses letter grades with the following equivalencies:

A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), etc. F < 60 (Failing); P (Pass), NP (No Pass), PH (Pass with Honors)

CURRICULUM

Courses at Maine Coast Semester are taught at honors and AP levels of instruction. Most students take honors- and AP-level courses at their sending schools and all students are academically challenged while attending. The Semester registrar works closely with sending schools to ensure a seamless transfer of credit - with many Maine Coast Semester courses transferring to sending schools as AP courses.

Students take 6 academic courses including Science, English, Capstone, and 3 additional classes from the list of Elective Courses below:

SCIENCE	Natural History and Ecology of the Maine Coast*
ENGLISH	Literature and the Land*
HISTORY	U.S. History AP® U.S. History
MATHEMATICS	Algebra II Precalculus Intro to Calculus AP® Calculus AB AP® Calculus BC
WORLD LANGUAGES	French: Intermediate, Advanced Spanish: Intermediate, Advanced
STUDIO ARTS	Art and the Natural World
CO-CURRICULAR	Human Ecology Seminar* Environmental Issues World Religions and the Wilderness
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Backcountry Expeditions and Outdoor Education

* Required course

STANDARDIZED TESTING

PSAT® tests are administered in the fall semester to all students. In the spring, we provide transportation so that students may take the ACT® or SAT® at regional testing centers. Prep courses for standardized tests are not offered at Maine Coast Semester. Advanced Placement examinations are administered during the spring semester for students who choose and are prepared to take them. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with a college counselor at their sending school before they arrive at Maine Coast Semester to discuss the AP® examinations they plan to take.

FINANCIAL AID

Need-based financial aid provides students with demonstrated need an opportunity for a high-quality academic experience that might otherwise be unavailable to them. We are eager to share in the cost of this education to the best of our ability.

As a general rule, we do not provide full scholarships and we expect every family to pay some portion of the tuition. In any given year, individual financial aid award amounts offered to students range from \$500 to \$30,000+ and approximately 40% of Maine Coast Semester students receive financial aid awards.

COLLEGE MATRICULATION

Since our founding in 1988, Maine Coast Semester graduates have gone on to attend many of the nation's most competitive colleges and universities. To date, the total number of Maine Coast Semester graduates who have enrolled at the following:

60+

Bates College
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Colby College
Colorado College
Cornell University
Middlebury College
University of Vermont
Wesleyan University

Oberlin College
St. Lawrence University
Stanford University
Tufts University
Whitman College
Williams College
Yale University

Smith College
University of Maine, Orono
University of Michigan
University of Pennsylvania
Vassar College

Johns Hopkins University
Macalester College
McGill University - Canada
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Reed College
Swarthmore College
Tulane University
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Colorado Boulder
University of New Hampshire
University of Virginia
Vanderbilt University
Warren Wilson College
Wellesley College

30-59

Carleton College
College of the Atlantic
Dartmouth College
Hampshire College
Harvard University
Kenyon College

20-29
Bard College
Columbia University
Connecticut College
Haverford College
Lewis and Clark College
New York University
Northwestern University
Princeton University
Skidmore College

10-19
Amherst College
Barnard College
Bennington College
Boston University
Bucknell University
Colgate University
Davidson College
Duke University
Emory University
Georgetown University
Hamilton College