



Funding an Outdoor Education Field Trip with ELO-P

A budget proposal guide for district Expanded Learning coordinators

Inside this guide

1. Why a Pali Institute trip fits your Expanded Learning program
2. Compliance crosswalk: ELO-P requirements and how a Pali trip meets them
3. Budget worksheet you can complete from your Site Reservation Agreement
4. Copy-and-paste justification language for your proposal
5. Sample itinerary and class menu
6. Proposal timeline and documentation checklist

2026–2027 School Year

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How to Use This Guide

This guide walks you from your Site Reservation Agreement to a finished budget proposal your business office and board can approve. Most coordinators complete it in four steps:

1. **Confirm your dates.** Pali will send a per-student price, included in the Site Reservation Agreement, reflecting the dates confirmed during your discovery call or email.
2. **Confirm eligibility with your fiscal team.** Use the compliance crosswalk (Section 2) to show how the trip fits your ELO-P program plan.
3. **Complete the budget worksheet.** Enter the figures from your Site Reservation Agreement into Section 3 to calculate the total and cost per student.
4. **Assemble the proposal.** Paste the justification language from Section 4, fill in the bracketed fields, and attach the documents on the checklist in Section 6.

A note on eligibility

ELO-P funds programming for students in transitional kindergarten through grade 6, and Pali Institute serves that full range: day trips for TK through 3rd grade, and day or overnight trips for 4th through 6th grade.

Allowable uses are determined by your local educational agency under California Education Code and CDE guidance. Review this proposal with your business office before submitting. This guide supports that conversation; it is not legal or fiscal advice.

1. Why Pali Institute Fits Your Expanded Learning Program

Pali Institute has partnered with Southern California schools and districts since 1990. A day trip or overnight program gives students non-school days of hands-on learning, physical activity and social-emotional growth, with Pali providing the staffing, meals, lodging and supervision a full day requires.

What districts ask about	What Pali provides
Setting	274 acres in the San Bernardino National Forest, Running Springs, CA
Accreditation	Accredited by WASC and by the Association for Experiential Education (AEE), which reviews experiential programs for safety and practice standards
Curriculum	Science modules are mapped to NGSS and California Common Core, with a crosswalk available for district review. Outdoor adventure and leadership classes build teamwork, communication, confidence and physical activity.
Staffing ratio	11:1 student-to-staff ratio. Instructors are background-checked and hold bachelor's degrees.
Supervision	Pali instructors supervise and teach students throughout the trip, including overnight in the cabins. The one exception is the evening Teacher Time, when school staff lead an activity Pali can supply. Schools send two or more support staff.
Health & safety	Registered nurses or licensed vocational nurses on-site from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Meals & lodging	Chef-prepared meals with vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free options; overnight cabin lodging for 4th–6th grade trips
Attendance records	Pali confirms rosters before check-in and verifies each student on arrival.
Vendor paperwork	W-9, Certificate of Insurance and district vendor applications provided on request

2. Compliance Crosswalk

Use this table to show your fiscal team and board how a Pali Institute trip supports the requirements of your ELO-P program plan. The right-hand column lists the records to keep for your annual expenditure report and audit file.

ELO-P requirement	What it asks of the LEA	How a Pali trip supports it	Records to keep
Eligible students	Funds serve TK–6 students in classroom-based programs.	TK–3rd grade: day trips. 4th–6th grade: day trips or overnight trips.	Final roster showing grade level of each student
Non-school days	At least 30 non-school days of programming (summer, intersession, weekends, breaks).	Weekend trips and fall, winter and spring break-week sessions take place on non-school days. Each Saturday, Sunday or break day of the trip can count toward your total.	Trip dates, itinerary, district calendar showing the days are non-instructional
Nine-hour day	At least nine hours of combined in-person programming on non-school days.	On a middle day of an overnight trip, the schedule runs from 7:00 AM Rise and Shine through the 9:00 PM end of the Evening Session, well past nine hours. For day trips, document Pali program hours plus any district-led time that completes the nine-hour day.	Pali itinerary with session times; daily sign-in or roster verification
Staffing ratio	No more than 20:1 for grades 1–6 (10:1 for TK/K).	11:1 student-to-staff ratio, plus district support staff.	Pali staffing confirmation; district chaperone list
Nutrition	Provide a nutritious meal or snack.	Chef-prepared meals served on-site, with vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free options available.	Pali menu or meal schedule
Quality Standards for Expanded Learning	Program plan addresses safe and supportive environment, active and engaged learning, skill building, youth voice and leadership, healthy choices and behaviors, and diversity, access and equity.	Supervised outdoor setting with on-site nurses; hands-on, NGSS-aligned science modules; team challenges and leadership activities; physical activity in every session; student-choice module on the final day.	NGSS crosswalk, class descriptions, post-trip student or staff reflections
Access for unduplicated pupils	Offer the program to eligible students; follow LEA policy on family fees.	District sets participant selection and any fee policy. Pali can price the full eligible group.	Recruitment notice, participant selection method, fee waiver policy

Plan around the spending deadline

2025–26 ELO-P funds must be expended or encumbered by June 30, 2027. A signed Pali agreement for a 2026–27 weekend or spring break trip may help your LEA put those funds to use. Ask your business office how it treats a signed contract against this deadline.

Limited 2026–27 dates. Weekend and break-week dates for this school year are limited. Pali is also accepting 2027–28 reservations for early planning.

3. Budget Worksheet

Complete this worksheet from your Pali Site Reservation Agreement and your district's internal costs.

A. Trip details

Item	Your entry	Item	Your entry
School(s) attending		Trip dates	
Program length (days / nights)		Site Reservation Agreement no. and date	
Students, grades TK–6 (ELO-P-eligible)		Students, other grades (if any)	
District support staff attending			

B. Line-item budget

Line item	Description	Qty	Unit cost	Total	Funding source
Pali Institute program fee	Per student, from your Site Reservation Agreement		\$	\$	
Adult attendee fees	District support staff or chaperones, if listed		\$	\$	
Transportation	Round-trip charter bus (via Pali or district)		\$	\$	
Staff extra-duty pay	Weekend or break stipends for district support staff		\$	\$	
Substitute coverage	Only if any trip day falls on an instructional day		\$	\$	
Student supplies	Packing-list gear for students who need it		\$	\$	
Contingency	Recommended 3–5% for headcount changes		\$	\$	
TOTAL PROGRAM COST				\$	

C. Summary for your proposal

Calculation	Amount
Total program cost (from Section B)	\$
Amount charged to ELO-P	\$
Amount charged to other sources (list)	\$
ELO-P cost per eligible student (ELO-P amount ÷ TK–6 students)	\$
Non-school days provided (trip days on weekends/breaks)	
Program hours per student (sum of daily scheduled hours)	
ELO-P cost per program hour (cost per student ÷ hours)	\$

Tip: Cost per program hour is often the most persuasive figure for a business office. One vendor agreement covers instruction, meals, lodging and round-the-clock supervision for every hour of the trip.

4. Justification Language for Your Proposal

Copy any of the paragraphs below into your budget proposal, board item or program plan. Replace the bracketed fields with your own details.

Program description

[District name] proposes to use Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) funds to provide [number] students in grades [TK–6] with a [day trip / number-day overnight] outdoor education program at Pali Institute in Running Springs, California, on [dates]. The program takes place on non-school days and provides at least nine hours of supervised, in-person expanded learning each full program day.

Alignment with ELO-P requirements

This program supports our ELO-P plan by providing [number] non-school days of programming toward the LEA's 30-day requirement. Pali Institute maintains an 11:1 student-to-staff ratio, below the 20:1 maximum for grades 1–6, and serves all meals on-site. Activities address the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning, including active and engaged learning, skill building, youth voice and leadership, and healthy choices and behaviors.

Educational value

Students participate in hands-on science modules aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and California Common Core, such as forest ecology and astronomy, along with outdoor adventure and leadership classes such as navigation and orienteering and team challenges. The program builds social-emotional skills, physical activity and connection to the natural environment, experiences that many of our students would not otherwise have access to.

Vendor qualifications

Pali Institute has provided outdoor education to Southern California schools since 1990 and is accredited by WASC and the Association for Experiential Education (AEE). Instructors are background-checked and hold bachelor's degrees, registered nurses or licensed vocational nurses are on-site from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM, and Pali staff supervise students throughout the trip, including overnight. Pali will provide a W-9, Certificate of Insurance and completed district vendor documentation.

Cost justification

The total cost of \$[total] includes instruction, all meals, supervision, on-site medical staff [and overnight lodging] for [number] students, or \$[cost per student] per student. ELO-P funds will cover \$[ELO-P amount] for eligible students in grades TK–6. At approximately [hours] hours of programming per student, the cost is \$[cost per hour] per program hour. [Optional: These funds will be expended from the LEA's 2025–26 apportionment, which must be expended or encumbered by June 30, 2027.]

5. Sample Itinerary and Class Menu

Pali's standard schedule for a 4th–6th grade overnight trip. All middle days follow a very similar schedule, so a two-night trip has one middle day and longer trips repeat it. Day trips for TK–3rd grade follow a shorter single-day schedule. Your Pali team will finalize classes for each session with you.

First Day	Middle Day(s)	Last Day
11:00 AM Arrival & Introductions 12:30 PM Lunch 2:00 PM Afternoon Session 1 3:30 PM Break 3:45 PM Afternoon Session 2 5:15 PM End of Session 2 5:30 PM Dinner 6:30 PM Cabin Time 7:25 PM Line Up 7:30 PM Evening Session 9:00 PM Return to Cabins 10:00 PM Lights Out	7:00 AM Rise and Shine 8:00 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Morning Session 1 10:30 AM Break 10:45 AM Morning Session 2 12:15 PM End of Session 2 12:30 PM Lunch 1:15 PM Cabin Time 2:00 PM Afternoon Session 1 3:30 PM Break 3:45 PM Afternoon Session 2 5:15 PM End of Session 2 5:30 PM Dinner 6:30 PM Teacher Time 7:30 PM Evening Session 9:00 PM Return to Cabins 10:00 PM Lights Out	7:00 AM Rise and Shine 8:00 AM Breakfast & School Video 9:00 AM Morning Session 1 10:30 AM End of Morning Session 10:45 AM Load Buses 11:00 AM Departure to School

- **Group photo and camp store:** Pali will schedule a group photo and time for students to visit the camp store if requested.
- **Teacher Time:** This is the only time during the trip that school staff take on student supervision. Pali has several activities to choose from and can supply any materials needed.
- **Program hours:** A middle day runs from 7:00 AM Rise and Shine through the 7:30–9:00 PM Evening Session, well beyond the nine-hour ELO-P day.

Class menu

Classes are selected with your Pali team when you book. Examples by focus area:

Science & environment	Adventure & physical activity	Leadership & SEL
• Forest ecology • Astronomy • NGSS science modules • Lake and specimen study • Hands-on science labs	• High ropes course • Zipline • Climbing tower • Archery	• Team challenge • Navigation & orienteering • Campfire & reflection • Group debrief and awards • Student choice module

Browse the full class catalog at paliinstitute.com/program-category/prospective-schools

6. Proposal Timeline and Checklist

Planning timeline

Stage	What to do
Step 1: Discovery & dates	Confirm dates with Pali during a discovery call or by email. Pali sends a Site Reservation Agreement with your per-student price.
Step 2: Vendor setup	Request Pali's W-9, Certificate of Insurance and any district vendor application. Start this early; vendor approval can take several weeks.
Step 3: Internal review	Share the compliance crosswalk and budget worksheet with your business office. Confirm the funding year and how the contract will be encumbered.
Step 4: Approval	Submit the proposal. If your district requires board approval for overnight trips or contracts above a set amount, calendar the board date.
Step 5: Contract & deposit	Sign the Site Reservation Agreement and submit the deposit to secure your dates.
Step 6: Families & rosters	Send recruitment and permission materials. Submit your final roster with grade levels to Pali before the trip.
Step 7: Trip & close-out	Pali verifies attendance on arrival. Afterward, file your records for the annual ELO-P expenditure report.

Documents to attach to your proposal

- ☐ Pali Site Reservation Agreement with per-student pricing and dates
- ☐ Completed budget worksheet (Section 3)
- ☐ Compliance crosswalk (Section 2)
- ☐ Sample itinerary showing daily program hours (Section 5)
- ☐ NGSS crosswalk (request from Pali)
- ☐ Pali W-9 and Certificate of Insurance
- ☐ Accreditation information (WASC and AEE)

Records to keep after the trip

- ☐ Final roster with grade levels and verified attendance
- ☐ Signed Site Reservation Agreement, invoice and proof of payment
- ☐ Final itinerary with session times
- ☐ District calendar showing trip days as non-school days

Ready to start?

Schedule a discovery call: paliinstitute.com/contact

Call: (909) 939-0888

Tell us you are planning an ELO-P trip. We will confirm dates, send your Site Reservation Agreement and provide budget-proposal support for your fiscal team.