



Camp Learning Ridge

To help parents and children cope with the new challenges associated with scholastics in the new COVID environment, Collins Lake Ranch (CLR) is looking for ways that our experience and facilities can be utilized to improve the educational opportunities for Mora area families.

Many schools, including the Mora Independent School District, are grappling with ways to safely educate children in the midst of the COVID epidemic. Current plans are to offer either distance learning or a hybrid of in-school and distance learning. From a safety standpoint, this is a prudent strategy, but it also creates significant hardships for families. Many parents do not have the ability to be home with their children during the day and help with their educational needs. Other families lack the skills to support their children's computer-based learning. Others do not have the resources to provide internet connectivity necessary for remote learning.

CLR is located in Cleveland, NM. Its primary mission is to support adults and children with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities. As part of this mission, CLR has created campground facilities that are leased to various groups for overnight camp programs. Our current utilization of these facilities is down due the COVID restrictions and we think that they might be beneficial in helping our local kids as they return to school. In addition to bunk and bath houses, we have a large covered outdoor area, kitchen and dining areas, and a large yurt that could be used as a classroom during inclement weather.

Our vision is just beginning to take form, but the basic idea is to host a learning day-camp for Mora area children for the period August 13 – September 4. Children will work on their school assigned curriculum with assistance from volunteer parents and educators. In addition to working on the school-assigned lessons, there would be time for other enriched learning experiences and outdoor activities. Beyond that basic framework, we are looking for ideas from parents and educators for ways to make this basic vision successful.

There will be challenges for sure, but we're hopeful that our joint efforts will find solutions to any problems that might arise. The health and safety of all participants will be paramount and we will ensure that we meet or exceed any and all State guidelines. If this first three-week session is successful, we will look for ways to extend the program into the fall and beyond.

At this time, we are looking for parents, educators and anyone concerned about our children to step forward and offer your ideas and assistance. It would be best to start small, but that doesn't mean our dreams can't be large.

The initial dreamers for this project are Marcella Martinez, Glen Carlberg and Steve Smaby. The phone number at the Ranch is 575-387-5089. The Ranch email address is CollinsLakeRanch@gmail.com. If you are not familiar with the Ranch, you are invited to visit our website, www.CollinsLakeRanch.org