

BOARD OF EDUCATION PROPOSAL

Kenya 2027: Science, Conservation, & Cultural Immersion

Miss (Christina) Abbott
Science Department, Okemos High School

13-day student field program · June 2027

Meet the Trip Leader

9th

year teaching science

11

countries visited

3

continents

Experience traveling abroad

People to People Sports Ambassador (Austria, 2007); study abroad in Indonesia and Malaysia; educator EduTour to Finland. Also Canada, Mexico, Cayman Islands, Scotland, Ireland, Italy and Japan.

Leading students

- Science Olympiad Head Coach
- Organized single day field-trips
- Club Advisor for Love For Our Elders
- Lead 8th grade class trip to Washington DC in Spring 2019

Safety background

CPR / First Aid trained; former lifeguard and swim coach. Registers with the U.S. Embassy (STEP) on every international trip.





How This Opportunity Came About

SEPTEMBER 2026

Began exploring a Kenya science program with Red Road Tours, a company with a Michigan office whose owner I know through a group working to connect Uganda and the U.S.

RELATED DISTRICT TIE

Our developing partnership with Nyaka Village School through TEEEM, a school founded by an Okemos parent, grew from the same network.

NOVEMBER 2026

Learned of the Board's three-quote policy and requested quotes from World Expeditions and WorldStrides.

TRANSPARENCY & SAFEGUARDS

- Personal connection disclosed to district administration.
- No financial interest in Red Road Tours.
- Red Road offers a complimentary trip-leader spot, a common practice among student travel companies; leader benefits will be compared across all vendors.
- Vendor selected by the trip leader using a published rubric; completed comparison and share with administration and the board upon request.

Why Kenya: 21 NGSS Standards in the Field

Earth Science

HS-ESS1-5 Plate tectonics: Rift Valley

HS-ESS2-1 Landforms: Longonot, Hell's Gate

HS-ESS2-3 Earth's interior heat: geothermal

HS-ESS2-5 Water shapes land: gorge, falls

HS-ESS3-1 Resources & climate: coffee farms

HS-ESS3-2 Energy solutions: geothermal plant

HS-ESS3-3 Resource management: rangeland

HS-ESS3-4 Reducing impact: cookstoves

Biology & Ecology

HS-LS2-1 Carrying capacity: rangeland

HS-LS2-2 Biodiversity: wildlife transects

HS-LS2-6 Ecosystem stability

HS-LS2-7 Human-wildlife solutions

HS-LS2-8 Group behavior: elephants, chimps

HS-LS4-4 Adaptation: savanna wildlife

HS-LS4-5 Changing environments: rhinos

HS-LS4-6 Biodiversity solutions: simulation

Physical Science & Engineering

HS-PS3-3 Energy conversion: geothermal turbines

HS-PS3-4 Thermal energy transfer: cookstoves

HS-ETS1-1 Define a global challenge: energy access

HS-ETS1-2 Break down a problem: service project

HS-ETS1-3 Weigh trade-offs: energy & conservation

Global Citizenship

Service Project with St. Mary's Secondary School students

Community Meal and market day with local families

Livelihoods Coffee farmers and agricultural economy

Coexistence Communities living alongside wildlife

Who, When, and How Students Are Supported



Who

Any Okemos High School student enrolled for the 2026–27 school year.



When

June 2027, 13 days / 12 nights. Exact dates set once the vendor and group air are confirmed.



Supervision

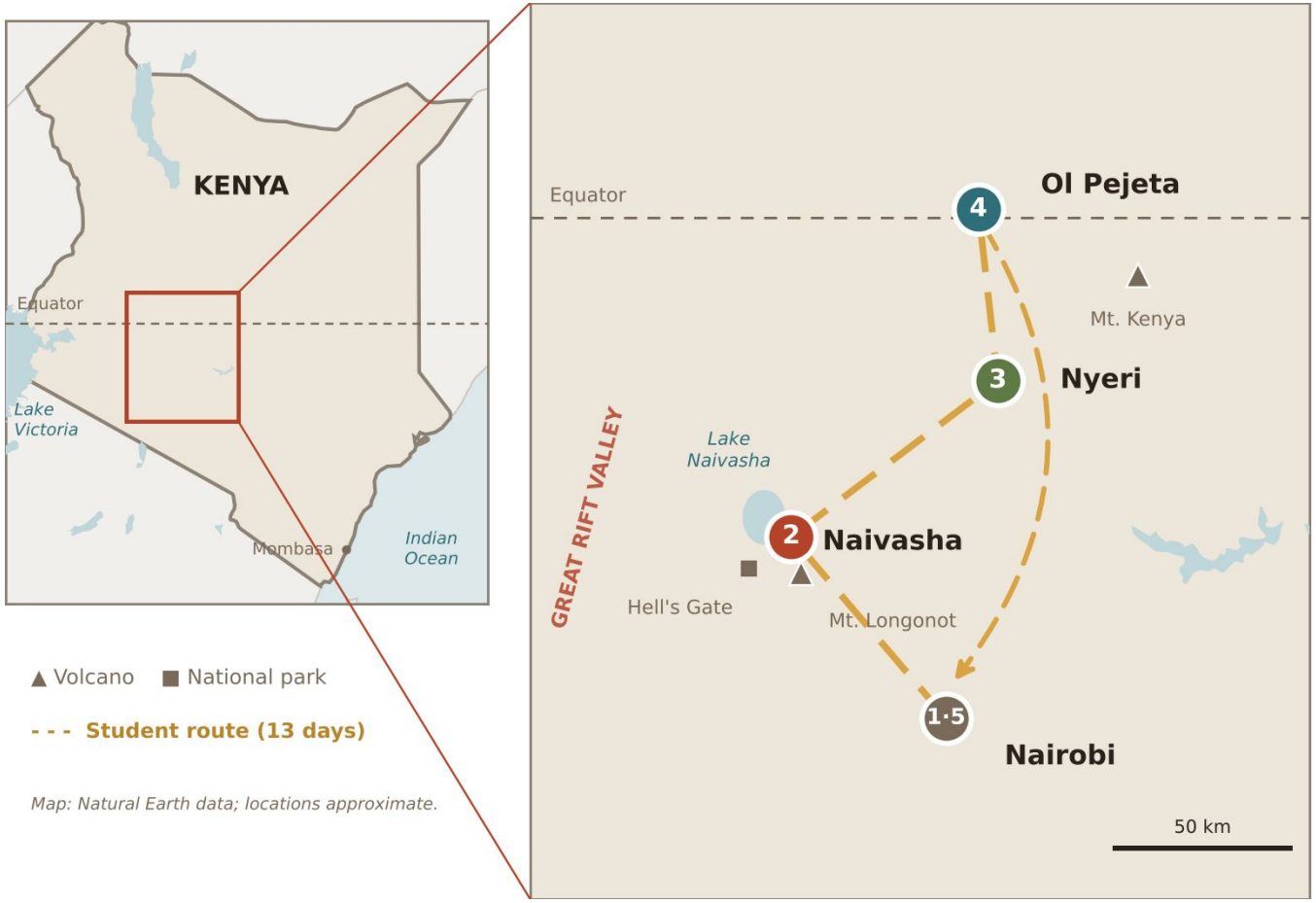
Adult chaperones plus the travel company's guides throughout.



In-country support

Required of every vendor quoted: in-country guides, 24-hour support, and all ground transportation.

The Route: Four Regions in Thirteen Days



1

DAYS 1 & 12–13

Nairobi

Arrival; Sheldrick elephant orphanage, Giraffe Centre, departure

2

DAYS 2–4

Lake Naivasha

Great Rift Valley: Mt. Longonot, Hell's Gate, geothermal energy

3

DAYS 5–7

Nyeri

Coffee country, St. Mary's school project, family day

4

DAYS 8–11

Ol Pejeta

Conservation field research on the Equator; chimpanzee sanctuary

Days 2–4: The Great Rift Valley

Lake Naivasha
Boat excursion to observe birdlife and hippos; Joy and George Adamson's conservation legacy at Elsamere.

Mt. Longonot
Crater-rim hike for firsthand volcanic geology; evening conservation discussion.

Hell's Gate & geothermal
Cycle the national park and gorge, then visit geothermal facilities powering Kenya's renewable grid.







Days 5–7: Coffee Country & Community





Farm-to-cup coffee

Cultivation, processing, climate impacts, and farmer livelihoods near Nyeri.

St. Mary's school project

With St. Mary's Secondary School students: a shared service project such as classroom renovation or fuel-efficient cookstoves.

A day with local families

Help prepare and share a traditional Kenyan meal, then a guided market visit.

"Rather than experiencing Kenya primarily as tourists, students will learn in the field alongside conservation professionals, Kenyan students, local families, farmers, community members, and guides."

From the Red Road Tours program proposal

Days 8–11: Conservation in Action at Ol Pejeta

01 **Training**

Orientation from conservancy staff on wildlife monitoring, rangeland assessment and data-collection tools.

02 **Field research**

Two days alongside researchers: rangeland health assessments and wildlife transects.

03 **Coexistence**

Human–wildlife conflict mitigation, including a community Eye-Cow painting demonstration to deter predators.

04 **Wildlife**

Game drives for rhinos, lions and elephants; Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary rescue and rehabilitation.



Optional Extension: Mombasa and the Kenyan Coast



+5

days, before or after the main program

+$750

per person (Red Road quote)

Included

- Four nights in a 3-star hotel, with meals
- First-class train between Nairobi and Mombasa, plus station transfers
- Full-day marine park excursion with snorkeling
- Fort Jesus and Mombasa Old Town

Science tie-in: coral reef ecology and marine conservation extend the biodiversity work from Ol Pejeta (HS-LS2-2, HS-LS2-7).

Leading Option: Red Road Tours

Pending the two outstanding quotes, Red Road's proposal is the strongest fit for our science program today.



Science-first design

Field research with Ol Pejeta scientists, volcano geology and geothermal energy are built into the core itinerary, not add-ons.



Students working with students

A collaborative project with St. Mary's Secondary School and a day with local families.



Inclusive land price

Lodging, all meals after arrival, ground transport, guides, and park and activity fees are in the $2,500.



Michigan connection, local experts

U.S. office in Tipton, Michigan; East African team; operating since 2010, with 24-hour in-country support.

What a Family Would Actually Pay (Red Road Tours Quote)

Cost item	Amount	Status
Red Road land package	$2,500	Quoted
Kenya eTA (entry authorization)	$30	Gov't fee
Kenya inbound health insurance (required since Oct 2026)	Up to $44	Gov't fee
Round-trip airfare, Michigan to Nairobi	~$1,500	Est. (Hopper, Nov 2026)
Guide & driver gratuities	TBD	TBD
Passport, vaccinations, spending money	Varies	Family dependent
Optional: 5-day Mombasa extension	+$750	Quoted (optional)

ESTIMATED

~$4,074

per student

For context, two-week mid-range Kenya lodge tours start around $2,800 land-only.

Questions?

Thank you for considering this opportunity for our students!

-Miss Abbott

Science Department, Okemos High School

