



February 1, 2024

Dear Saltwater Studies Parents and Families,

As you prepare for next school year, I would like to make you aware of two upcoming changes that Saltwater Studies will be implementing going forward. After careful prayer and consideration, I have concluded that these changes are necessary to enable Saltwater Studies to continue offering a high quality of education for homeschool students. Since both changes could have financial implications, I am letting you know in advance of open registration on March 1st so that you can make plans that are best for your family.

Program Cost Changes. Since Saltwater Studies began nearly thirteen years ago, it has been my desire to offer a high standard of education at a rate that is affordable for homeschool families. As a result, I have cautiously increased my prices throughout the years while also seeking to coordinate them with expanded services or resources. However, being so cautious with my price increases has left Saltwater Studies in a precarious position considering inflation over the past three years. This is particularly applicable to the Florida's Marine Life class series for elementary school students. As I evaluated Saltwater Studies' financial status, I realized that what I have charged for the elementary school program in the past does not cover the associated costs. To cover the shortfall, Saltwater Studies has been seeking alternative ways to generate income in a manner that is not sustainable in the long term.

After spending a significant amount of time this year giving Saltwater Studies' financial structure a hard look, seeking professional and personal counsel, and praying over the cost for the Florida's Marine Life class series, I have realized that this year I must significantly increase the price to position Saltwater Studies positively for the future. This cost increase will allow Saltwater Studies to:

- Maintain a small class size with twelve (12) or less students seeking to create a positive learning environment, increase the likelihood of students spotting marine life and also encourage a high level of interaction with the instructor,
- Continue offering students a hard copy of the supplemental curriculum workbook (a \$45 value),
- Continue availability of lesson-specific podcasts,
- Continue securing high quality visual aids to enhance class discussion (on average each class incorporates specimens and other visual aids with a total value between \$500 to \$1,500), and
- Expand existing curriculum resources.

So that you can plan accordingly, the cost for the Florida's Marine Life class series for the 2024/2025 school year will be \$550 per student. I am also implementing a smaller cost increase for the middle and high school Florida's Marine Animals field courses. Fees for these field courses during the 2024/2025 school year will be \$1,050 per student, paid in two installments. To assist with the affordability of all its programs, Saltwater Studies will also be continuing the following:

- Offering a 10% early registration discount for those who register for any full-year program before June 1,
- Maintaining its accreditation as a direct pay provider with Step Up for Students (SUFS) for both PEP and FES-UA so that recipients' scholarship accounts can be directly debited for Saltwater Studies' programs, and
- Continuing to provide administrative support to those seeking reimbursement from SUFS in the form of receipts that meet SUFS review criteria.

Sibling Policy. Currently, Saltwater Studies has adopted the policy that siblings may accompany registered students if they do not participate in class and do not become a distraction. However, as Saltwater Studies has grown, an increased number of siblings of all ages have been accompanying registered students, in some cases making the classes quite large. After careful consideration, I have made the difficult decision that siblings of any age will no longer be allowed to accompany registered students to Saltwater Studies events beginning September 1, 2024. All students who are at a Saltwater Studies class or field trip must be within the age range for the applicable class or field trip and be registered to attend. The intent of this policy is to provide the best possible learning experience for registered participants by maintaining a small class or event size. As a reminder, the age range for Saltwater Studies classes and field trips are as follows:

- Florida's Marine Life Class Series: ages 5 to 12 years
- Florida's Marine Animals Field Course (Middle School): at least 10 years of age and completing middle school science work at home
- Florida's Marine Animals Field Course (High School): at least 14 years of age and completing high school science work at home
- Field Trips: ages 3 and up; must be of sufficient capability and temperament to complete the associated activity such as snorkeling, kayaking, walking etc.

Please also note that a parent or guardian must continue to accompany and supervise children registered for the Florida's Marine Life class series for safety reasons as it is not a drop off program. The Florida's Marine Animals field courses for middle and high schoolers are drop off programs although parents may accompany registered students if they desire to do so.

Ultimately, I am passionate about what I do. I love my students and their families, and I want to continue offering a high quality of education and expanding available learning resources for a long time in the future. These changes will set me on the right path to accomplish this goal.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Christa Jewett, Founder
Saltwater Studies, Inc.