

School Field Trip Information

Guided and Self-Guided Letter

We are looking forward to your upcoming field trip to The Morton Arboretum! Please review the details below in order to prepare for your trip. The time frame below is an estimate, however it is important that all of these details be considered and reviewed prior to your trip. **Please note: This letter should be shared with the contact teacher who scheduled the field trip.**

3-4 weeks before your trip:

- Confirm the program details on your confirmation and statement of fees. Review these details to ensure they reflect your goals for the trip. Specifically take note of the following details:
 - Review the number of adults listed as coming in order to ensure that you will have **3 adults per group of 20 students.**
 - Review the program start time, end time and program selection.
 - Review the number of students, buses, cars, etc. to ensure these details are accurate.
 - Communicate any special needs or accommodations for any specific students, if needed (e.g. mobility concerns, etc.)
- Schedule your transportation.
 - Inform your bus drivers to bring a lunch. **They are responsible for staying at The Arboretum with the bus at all times.**
 - Confirm your program times and routes with your bus company to ensure that you will be able to arrive on time and leave with time to get back to school.
- Payment for your trip must be received 21 days prior to your program. We reserve the right to cancel any program if payment is not received 21 days prior to the program date.
- Give final totals of students and adults with the payment for your program. There are no refunds for absent students and we want to ensure that we have adequate staff to cover the number of students you will be bringing.
- Coordinate chaperones for your student groups.
 - For optimal learning and safety **we arrange for groups of 20 students with 3 chaperones.**
 - Guided Programs: Each group of 1-20 students will be led by an Education Program Guide. The number of Education Program Guides assigned to your program, is listed on your confirmation. Therefore in order to create your field trip groups evenly divide your students into groups based on the number of guides that are assigned to your program.

The week of your trip:

- Copy and distribute the enclosed “Chaperone Letter” for each of the chaperones/teachers who will be attending your trip. They will want to know what to bring, and how to prepare for their day at The Arboretum. This letter is also available online in the registration information for your grade level (bottom of the webpage).
- Prepare your students and chaperones for the field trip.
 - **DRESS:** Dress appropriately for the weather and off trail hiking. This includes: closed-toed shoes, long pants, and long sleeves. Sunscreen, bug spray and hats may be appropriate. When rainy weather is predicted, please encourage students to bring ponchos, rain jackets and boots. Umbrellas are NOT recommended as they can create a safety hazard while walking.
 - **BRING:** Students and Chaperones should bring their lunch and water. There is not a lunch facility or vending machines on the grounds near the location for school programs to purchase food.
 - **PREPARE:** We have added a number of vocabulary resources and activities to our website to help you maximize your field trip experiences. Check these out at: <http://www.mortonarb.org/learn-experience/school-groups>
 - **ORGANIZE:** Students into groups based on the number of guides assigned to your program and assign teachers and chaperones to each group.

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The day of your trip:

- Bring your Confirmation. All teachers and separate drivers should have a copy of the confirmation. This is your admission and designates your program location to the front gatehouse attendant.
- Lunch and Washrooms.
 - Since you are participating in both a guided and self-guided program, you will eat lunch in the location of your AFTERNOON program.
 - Please give your group time to have lunch, use the restrooms and break into groups needed to participate in the guided program at 11:45.
 - If you are participating in a guided program in the afternoon, your lunch will be at the Thornhill Picnic Area near Parking Lot 21. Please note: seating is limited - your group may be seated on a tarp or blanket to enjoy a picnic lunch.
 - If you are participating in a self-guided program in the Children's Garden in the afternoon, your lunch will be in the Children's Garden or at Meadow Lake Picnic Area. Seating for lunch in both of these locations is on a first come, first serve basis.
 - Afternoon programs will begin promptly at 11:45 - Restrooms are located at the Thornhill Picnic Area, Children's Garden and Visitor Center. Locations out in the field may have port-a-potties with hand-washing stations.
- Logistics:
 - Plan to arrive 15 minutes early. Guided programs begin at 9:45 AM and 11:45 PM. Students should be organized into their groups with chaperones to meet their program guides. Allow 15-20 minutes to commute from the Gatehouse (or P1) to the West Side Parking Lot 21 (P21) where school programs begin.

Self-Guided Program Details

- West Side Self-Guided Backpacks (must be reserved in advance). This includes our Joy Path Backpacks and Tree Id Backpacks:
 - Program Location for these backpacks is Parking Lot 21 on the West Side of the Arboretum.
 - Backpacks will be available for pick up after 9:30 AM
 - Backpacks are designed for groups of **20** students.
 - Backpacks can be picked up from a saw-horse at the Thornhill Annex driveway.
 - Each group of 1-20 students must have **3** chaperones that are expected to stay with their group the entire time.
 - The contact teacher is responsible for ensuring that items are returned in good condition at the end of the visit.
 - Please return the backpacks to the Thornhill Annex saw-horse, before departing.
 - Lunch and Logistics:
 - For groups participating in the Joy Path/Tree Id backpack program, lunch will be scheduled at the Thornhill Picnic Area (unless otherwise specified). Please note: Seating is limited. You may be asked to enjoy your picnic lunch on a tarp or blanket.
- Children's Garden Self-Guided information (with and without backpacks must be reserved ahead of time)
 - Groups coming to the Children's Garden should park in Parking Lot 1 (P1). This is the main lot near the Visitor's Center.
Backpacks are designed for groups of **10** students. (2 back packs are assigned per group of 20 students).
 - Backpacks can be picked up at the entrance to the Children's Garden.
 - The Children's Garden opens at 9:30 AM daily.

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- Each group of 1-20 students must have **3** chaperones that are expected to stay with their group the entire time.
- The contact teacher is responsible for ensuring that items from the backpack are returned in good condition at the end of the visit.
- Please return the backpacks to the entrance of the Children's Garden before departing.
- Lunch and Logistics:
 - There is no reserved space for lunch. Picnic tables and the picnic lawn are available on a first come, first serve basis. Groups may wish to bring a tarp/blanket to eat their lunch picnic style on the grass areas. Groups of 30 or more students are expected to eat lunch at the Meadow Lake Picnic Area.
 - It is recommended that you bring a bin, laundry basket, or box to hold your lunches in. There is no place to store lunches, but it may ease transport from the bus to the Children's Garden or Meadow Lake Picnic Area.

Photography Consent

Please Note: The school program registration process serves as consent for the photography of students and their parent/guardians unless otherwise noted during the online registration process or communicated separately to the registrar office. Groups will not be identified by school name or grade level and these photos may be used by The Morton Arboretum for publication and promotional materials.

Cancellation Policy

- Programs will run as scheduled to be outdoors during seasonal weather - rain, snow and cold. Please dress accordingly.
- **There are no refunds for cancellations or changes in headcount made fewer than 21 days prior to the program date or for absent students and chaperones on the program date.**
- If weather turns severe during your guided program (lightening, thunder, or tornado warnings), the program may be moved indoors and the guided groups will be given a modified indoor program. The Children's Garden will close in the event of severe weather. The Children's Garden will reopen 30 minutes after the storm has moved out of the area.

If you think your program may be cancelled, please contact our Registrar Office at (630) 719-2468 (between 9am and 4pm Monday-Friday) for the status of your program.