

Teacher Orientation Packet

Thank you very much for your work in education and for bringing you students to Conner Prairie! Your adventure is about to begin! Please look through this document before your visit. It contains the following pre-visit materials designed to help you prepare for your field trip:

- Teacher Field Trip Checklist
- Essential Information
- Links to Important Forms and Materials

Covid-19: The safety of our visitors, staff and animals is very important to Conner Prairie. In accordance with this and following local requirements:

- Masks are mandatory inside of buildings, bathrooms, admission check-in, and where social distancing isn't possible.
- Hand sanitizer will be located throughout the grounds.
- Weather/Emergencies - In the event of bad weather or an emergency that would require guests to otherwise move indoors - all guests and staff will be instructed to shelter in vehicles.
- Our Welcome Center and Conner Prairie Tram will not operate at this time.
- Due to the on-going situation, some elements of our outdoor experience areas will be closed or adapted.
- Please note: these plans are subject to change based on CDC guidance.

NEW for this season!

Making the most of your Prairietown experience: We are excited to have you take part in a new interpretive themes we have introduced in Prairietown. Our staff portraying characters will be outside looking for opportunities to interact with visitors. If you enter one of the buildings that are open in Prairietown and do not see a staff person, there are still valuable opportunities to immerse yourself in history. Have your group observe the space, taking special notice of the items you see. Study these items to learn more about the past and compare it to the present. Create your own role-play experiences and bring history to life! We hope you enjoy the new opportunities for students, teachers and chaperones to become part of living history!

Important Information for Teachers

CONNER PRAIRIE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

The board, executives, staff and volunteers of Conner Prairie firmly believe that its mission is expansive – that the past we share encompasses all communities and cultures, and that the individualized experiences we provide are for all people. We believe this mission compels us to create and maintain a culture that values everyone by actively challenging and responding to bias, harassment, and discrimination. Therefore, we will embrace, model, and lead ongoing diversity and inclusion efforts that respect and welcome all regardless of age, citizenship, ethnicity, gender identity, marital status, nationality, physical, mental and learning ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

As indicated in the above statement, Conner Prairie is committed to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. As part of this commitment, we hire interpretive staff with disabilities. At times, these staff members may offer an activity station designed to give students the opportunity to learn more about that disability. Some staff members with disabilities also portray an historic character with a disability. We will not have someone portray a character with a disability if they do not actually have that disability.

We thought it important to inform you of this due to an incident that occurred at Conner Prairie in the past. One of our staff members, who is blind, was harassed as he portrayed a blind character during one of the tour experiences. A group of students, with their chaperone standing by, were physically aggressive to this individual as though they didn't believe he was actually blind; they were trying to get him to "come out of character." Obviously, this caused our staff person much distress. As one part of our response to this situation we decided to communicate with educators in the hopes of avoiding future such behaviors.

If one of our staff members with a disability is working on a day you are visiting, we hope you use that experience to start conversations with students that support your efforts to develop compassionate and caring perspectives regarding inclusion. We also welcome your suggestions on how we can further support such efforts.

Teacher Field Trip Checklist

Prior to Your Visit:

- Review this packet.
- Send home permission slips and notes to parents.
- Sign up for lunch time through Signup Genius. This will be sent to you a few weeks before your trip.
- Recruit adult chaperones (At least one for every 10 students in grades 2 and above. At least one for every 5 students in kindergarten through grade 1.)
- Make copies of the **Chaperone Information Sheet** and fill it out with student lists, teacher goals, and other information.
- Make copies of the [School Tour Map](#) to give to chaperones.
- Create (or have students create) school name tags for each adult and student to wear that have the school name and teacher name on them.
- Review guidelines and goals with your students.
- Remind students what to wear for their visit. Conner Prairie operates in all kinds of weather.
- Arrange payment so it can be made with one check, credit card, or purchase order.
- Visit connerprairie.org for additional information.

On the Morning of your Visit:

- Give maps, field trip guides, and chaperone information sheet to chaperones.
- Hand out school name tags to everyone.
- Pack lunch boxes or coolers for easy transportation and storage.
- Review directions with the bus driver(s).
- Obtain final counts of students, chaperones, and teachers/school staff.

Upon Arrival:

- Instruct everyone to remain on the bus, yourself included, until the school tour coordinator, or other staff member, greets you.
- Once you get off the bus, proceed immediately through the gates to regroup and organize at your group's assigned number, which will be given to you upon arrival.

During Your Visit:

- Bring payment (if not prepaid) and invoice sheet (provided by a school tour coordinator upon check-in) to the Guest Service Office in the Welcome Center any time during your visit.

Essential Information

Lunch and Departure Information Needed

A few weeks before your scheduled tour date, our School Programs Coordinator will send you a link through Signup Genius. This will be used to gather the following information.

- Your lunch-time choice and location
- Your planned departure time
- A day-of, on-site emergency contact phone number
- If you are planning on visiting the gift shop

School Name Tags Required

All adults and students are required to wear a school name tag with the school name and teacher name on it. (Students names are not required). It will expedite check-in if everyone is wearing their school name tag when you arrive at Conner Prairie.

Arrival/Check-in Information

Upon arrival at Conner Prairie, make the first right and follow the drive to the School Check-in location which is marked by a large yellow School Tour banner. Pull up along the curb and remain on the bus until greeted by a school tour staff member.

The coordinator will give the lead teacher an invoice sheet. At some point during your visit, please fill this sheet out with your final, accurate head count, then bring it and your payment (if not prepaid) to Guest Services near the Ticket Desk in the Welcome Center. Guest Services staff will process the payment and can provide refunds in the event of overpayment. They can also book your visit for next year. (In order to speed up the check-in process, the coordinator who checks you in does not handle payments or refunds.) PLEASE NOTE: Any adults (except Conner Prairie members) who pay individually at the ticket desk will be charged regular general admission.

Once students have been instructed to exit the buses, please have them quickly go straight through the gates and organize groups **inside** the gates at your group's assigned number. (This number will be told to you upon arrival.) With buses and other vehicles moving around near the sidewalk, we need students away from that area as quickly as possible.

Lunches can be taken to your assigned pavilion and placed under your school's number. (This number will be told to you upon arrival.)

Fees/Payments

Tours may be prepaid or paid on the date of your visit. Payments may be made at Guest Services anytime during your visit. Payment in one transaction with check, credit card, or purchase order is required. Please make checks payable to Conner Prairie. Please refer to the confirmation form and cover letter we sent you for specific fee/payment information. If you will be flying in the balloon, you may wait to pay for your general school tour and balloon flight at the Guest Services office until after everyone in your groups has finished the flight.

Behavior Guidelines

We ask that you and the chaperones be actively involved in the supervision of students. We need their (and your) active participation to ensure students are acting in a respectful and safe manner and to enhance student learning. Please emphasize the following behavior guidelines to your students and chaperones:

- For safety, students of all ages, grades K-12, must be accompanied by a teacher or chaperone at all times. Students should not run ahead or go exploring on their own.
- For safety, school groups should not begin activities involving animals, sharp tools, or fire until directed to do so by a Conner Prairie staff person.
- Be kind and respectful to each other, to other visitors, to our staff, to our animals, and to our buildings and grounds.

What to Wear

Conner Prairie operates in all kinds of weather, so everyone should dress accordingly. Comfortable shoes are important. Remember sun protection - bring sunscreen and brimmed hats. Teachable moment: On rainy days use the opportunity to discuss how weather could affect such things as fire building and traveling.

Accessibility

Conner Prairie strives to provide an educational and fun experience for guests of all abilities. If your group has anyone with special needs, please contact Guest Services for guidance on planning your visit.

First Aid/ Lost Child/ Weather Warnings

Conner Prairie staff can communicate via two-way radio or phone. We have a first aid responder on site during regular open hours. If there is a first aid need or a lost child, notify any Conner Prairie staff person. We do keep track of weather conditions. In the event of a severe weather warning, staff will be instructed to advise our guests on where to seek shelter.

Photography

Still or video photography is welcomed at Conner Prairie for personal, non-commercial use only. No tripods, please. **During your visit, you may be photographed for promotional purposes by Conner Prairie staff. If you, or anyone in your group, does not wish to be photographed, please request a special sticker during check-in or at Guest Services in the Welcome Center.**

Standards

Conner Prairie experiences relate to the Indiana State and Common Core academic standards for all grade levels and multiple subject areas.

Directions

Conner Prairie is located six miles northeast of Indianapolis at 13400 Allisonville Road. It is also six miles from I-69, exit 205. After turning into the Conner Prairie entrance, make the first right and drive to the School Tour Check-in location marked by a yellow School Tour banner. Please have everyone remain on the bus until a Conner Prairie staff member greets you. After we have provided a brief orientation on the bus and the bus is unloaded, staff can provide instructions on where to park. Bus drivers are welcome to enter free of charge.

For More Information

If you have any questions about your visit, please do not hesitate to contact us at 317.776.6000 or 800.966.1836. Pre-visit materials for our experience areas, classroom resources, and information about the different experience areas are available on our website, www.connerprairie.org.