CIVICS: THE POWER OF PLACE FIELD TRIP
Information for Teachers, Chaperones, and Parents

What is the Power of Place Field Trip?
Students are invited to discover their stories and their role in history through the power of place: learning the history of where they are to better understand who they are. Together we will delve into civic action, participation, and what it means to be a good ancestor through the lens of place. Students are encouraged to study the actions of local ancestors past, analyze the impact they have on us in this present moment, and establish ways in which we can become civic-minded ancestors for future generations.

To be able to assess and improve the well-being of our communities, we will utilize the Learning For Justice Social Justice Framework focused on identity, diversity, justice, and action. Students will have the opportunity to engage in identity work, explore the grounds of Conner Prairie to better understand the true history of the place and the people who once called it home, and use their observations to inspire and support their activism. Conner Prairie staff members act as facilitators, asking open-ended questions to encourage students to observe closely, follow their curiosities, and lean into difficult, honest conversations.

Beliefs from Conner Prairie’s Learning Philosophy:
• Learning is unique and personal. All learners have the right to construct their own knowledge through interactions with the people and environment around them.
• Everyone deserves time, space, and freedom to notice, question, feel, and settle into the process of learning, removing the pressure of expected outcomes or final products.
• We provide limitless opportunities that honor and celebrate their individual needs, passions, interests, dreams, and fears.
• History is at the core of what we do, because we must understand where we’ve been in order to understand where we are and look forward to where we might go.
• History lives in our stories, and stories are enhanced through art, science, imagination, and nature.

How can you support learning during this field trip experience?
• Ask open-ended questions such as: What do you notice? What’s the same/different? What is new and interesting for you? What are you wondering? How did you know that? What do you suppose would happen if…?
• Try to avoid naming what is being observed. Use phrases that encourage elaboration on what the student is noticing, thinking, feeling, and observing. What do you notice? What does it remind you of?
• Let the students guide transitions to the next observation. Rather than saying “Are you ready to move on?” or “Do you want to try this now?”, encourage students to move at their own pace and let curiosity be their guide. This gives children the opportunity to sink into their own discovery and develop their sense of self.

Civics Education is good for us!
While there’s a lot of uncertainty and anxiety about the future of our communities, our democracy, the Earth’s climate, etc., one thing we are absolutely certain of is that our youth are the future. There are many benefits for civics education at any age, but especially for middle school students. Developing skills for effective citizenship helps to combat these anxieties by creating lasting change. Additionally, civics education helps to form and shape identity, connect and heal communities, and contribute to creating a more just and equitable society. For more information please contact Zoe Morgan, Curriculum Specialist at Conner Prairie, at morgan@connerprairie.org.
ACADEMIC STANDARDS

**6.C.13** Explain the role citizens have in making decisions and rules within the community, state, and nation.

**6.C.14** Examine ways by which citizens may effectively voice opinions, monitor government, and bring about change in government, including voting and participation in the election process.

**6.C.15** Use a variety of informational resources to identify and evaluate contemporary issues that involve civic responsibility, individual rights, and the common good.

**6.C.16** Recognize and explain the relationship between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in the United States.

**8.C.5** Explain the importance of responsible participation by citizens in voluntary civil organizations to bring about social reform.

**8.C.7** Explain how citizens can monitor and influence the development and implementation of public policies at local, state, and national levels of government.