



Field Trip Planning Guide

Great Lakes
AQUARIUM

Before Your Visit

Your Confirmation Email

Please check your confirmation email to be sure that the information and dates are correct. This letter can be used as an invoice for purchase orders. Our staff use the details included to plan for your arrival. To make changes please call (218) 740-2000 or send us an email at fieldtrips@glaquarium.org

Field Trip Planning

Minnesota and Wisconsin teachers are always admitted free to the Aquarium. You are welcome to visit prior to your trip to preview exhibits, talk to our staff and borrow pre-lesson materials or kits. Visit our website for curriculum links and class descriptions.

Chaperones

Chaperones are a vital part of your students' experience at the Aquarium; they must be at least 18 years of age. We require 1 chaperone per 5 students for grades K-8 and 1 chaperone per 10 students for grades 9-12. Please brief chaperones on expectations and responsibilities prior to your visit. Each student must be assigned to a teacher or chaperone in order to explore aquarium exhibits. You receive one free chaperone admission per five students.

Arrival Procedures

Teachers should check in at the ticketing counter prior to bringing students into the building. Groups are scheduled to arrive at the Aquarium at a specific time. This ensures that your students and chaperones have the time and space to settle into your visit without overlapping other group arrivals. If you arrive prior to or after your planned arrival time, you may be asked to wait on the bus or outside.

Your Schedule

If you are taking a class or eating lunch during your visit, you have also been provided with a schedule that details who should be where and when. Please share this schedule with students and chaperones prior to your visit. Transition time between events has been considered in making this schedule for you. Please be sure to set a departure meeting time for your group.

Lunch

You are welcome to bring bag lunches. Your group will receive a bin to store coats, backpacks, and lunches upon arrival. Food must be eaten in designated areas only. Indoor lunch space is limited (picnic-style seating in the lobby). Please inquire about lunch space prior to your arrival. Abundant space is available for picnics in the park surrounding the Aquarium. Please dispose of trash properly, and do not feed the gulls. Snacks and beverages are available for purchase in the gift shop. There are many restaurants both fast food and sit-down within walking distance.

When You Arrive

Directions

353 Harbor Drive, Duluth, MN 55802

From the South (Twin Cities area)

From I-35 North take exit 256B (5th Avenue West). At the lights turn right on Harbor Drive. The Aquarium is 2 blocks ahead on your right.

From the North East (North Shore area)

Take Highway 61 to London Road (Highway 61 turns into London Road as you enter Duluth). At 26th Avenue East take I-35 South to exit 256B. Keep right to 5th Avenue West. At 5th Avenue West/Harbor Drive lights turn left. The Aquarium is 3 blocks ahead on your right.

From the East (Wisconsin)

Take Highway 53 North to I-35 North. Take exit 256B (5th Avenue West). At the lights turn right on Harbor Drive. The Aquarium is 2 blocks ahead on your right.

From the North West (Iron Range cities)

Follow signs for Highway 53 South to I-35 North. Take Northbound I-35 to exit 256B (5th Avenue West). At the light, turn right on Harbor Drive. The Aquarium is 2 blocks ahead on your right.

Parking

Vehicle parking is included free of charge with your admission. Chaperones driving themselves must request a parking pass at the ticketing desk or from the Aquarium Educator. Busses must park in the lower back corner of the parking lot. If the lot is busy, Aquarium staff may ask the bus driver to park in the Bayfront Parking lot, just west of the Aquarium parking lot.

Arrival Procedures

Prior to entering the Aquarium, please note how many students, school staff, and chaperones are present.

We ask that **one teacher enter the building** prior to letting the students into the Aquarium.

An Aquarium Educator will confirm the following:

- Final attendance numbers (students, teachers, and chaperones) and payment
- Departure time
- Gift Shop visitation (will your group be visiting the gift shop?)
- Dive in Deeper class timing, if applicable

After your group is checked in, we will invite students into the building and ask them to sit in front of the water wall in the lobby.

Labeled coat and lunchbox bins will be available in the lobby for your group's items.

Finally, your group will be welcomed by an Aquarium Educator with a brief orientation and review of behavior expectations before beginning your adventure.

Payment

Group payments are required. Individual payments will not be accepted. If students or chaperones are paying individually, the group leader must collect payments prior to arriving at the ticketing desk. We can also send an invoice after your visit.

Restrooms

Restrooms are located on the main level near the Art Gallery and on the second level past the Discovery Center.

Behavior Expectations

It is important that everyone is on the same page about what is expected of them on the field trip. We ask that you review and enforce the following expectations during your visit. They help ensure that both animals and guests have a good time.

Be Safe

Stay with your group. Wherever you go today in the Aquarium you must be with your group and an adult. No students should be alone.

The escalator only goes up. There are three ways to get from the main level to the 2nd level of the aquarium. You may use the escalator, elevator, or stairs. The escalator only goes up, and any students that try to go down the escalator will be asked to sit with a chaperone or teacher in the lobby for the rest of their stay.

Use walking feet. The concrete floors can be slippery when wet!

Be Kind

Touch fish in the touchpool only. There are two touchpools on the second floor that rotate open times, and one touch pool on the first floor that is open 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Look for Aquarium Staff at each touchpool for instructions.

Take a fish-friendly photograph. You are welcome to take pictures, but please turn your flash off.

Be Curious

Ask questions. See if you can answer your questions by reading signs, interacting with exhibits, or finding an Aquarium staff member. Bring home your new knowledge to your family!

Gift Shop

Your group is welcome to visit the gift shop during your visit. Students can only enter with a chaperone or teacher. Try to limit the number of groups in the shop at a time. We recommend groups aim to visit the gift shop earlier in their visit rather than the very end. This will help your group depart on time.

Consequences

Groups that are unable to meet these expectations will be asked to leave.

Remember

Aquarium staff throughout the building and at the ticketing booth are here to help!

Final Checklist

Six Weeks Before Your Trip

Confirm transportation.

Distribute maps, directions, and parking information to bus drivers and chaperone drivers.

If coming with other teachers, meet to solidify learning goals and activities.

Two Weeks Before Your Trip

Finalize any class decisions and numbers with Aquarium staff (fieldtrips@glaquarium.org).

Confirm chaperones. We require a 1 chaperone per 5 students for grades K-8 and 1 chaperone per 10 students for grades 9-12. Provide them with the chaperone handout and an overview of learning goals or activities.

Facilitate pre-visit activities with your students.

One Week Before Your Trip

Collect permission slips from students.

Gather paperwork and make arrangements for payment. Request purchase order from district or main office if necessary.

Assign students to chaperone groups.

Make copies of exploration activities, if using.

Day of Your Trip

Inform students and chaperones of group assignments.

Review class and lunch plans, emergency procedures, and behavior expectations.

Select a group meeting place and departure time.

Prepare a final head count of students, chaperones, teachers, and bus drivers for use in payment processing.

Be sure to bring the appropriate payment for the group (cash, check, credit, or purchase order). Alternatively, let Aquarium staff know if you prefer and invoice and where it should be sent.

Prepare to have a great time!

Questions or concerns?

Contact our Learning Team at any time at fieldtrips@glaquarium.org or (218) 740-2000. We work with groups of all sizes and compositions year-round. Our goal is to help you have a great visit. Please feel free to ask us anything!

For Your Chaperones

Your Group Information

Arrival Time: _____

Class Time: _____

Departure Time: _____

Lunch Time: _____



Student Names:
