



Free Dominion Energy School Programs Field Trip Logistics

Arrival

The Aquarium opens at 9:00 am and closes at 5:00 pm. We ask that you arrive at least 30 minutes before your program start time. This allows time for restroom breaks and group orientation before entering the building. Please tell Jaime what time you will be arriving if it is different than stated in your email.

Parking

Parking for buses is free and conveniently located behind the Aquarium Wharf Parking Garage in the bus lane. For directions go to <https://scaquarium.org/directions-parking> The drop off area for students and chaperones is using the sidewalk next to the bus lane. For the safety of your students, please do not use Concord St. for drop off. Please remind bus drivers to not idle for longer than 5 min (decreases air pollution). Restrooms are located in the garage or available in the Aquarium.

Program Location

October-December 2023: Programs will be taught in a large covered tent in front of the Aquarium in Liberty Square (due to renovations and upgrades in the Aquarium). Upon arrival with your group, please walk to the Aquarium building for your orientation (please use the restrooms in the garage). From there, educators will help you to the tent for your program. If your students are in the Aquarium touring and it's time for your program, please walk outside and wait near the tent for an educator to help you.

January-May 2024: Programs will be taught inside the Aquarium in the classrooms. Please meet your educator in the Great Hall on the benches.

Lunches

Schools may eat lunch outside the Aquarium in Liberty Square. During inclement weather, the Aquarium recommends using the arrival area of the Parking Garage or the covered pavilions in front of the Fort Sumter Museum. Please do not bring your lunches into the Aquarium. We recommend that you leave them on your bus until your lunch time. We do not have a space to store lunches in the Aquarium.

Chaperones and Extra Chaperone Payment

For free Dominion Energy School Programs, the Aquarium allows one free parent *chaperone* per 6 students. Certified SC teachers always receive free admission and should not be included in the parent chaperone count (please put teacher aids, special needs assistants, nurses and administrators in the teacher count number). Chaperone count is for parents. For example, if you have 60 students in your group, you will receive 10 free chaperones **plus** the teachers with the group. If you want to bring more chaperones than the 1:6 ratio allows, the cost is \$15 each.

Payment arrangements for the extra parent chaperones must be made in one payment (school check, credit), **one month** before your trip. Parents cannot pay individually at the \$15 group rate. If a parent pays individually the day of the trip, the cost will be full price at the gate. It's also possible there will be no tickets for the parent to purchase due to timed ticketing. Any credits left on an account after your field trip will be applied to future trips within 12 months. After 12 months, unused credits will be considered a donation to the Aquarium. Refunds are not available. Please be accurate with your number counts.

Your final chaperone number should be given to Jaime Thom at least 1 month before your trip. Please note that our payment policy is to ensure quick entry for groups as well as an easy experience for teachers the day of the trip. Please share this information with all teachers and parent chaperones in order to make things run smoothly for all. If you have any questions, please call Jaime Thom.

Parent chaperones are not allowed into the classrooms during the classroom program. Instead, parents can enjoy the Aquarium and then meet the group as they exit the program. Please make sure to share the program schedule with all chaperones so they know what to expect. Teachers and Teachers Aids are required to be in the classroom program. Teachers/Teacher Aids are responsible for helping with behavior, bathroom breaks and student issues.

Members

Membership privileges do not qualify during a group visit. Communicating this to your chaperones will often prevent unnecessary delays on the day of your visit.

Gift Shop

The Aquarium has a gift shop and students are allowed into the shop in small groups with the supervision of a teacher or chaperone. We will ask the students to place their purchases aside during their classroom program in order to diminish distractions.

Workshops (School Program Teacher Workshops)

All teachers must attend a 3 hour workshop session when winning a free School Program. During the workshop, teachers learn about the Aquarium's online curriculum and get comfortable with the logistics of their upcoming fieldtrip. Teachers will receive 3 hours credit, which can be used toward continuing education, for attending and will be placed on the "Attended" list for the future. Teachers only have to attend the workshop once in their teaching career, the first year they win. Failure to complete a workshop will result in the cancellation of your program. If you have questions, contact Jaime Thom.

Fieldtrip Check List

Before your visit:

- Confirm your trip by emailing Jaime Thom (you should have already done this step).
- Fill out the "School Programs Contract" as you are planning your trip and email or fax it back to Jaime Thom no later than 1 month before your trip.

- On the “School Programs Contract”, indicate your number count for students, teachers and parents. This is due 1 month before your trip.
- Arrange payment for extra parent chaperones no later than 1 month before your trip (may not apply).
- Prepare your students by completing the 3 recommended pre-visit activities (more info below under ‘Online Curriculum’).
- To get the most out of your visit, prepare something for your students when they are not participating in the classroom program. The Aquarium has scavenger hunts and answer keys available online if you would like to print them off before you come (more info below).
- Print bus directions for your travels (see above link under ‘Parking’).
- Have these phone numbers handy so we can communicate the day of your trip.
 - **(843) 579-8562** – Text or call! This will come straight to Jaime’s cell phone
 - (843) 577-FISH(3474) – If you can’t reach Jaime on her cell, call this number for the Aquarium
- Email or call Jaime Thom if you have any questions. She is available to help make your experience educational, organized and fun!

During your visit:

- When you arrive, unload in the bus lane next to the garage and use the garage restrooms.
- Walk toward the Aquarium. Guest Services will greet you in front of the Aquarium for a brief orientation before leading you into the building or to your program.
- The most important thing is to be on time for your classroom program/s. Please pay close attention to when your program/s start. Any question or issue with your designated program time/s please contact Jaime Thom in advance.
- When you are not in the classroom, you are more than welcome to enjoy the Aquarium exhibits on your self-guided tour.
- Groups can come and go from the Aquarium building as long as chaperones are wearing their chaperone sticker (given at orientation when you arrive).

After your visit:

- We would love to know how your trip went. If you would like, have your students send letters, pictures or drawings of your Aquarium experience to the address below.
- We also have a great post-visit activity online for each grade level (see below list).

Teacher Resources

The Aquarium has several resources available online for teachers. For example:

- **Online Curriculum** – The Aquarium provides a standards-based, award winning online curriculum activities for teachers to use in their classroom. The activities provide a fun and engaging way to connect your field trip to lessons being taught in your classroom. The easy-to-use curriculum can be found at <http://curriculum.scaquarium.org/> Each activity will include listed lesson objectives, science standards addressed, background information, assessments, cross curricular extensions, printable color pictures, datasheets and a list of resources.

We ask that you complete 3 pre-visit activities before your field trip to enhance student learning. Here are the 3 suggested pre-visit activities for each program:

K-2 (Habitats)

Living Things
Water Wonders
Habitat Hop

3-4 (Life Cycles & Adaptations)

Communities and Ecosystems
Life Cycles
Adaptations

5 (Food Chains and Adaptations)

Communities and Ecosystems
Food Chains and Webs
Adaptations

6-8 (Watersheds)

What are Watersheds?
Topography
Water Quality

6-12 (Earth History)

Geologic Time Scale
Rock Cycle and Layers
Fossil Gap

9-12 (Human Impacts: Sea Turtles)

A Sea Turtle's Life
Sea Turtle Diets
Sea Turtle Strandings

9-12 (Human Impacts: Dolphins)

Marine Mammals
Diets and Dangers
Dolphin Strandings

These are the activities recommended post-visit:

K-2 (Habitats)

Helping Habitats
Litter Free Starts with Me

3-5 (Life Cycles/Food Chains & Adaptations)

Helping Communities
Litter Free Community

6-8 (Watersheds)

Helping Watersheds
Litter Free Land to Sea

6-12 (Earth History)

SC Rocks and Fossils

9-12 (Human Impacts: Sea Turtles)

South Carolina Aquarium Sea Turtles

9-12 (Human Impacts: Dolphins)

Marine Mammal Debate

- **Scavenger Hunts** – Keep your students actively involved throughout their self-guided tour by giving them grade specific scavenger hunts. Scavenger hunts and answer keys can be printed online at <https://scaquarium.org/onsiteactivities/>

Dominion Energy School Program

For more information about your free standards-based school program please visit our website at <https://scaquarium.org/schoolprograms/> You will find program descriptions, standards addressed during your program and tips on preparing for your visit. If you have any other questions, be sure to contact Jaime Thom.

Jaime Thom

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