



IOWA'S WILDEST ADVENTURE

Field Trip Guide

Blank Park Zoo
Education Department
515-974-2588

Thank you for making the Blank Park Zoo a part of your educational experience. The following information will help you prepare for your field trip to the Zoo. They are necessary to make your visit more enjoyable and safe!

Preparation Checklist:

Before you arrive.

- Review your barcoded confirmation letter for the correct contact information and date.** To make changes, please follow the directions included in your confirmation email. Blank Park Zoo staff is also available by phone at 515-974-2588.
- Arrange for 1 teacher or adult chaperone for every 10 students.** Blank Park Zoo requires a chaperone to student ratio of 1:10. Chaperones must accompany their students at all times. No students are allowed in the gift shop without an adult. Classrooms with special needs may qualify for special pricing, please call 515-974-2588.
- Wristbands will be given during the months of April and May for adult chaperones.** During other months, adult chaperones will receive a hand stamp at admissions once your group has been paid for. Students will not receive wristbands or hand stamps but will be required to be with a stamped adult to re-enter the Zoo at any time.
- Review the following Zoo safety rules with your students.** Please note that groups not respecting Zoo rules will be immediately escorted from Zoo grounds by Zoo staff.
 - Students are to remain with chaperones at all times.
 - Respect the animals. This means being quiet and not attempting to touch, tease, feed, or disrupt normal animal behavior.
 - Walk; don't run, on designated paths only.
 - Leave no trace. Keep the Zoo looking the way you found it, or better! Use the appropriate recycling and trash receptacles.
 - Leave native animals, flowers and plants for other visitors to enjoy.
 - Be courteous and respectful to other visitors.
 - Remain seated at all times on any ride.
- Choose a meeting place.** Complete and distribute the included itinerary to each adult teacher/chaperone to help coordinate your visit. A separate list is included for bus drivers.
- Look for Zoo staff and volunteers throughout your day to provide educational highlights.** A schedule of free programs can be found on the backside of the Zoo map. Another resource to help focus your students' learning (Tracks to the Zoo) was attached to your confirmation email. Add a 'Show and Tell' education program to your visit for \$45, call 515-974-2588 for more details or to add a 'Show and Tell' today ('Show and Tell' programs must be scheduled at least 2 weeks in advance)
- Send in group lunch & souvenir bag orders 2 weeks prior to visit.** If you wish to order group lunches in advance to avoid the lines, we require orders to be submitted 2 weeks prior to your visit. We appreciate souvenir bag orders placed in advance.

When you arrive.

- Know the time.** Blank Park Zoo is open every day, October-April: 10:00am—4:00pm and May-September: 9:00am—5:00pm.
- Due to the large volume of Field Trips during May, bus queues are managed by Zoo staff Monday through Friday.** Unless otherwise directed by Zoo staff, students will remain on the bus until a Zoo staff member greets you. The lead teacher (who is responsible for payment) should exit the bus and proceed to the “Member Admissions” door. The Zoo staff member will give students and remaining chaperones fun information about the zoo and go over zoo rules. We hope this will add to the educational value of the trip and eliminate some of the stress associated with the admissions process.
- Know the exact, separate count of students, teachers and chaperones.** The lead teacher will enter Zoo Admissions with your numbers and printed barcoded confirmation letter and pay for your group with one transaction. If your admission numbers have changed, adjustments will be made at this time. If you are paying via purchase order you must have a copy of your PO at check in.
- Unload buses and enter the Zoo quickly!** During May, Zoo staff will instruct which gate you are to enter. All other months please proceed through Zoo Admissions as quickly as possible. Please note that buses are not allowed to park in the East and West Parking Lots. Once unloaded, buses must proceed to park in School Bus Parking in the gravel overflow lot.
- No outside food or beverages (except water) are allowed inside the Zoo.** Blank Park Zoo does not provide lunch storage. If you are eating your lunch at the Zoo, please leave your lunches on your bus until it is time to eat. Picnic areas are available between our East and West Parking Lots and overlooking the Bactrian camel exhibit. If you are purchasing group meals from our Safari Grill (available April-September) these orders must be placed at least two weeks prior to your visit.

When you depart.

- Buses may unload and load in the Bus Loading Zone.** Buses are not allowed to park in the East and West Parking Lots. Once unloaded buses must proceed to park in School Bus Parking in the gravel overflow lot. When your group is ready to leave, have your school bus meet you at the Bus Loading Zone.
- Ensure everyone is accounted for!**

To cancel or reschedule.

- Please call 515-974-2588 or email kscross@blankparkzoo.org.** We will work with you to find another date or cancel your field trip.

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Complete and distribute to all teachers and chaperones prior to entering the Zoo.



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Date of Field Trip: _____

Names of students in your chaperoned group (no more than ten):

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

School Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Teacher Contact: _____

Cell Number: _____

Bus Driver: _____

Cell Number: _____

Bus District: _____

Bus Number: _____

Education Program Time (if applicable): _____

Location (told upon arrival): _____

Lunch Time: _____

Meeting Place: _____

Departure Time: _____

Meeting Place: _____

In case of an emergency, please find the nearest Zoo staff or go to the nearest gift shop or concession stand. You may also call the Zoo switchboard at 515-285-4722, option 2.

Bus Driver Tips:

Before you arrive.

- Review your confirmation for the correct **contact information, date and time.**
- Exchange the below information** with your teacher contact.

When you arrive.

- Unload at the **Bus Loading Zone** in the **East Parking Lot**, unless otherwise directed by Zoo staff.
- Pull up as far as you can.
- Keep everyone on the bus and wait for the lead teacher to return after checking in.
- Ensure everyone in your group knows the departure time.
- The Zoo may be busy, so unload quickly.
- Know the plan for **Lunchtime**. Lunches must be store on the bus so ensure someone can get to them.
- After everyone unloads, park in School Bus Parking in the gravel overflow lot. **Buses are not allowed to park in the East and West Parking Lots. Buses must park in School Bus Parking in the gravel overflow lot.**
- Zoo admission is free** for all bus drivers with identification.

When you depart.

- When your group is ready to leave, please pick up your group in the Bus Loading Zone in the East Parking Lot.
- When everyone is accounted for**, exit through the Zoo Main Entrance.

Date of Field Trip: _____

School Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Teacher Contact: _____

Cell Number: _____

Education Program Time (if applicable): _____

Location (told upon arrival): _____

Lunch Time: _____

Meeting Place: _____

Departure Time: _____

Meeting Place: _____

In case of an emergency, please find the nearest Zoo staff or go to the nearest gift shop or concession stand. You may also call the Zoo switchboard at 515-285-4722, option 2.

Arriving at Blank Park Zoo

Upon arrival, please have buses drop students off in the Bus Loading Zone. Once students are unloaded have buses proceed to overflow parking. **Buses may not park in the East and West Parking lots. Once buses are unloaded, buses must proceed to park in the gravel overflow parking lot.**

The lead teacher must proceed to Zoo Admissions to check in your group and pay for your visit. Please print and bring with you the barcoded confirmation letter you received after making your reservation.

Maps of Blank Park Zoo's exhibits are available in the Zoo lobby, gift shop, stroller stand and Kids' Kingdom Snack Shack.

