



Nature's Classroom 2019

Date of Trip: October 28-31

Site: Charlton, MA

Dear 5th grade students and families,

This packet contains information about the upcoming 5th grade field trip to Nature's Classroom. Please read everything carefully and fill out all of the forms. Payment for the trip is due in full October 10th and can be made in 2 payments to MySchoolBucks, the first payment is due September 20th. All permission and medical forms are due to your student's homeroom teacher by September 20th.

The students will be hearing lots and lots about the trip in our classroom and upcoming meetings about the trip during the school day. The packing list is attached to this email and is a very good resource for getting prepared for the trip. Absolutely no phones or electronics are allowed on the trip. All food is covered in the price of the trip and is prepared by chefs at Nature's Classroom, food and drinks should not be sent. The facility is strictly allergen free. If there are any dietary concerns, please reach out to your student's homeroom teacher. Most dietary plans can be accommodated.

The trip is a great way for students and teachers to connect with each other, the community, and nature. It creates lasting memories and fun. We hope to see all of the 5th grade students attend the trip.

Please direct all questions and emails about the trip to your student's homeroom teacher.

Sincerely,

The 5th Grade Team.

NATURE'S CLASSROOM PAYMENT INFORMATION 2019

Nature's Classroom will cost each student \$325 to attend. This payment may be made directly to Myschoolbucks. You may also pay with **Cash, Money Order, or Bank Check ONLY** (sent to the homeroom teacher). Absolutely no personal checks accepted. All permission forms are due on 9/20/2019.

*If you should need financial assistance fill out the financial assistance form on the FRCS website and submit this application asap to the business office.

Here is the link: <https://4.files.edl.io/1102/07/24/19/144627-17288c0-a247-45e1-b1ad-044a72034b7f.pdf>

Please use Myschoolbucks to pay for the trip. Use the link **MY SCHOOL BUCKS** below to pay the \$175 deposit no later than September 20th. The final payment of \$150 is due no later than October 10th. You may also pay in full if you wish.

Myschoolbucks® (MSB) as a secure online payment service, it provides a quick and easy way to add money directly to your student's account using a credit/debit card or electronic check. There is a fee charged by MSB when making payments to cover debit/credit/check processing fees. You can also view recent purchases, check account balances and setup low balance alerts.

Myschoolbucks provides:

- **Convenience** – Available 24/7 on the web or with the **Mobile App** for your smart phone!
- **Efficiency** – Make payments for all your children. Eliminate the need for your child to take money to school. Eliminate the possibility of losing payments in a backpack!
- **Control** – Set low balance alerts, view account activity, recurring/automatic payments & more!
- **Security** – Myschoolbucks adheres to the highest security standards, including PCI and CISP.

Enrollment is easy!

1. Go to www.Myschoolbucks.com and register for a free account.
2. You will receive a confirmation email with a link to activate your account.
3. Add your child(ren) using their school name and student ID.
4. Make a payment to your child(ren) accounts with your credit/debit card or electronic check.

OVERVIEW OF NATURE'S CLASSROOM

Nature's Classroom offers a unique educational experience to students and their teachers. The goal of the program is to create an educational community that integrates social development, student-driven exploration and interdisciplinary study. Students are under adult supervision at all times both during the day and at night. Small student to teacher ratios are maintained to promote personal growth and provide individualized attention to each student. The Nature's Classroom staff is comprised of professional staff with a wide variety of academic backgrounds and interests. Nature's Classroom encourages students to cooperate as a community, strengthen their self-concept and gain an appreciation of curiosity and learning. Working closely with your student's classroom teachers, Nature's Classroom develops a program that dovetails with the classroom curriculum and reinforces key concepts.

A typical day at Nature's Classroom features a morning *Field Group*, afternoon *Special Interest Classes*, and a *Large Group Activity* in the evening.

Field Group is generally the first activity of the day. Students are assigned by their classroom teachers to a field group; each field group is assigned to a single Nature's Classroom teacher. During field group, a strong emphasis is placed on working and learning as a team. Each day with their field group, students have the opportunity to explore in natural surroundings while studying important ecological concepts and their connection to the world and its life support systems. Students are encouraged to use critical thinking skills and work together to investigate a wide variety of natural phenomena and relationships.

Special Interest Classes occur primarily in the afternoon. Students have an opportunity to choose classes from a wide range of interests and disciplines. Nature's Classroom prides itself in presenting hands-on classes that are planned in conjunction with your student's classroom teachers. Classes are selected to reinforce and build upon your school's curriculum and explore the relationships between various academic disciplines. In order to provide students with the maximum opportunity for discovery and growth, a new selection of classes are available each day.

Large Group Activities and evening programs are selected by the classroom teachers to best suit the needs and goals of the students. With subjects ranging from science to leadership, traditional living to theatre, and everything in between, large group activities are a great way to create shared experiences for all Nature's Classroom participants.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided, as well as an evening snack at the close of each day. Meals provide an opportunity to interact with other members of the community and share personal triumphs and discoveries. The diversity of subject matter covered within field groups, classes and other activities encourages students and teachers alike to share their excitement and engage in meaningful conversation around the table. Medications and first aid are administered by an RN, EMT or other medical personnel who is always available. Lodging is dormitory styled.

Students return from Nature's Classroom with newfound interests, lasting memories, and a greater sense of independence. Relationships formed and strengthened among both students and their teachers carry over into the classroom and beyond. The real life experience, both social and academic, inspires an increased understanding and a deeper appreciation of community, education and curiosity. We look forward to providing your child with a unique opportunity to learn and play in a safe and supportive environment.

DEAR PARENTS,

Your child will soon have an opportunity to participate in a residential outdoor school program. This letter attempts to answer some of the questions parents usually ask. Please feel free to ask us about any other concerns you may have about the program. Outdoor environmental education uses the out-of-doors for learning experiences that cannot easily take place in the classroom. Students and teachers learning outdoor awareness in this extended classroom can use the experience to help in their understanding of the natural environment, their school subjects, and the way people live. The program includes activities such as examining life in lakes and swamps, investigating weather, Colonial and Native American skills, and confidence building group challenges. A variety of field walks, classes in all subjects, and evening activities insure an exciting, stimulating experience.

SUPERVISION AND STAFF: Students are supervised 24 hours a day. In addition to the classroom teachers and chaperones accompanying each visiting group, Nature's Classroom has a permanent staff residing on site consisting of a director, environmental teachers on 1:12 ratio, and a nurse, EMT or health staff person on call at all times.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: There is no requirement that students undergo a medical examination before attending Nature's Classroom. The program is physically intensive, however, and you may wish to consult your physician if there are any concerns that should be brought to the attention of the staff. Such guidance will assist them in planning the program of activities with the students. Please note any special health concerns on the Nature's Classroom medical forms. The forms must be completed before a student can attend. Health and safety are our most important objectives! A fully staffed and equipped hospital is less than 30 minutes away from all of our facilities. Every student is covered by insurance while attending the program.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT: A clothing and equipment checklist is furnished. Particular care should be taken in supplying ample footwear and pants, as students frequently participate in activities in wet areas. Clothes should be chosen for comfort and durability, rather than style. Please add or delete items appropriate for the season (gloves, hats, parkas, etc.)

FOOD AND LODGING: Meals are prepared by a permanent cooking staff and are served family style. Special dietary needs should be noted on the medical forms. Students, visiting teachers, and chaperones are lodged in winterized dormitories and cabins. Parents are welcome to visit any of our Environmental Education Centers and to view the facilities; such visits, however, should be made before or after your child's experience, preferably midweek. The physical facilities are always open, so a weekend visit might be possible. You must call the site and make an appointment with the Program Coordinator before coming.

TELEPHONE: The telephone is not available for the students' use, and parents are asked not to call students except in case of an emergency. The Nature's Classroom telephone number is 508-248-1470.

MAIL: Mail is most appreciated by students, but to be safe, allow 4 days for delivery. Mail posted midweek may not reach Nature's Classroom until Friday after the group has left (please make sure there is a return address in case we need to send it back). Please include the name of both the student and the school to assist delivery. Mail should be sent to Nature's Classroom, 73 Pumpkin Lane, Chariton, MA 01507.

Sample Basic Schedule

Monday

11:00 Arrival & Settling In
12:00 Lunch
Orientation
Field Experience
4:00 Special Interests Classes
5:30 Dinner
7:00 Quest
9:00 Quiet Sing

Wednesday

7:15 Good Morning!
8:00 Breakfast & Clean Up
9:30 All Day Ocean
Field Experience
(or same as Tuesday)
4:00 Special Interests Classes
5:30 Dinner and Free Time
7:00 Large Group Elective
9:00 Quiet Sing

Tuesday

7:15 Rise and Shine!
8:00 Breakfast & Clean Up
9:30 Field Experience
12:00 Lunch
Free Time
2:00 Special Interests Classes
4:00 Special Interests Classes
5:30 Dinner and Free Time
7:00 Night Experience
9:00 Quiet Sing

Thursday

7:15 Wake Up!!!
8:00 Breakfast & Clean Up
9:30 Field Experience
12:00 Lunch
Free Time
2:00 Predator/Prey
4:00 Special Interests Classes
5:30 Dinner and Free Time
7:00 Thursday Night Life
9:00 Quiet Sing

Friday

7:30 Luggage Out
8:00 Breakfast
Final Clean Up
Field Experience
Evaluation
12:00 Lunch
Departure



Sample of Special Interest Programming

The curriculum for **Nature's Classroom** contains over 500 hands-on science, math, humanities, and social studies lesson plans with follow-up activities for use in the schoolroom as well as references for further investigation.

4 P.M. MONDAY

SC	Double Bubble (Chemistry of Soap)
MA	Just Plane Fun (Flight and Aerodynamics)
MA	Incredible Edibles (Edible Plants)
MA	Geodome (Geodesic Dome Construction)
HM	Get Lost (Map and Compass, Orienting)
HM	Feed Your Face (Natural Cosmetics)
SS	The Oil Game (Sharing a Limited Resource)

2 P.M. TUESDAY

SC	Go with the Flow (Heart and Blood)
SC	Soccerball Dissection (Human Physiology)
MA	Egg Drop (Package Design)
MA	Go Fly a Kite (Wind, Atmosphere)
MA	Up and Away (Hot Air Balloons)
HM	On the Air (Radio Broadcast Writing)
SS	It's the Law (Criminal Justice)

4 P.M. WEDNESDAY

SC	Crystals (Chemistry)
SC	Compost It (Biology)
MA	Pollution Solution
MA	Oh Rats! (Dissection)
MA	Speed Boats (Stream Power)
HM	Woods Words (Poetry)
SS	Egg Babies (Responsibility)

4 P.M. TUESDAY

SC	Fruit Lab (Fruit Dissection)
SC	Rock-n-Roll (Geology)
MA	Weather or Not (Meteorology)
MA	Hang in There (Suspension Bridge)
HM	Yes Andi! (Drama)
SS	Don't Dis Professor X (Exploring Handicaps)
MA	Game Theory
HM	NC News (Newspaper)
SS	Sensory Walk
SS	Alpha/Beta (Cultural Differences)

4 P.M. THURSDAY

SC	Owl Pellets (Owl Study)
SC	Chemistry Magic
MA	Pond Probe (Ponds)
MA	Volcano
MA	Game Theory
HM	NC News (Newspaper)
SS	Sensory Walk
SS	Alpha/Beta (Cultural Differences)

The preceding is a **SAMPLE** outline of courses for a group size requiring seven of our instructors. The specific courses offered vary with the time of year, location, current **Nature's Classroom** instructors, and goals the visiting school wishes to achieve.

SC: Science MA: Math HM: Humanities SS: Social Studies



Nature's Classroom®

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NATURE'S CLASSROOM INSURANCE COVERAGE

Many schools have been requesting additional information about the Nature's Classroom insurance coverage. The following has been compiled to help ease the minds of parents, teachers, principals, etc. Keep in mind, also, that before a child receives outside medical treatment, his/her parents are notified. Nature's Classroom is insured in the following manner:

STUDENTS

\$2500 each accident/injury

\$ 750 each sickness

"Injury" means bodily injury to the child resulting directly and independently of all other causes in loss from accident occurring during the child's stay at Nature's Classroom.

"Sickness" means sickness or disease of a child which first manifests itself during the child's stay at Nature's Classroom.

The policy does not cover the following:

- pre-existing conditions. (For example: a child comes to Nature's Classroom with a cold; the cold worsens and medical attention is sought; payment would be the parent's responsibility.)
- intentional, self-inflicted injury.
- preventative medicines, vaccines, or medical examinations which are not necessary for the treatment of injury or sickness.
- repair, replacement, examinations for prescriptions or fitting of eyeglasses, contact lenses, or hearing aids.
- any dental work or treatment of natural teeth, cosmetic or plastic surgery not necessary for the repair or alleviation of injury.
- the repair or replacement of existing dentures, partial dentures, braces, bridges, or other artificial dental restoration.
- the repair or replacement of artificial limbs or orthopedic braces.

NOTE: This policy does not cover visiting teachers and other adult supervisors:

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT LIST FOR NATURE'S CLASSROOM

This list is for a five day program and dependent upon *seasonal weather*. Plan for everything!

---Notebook(s) and writing utensils

---Sunscreen

---Insect repellent (no aerosols please)

---"Day pack" or backpack

---Camera: preferably disposable

---Flashlight (optional)

---Book for reading at night

---Deck of playing cards (optional)

DO NOT SEND:

- Electronics: cell phones, i-pods, MP3 players, portable gaming systems, kindles, nooks, tablets, etc.

- Pocket knife, candy/gum/food

***Please do NOT buy new clothes or shoes for your child to wear at Nature's Classroom. Send old clothes that you do not mind your child getting dirty during outdoor activities.

***Please make sure that every personal item (shoes, camera, socks, etc.) are clearly labeled with your child's name. Sharpie everything!

***If your child loses any items at Nature's Classroom, contact the Program Coordinator immediately. NATURE'S CLASSROOM TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOST ITEMS.

---Water Bottle *** Super important!

---1 Sleeping bag or bedroll (sheets and blanket)

---1 Pillow and pillowcase

---5 Pairs of jeans/pants

---Multiple shirts (short and long sleeve)

---1 Sweatshirt/hoodie or sweater

---Pajamas

---1 Pair of slippers/flip-flops for cabin

---Shorts for cabin use only

---Many changes of underwear (for 5 days at least 8)

---Multiple pairs of socks (at least 2 per day)

---1 Warm jacket/coat

---Hat(s): warm hat and/or ball cap

---Gloves, scarf

---Shoes (2-3 Pairs): old sneakers, rain boots, well-broken-in hiking boots, etc.

---1 Raincoat or poncho

---Toiletries: soap (and container), shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, towels, washcloths

---Laundry bag or extra pillow case

---Pre-addressed stamped envelopes or postcards, paper and pens, etc. for writing home

