



Dear Educators,

Thank you for planning a field trip to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium - we are so excited to host your group! Please read and distribute the information below to all appropriate contacts *prior* to completing your school's required online registration at www.columbuszoo.org/school-trips.

This letter is for internal purposes *only* and serves as a formal quote to assist with planning. Online registration must be accurate and completed at least 48 hours in advance to qualify for the rates listed below. Information for the 2026-2027 academic year will be as follows:

DATES:

- ELIGIBLE VISIT DATES: **Monday, September 14th, 2026 – Thursday, May 20th, 2027**

RATES:

- Franklin County: \$6 per student/staff
- Non-Franklin County: \$8 per student/staff
- Columbus Zoo Members are FREE upon presentation of Membership at Parking Booth and Turnstiles
- Busses, school-marked vehicles, and bus drivers are FREE.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Visit in groups of 15 or more students and school staff
- Follow a state-certified curriculum
- Visiting Monday-Friday during eligible school group dates, entering before 3pm

	_____ # of Students (non-members)	x	\$6 / \$8	=	_____
Formal	_____ # of Staff (non-members)	x	\$6 / \$8	=	_____
Quote	_____ # of Members (students and staff only)	x	FREE	=	_____
Assistance	_____ # of Shelters	x	\$50	=	_____
	_____ # of Meal Vouchers	x	\$17.50	=	_____
			Total	=	_____

Please do not hesitate to reach out to schools@columbuszoo.org with any questions that you may have.

Kindest regards,

The Columbus Zoo Schools Team



NEED TO KNOW

<u>Payment Options</u>	• Credit cards and approved Purchase Orders are accepted online for registration. • The Columbus Zoo is cashless; there are several machines in park that allow guests to convert cash to a pre-paid debit card, at no cost. • Google Pay, Apple Pay, and Zoo gift cards are accepted at most locations in park. • We are unable to accept group payments in person and require advanced registration.
<u>Purchase Orders</u>	• A Purchase Order is a formal document provided by the school to the Columbus Zoo to promise payment at the time of invoicing. Provide a copy to schools@columbuszoo.org. • Request your PO for a larger amount than anticipated; your school will be invoiced <u>after</u> your visit based <i>only</i> on final headcount provided at check-in. • Total headcount of paying guests collected at check-in is final and cannot be modified. • Please include your school's preferred method of invoicing on your PO.
<u>Parents & Chaperones</u>	• Any guests accompanying a registered school group but arriving separately will be individually charged the school group rate at the gate upon arrival. • Parents and chaperones arriving separately cannot be included in online registration. • Current Zoo members accompanying a registered school group will enter directly through the turnstiles with photo ID as normal. • To avoid congestion at the gate, please designate a meeting location inside the Zoo. Parents and chaperones will be asked to enter the park prior to their school group's arrival.
<u>Meal Vouchers</u>	• Separate credit card payment or Purchase Order is required, addressed to "The SSA Group". Visit columbuszoo.org/form/group-events to request vouchers. • At least 2 weeks' advanced notice is required. Credit card payment must be made up front, and all payment is final. No refunds will be provided for unused meal vouchers.
<u>Registration</u>	• Registration opens month by month to allow schools to finalize plans. • Must be registered <i>at least</i> 48 hours in advance of visit date to qualify for rates. • School groups are not limited per day; if your preferred date falls within the eligible dates listed, it will be accepted. • Overestimate your group size during planning and registration. The cost of all unused tickets will be returned based on the final headcount collected at check-in.
<u>Zoo Members</u>	• Upon arrival, provide a list of member IDs (6-8 digits) of each student and school staff with current zoo memberships. Copies or photos of memberships are <i>not</i> required. • A primary named adult must be present to utilize guest spots; students visiting without a primary adult cannot bring guests on their Family Plus Membership.
<u>Shelters</u>	• Shelters are reserved by the day, and your group may drop off lunches to come and go throughout your visit. Please note, this area is not monitored by zoo staff. • Shelters accommodate 200-400 guests and are assigned upon arrival based on group size. Rentals September-March require advanced credit card or check payment in full.

<u>Arrival & Check-In</u>	• Entry instructions vary based on your visit date. Please refer to instructions provided to your email after registration. • Total headcount numbers collected at check-in are final.
<u>Hours of Operation</u>	• Park hours vary throughout the year. Prior to choosing a visit date, please verify park hours at www.columbuszoo.org/hours-and-rates. • All school groups must enter the park by 3pm. • School group rates are not eligible for October 6th or Wildlights hours. • Beginning November 19th, 2026, the Zoo opens at 12pm. Early admission not permitted.
<u>Emergency Contact Information</u>	• Registration should include the name, phone number, and email address of the <u>school staff member who will accompany the group</u>. • This information will be utilized in the event of an emergency and must be accurate. Please do not use indirect phone numbers (i.e. school's main line).
<u>Code of Conduct</u>	• Disrespectful behavior, such as vulgarity, loitering, intoxication, line jumping, theft, and all other actions that negatively impact our guests, staff, and animals will not be tolerated, and may result in ejection from the park without a refund. • The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium reserves the right to deny admission or cancel any membership if the bearer violates park safety and security rules.
<u>What to Expect?</u>	• Download the FREE Columbus Zoo App: www.columbuszoo.org/mobile-app • Park Map: www.columbuszoo.org/areas-zoo • View the Zoo's policies here: www.columbuszoo.org/zoo-policies - Bags and Coolers - Outside Food and Beverage - Photography and Videography
<u>Accessibility</u>	• Visit the zoo's Accessibility page at www.columbuszoo.org/accessibility for more information on: - Social Stories - Sensory Maps - Wheelchair and Scooter Rentals - Adult Changing Station - Sensory Bags - Tactical Experiences Map
<u>Cancelling and Rescheduling</u>	• School groups will not be penalized for cancelling and visits may be rescheduled to another eligible school group date or returned in full. • Please contact schools@columbuszoo.org with details and we'll take care of it! • If your school is part of the 50% Reduced Lunch Program and your registration requires any modifications, please contact schools@columbuszoo.org.