

KU Natural History Museum – School Programs FAQs

What school programs are available?

Public Education offers a variety of science programs for school groups. There are two kinds of programs:

- gallery activities that use select exhibits to investigate a particular topic
- hands-on workshops that are activity based and take place in our classroom

Our School Programs page has program descriptions, fees, connections to standards and other information. Education programs are 45 minutes. If booking multiple slots of the same program on the same day, each program is scheduled for an hour (45 minute program and 15 minutes needed to clean up and re-set material). If booking different programs on the same day, one hour would be scheduled between programs for switch over. If you have any questions about school programs, contact Public Education at 785.864.4173.

Do you offer anything for high school groups?

Several school programs are suitable for high school. They include *Quarks: Ups, Downs and the Universe*, *Cartoon Guide to Energy*, *Rock Clocks*, *DNA Discovery*, *Dinosaur Discovery* and *Walking with Dinosaurs*.

Also, several Discovery Guides and exhibit activities are suitable for high school and adults; these and other resources can be found under Educator Resources.

What do school programs cost?

Gallery activities are \$60 per program; workshops are \$5 per student. For workshops, one adult chaperone (including teachers) is free for every five students (paraprofessionals exempt); this is the maximum number of adults allowed in the program space. Please note: no additional adults or siblings are allowed in the program area.

How do I book a school program?

Bookings must be made at least three weeks in advance. We begin taking bookings in early August. Any program can be booked for any day Tuesday through Friday during the school year (dependent on instructor availability). Please note: if booking multiple slots of the same program on the same day, we schedule each program for an hour (45 minute program and 15 minutes required for clean up and to re-set between programs). If booking different programs on the same day, one hour would be scheduled between programs for switch over. We recommend calling early as many dates fill up several months in advance. Due to high demand we cannot hold dates.

Contact Public Education at 785.864.4173 to check availability of dates and to book your program. Please have the following information ready before you call:

- preferred visit date and alternative date(s)
- grade of students
- number of students and adult chaperones (1 adult for every 5 students maximum, including teachers); paraprofessional exempt
- school mailing information

Please let us know at the time of booking if you have any students with special needs. Feel free to contact us for more information, advice on popular programs or scheduling suggestions; typically large groups divide themselves into two or three groups and rotate between a workshop, gallery activity, self-guided tour of the galleries with Discovery Guides, or lunch.

Can you hold dates until I decide which one works best?

Due to high demand, we cannot save dates.

Is there a minimum and maximum number of participants for school programs?

A gallery activity can accommodate up to 25 people (students and adult chaperones), and requires a minimum of 15 participants. We limit gallery activities to a maximum of 25 people to ensure that the entire group can see the items we are discussing, facilitate effective movement through the galleries, and maintain adequate space for the movement of museum staff and other visitors through the space.

For school workshops, there is a 15 student minimum and a 30 student maximum (20 max for kindergarten); fee includes one adult chaperone (including teachers) for every five students. This is the maximum number of adults allowed; we limit the number of chaperones to ensure exits remain clear, avoid crowding and limit distractions.

Please note: only students on the field trip are allowed in program spaces; additional adults and parents with other children are welcome to explore the museum galleries during programs.

What is the difference between a gallery activity and school workshop?

Gallery activities take place in the gallery space and use select exhibits to investigate a topic. Gallery activities have a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 people (students and adults).

School workshops are hands-on activities that take place in our classroom. Workshops have a minimum of 15 students and a maximum of 30 students (20 max for kindergarten); with a 1 adult chaperone (including teachers) to every 5 students ratio (maximum).

Can I book multiple or different school programs on the same day?

Only one workshop can run at a time. However, a workshop and a gallery activity can run simultaneously (dependent on instructor availability). If you book multiple sessions of the same program, we schedule each program for an hour (45 minute program and 15 minutes required for clean up and to re-set between programs). If you want to book two different workshops on the same day, one hour would be scheduled between programs to switch over the classroom.

Who teaches your school programs?

School programs are developed and taught by our museum education professionals with science backgrounds and years of experience teaching in informal learning environments.

How do I pay for a school program?

Program fees are due the day of the program, and can be paid by check (to the KU Natural History Museum), credit card (MasterCard or Visa) or cash. Payment should be given directly to

the Public Education staff member that greets your group during check in. Receipts are available upon request.

Are there scholarships available for school programs?

We have limited scholarship funding available to cover the costs of fees for school programs. There may be additional scholarship funds to cover bus costs. Application forms are available for download online and can be mailed or faxed back to us. If you would like a copy of the scholarship application form mailed to you, please call 785.864.4173. Typically we consider scholarships for schools with a minimum of 50 percent of their students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program. Please note: programs cannot be scheduled prior to scholarship review.

Can your school programs come to my school?

Unfortunately, due to limited resources we do not offer our school programs at off-site locations.

Can I book a school program for a group with students across multiple grades?

Unfortunately, due to limited resources we are not able to offer programs specifically designed for multi-age student groups.

Can siblings accompany parent chaperones in school programs?

Only students on the field trip are allowed in the programming areas. Parents with other children are welcome to explore the museum galleries independently during scheduled programs.

What other resources are available to use during our museum visit?

Discovery Guides are available to explore the museum. For suggestions on how they can be used see the Discovery Guide Chaperone Guide. Answer keys are available at the Visitor Services desk. For a more in-depth independent exploration of the galleries, a series of exhibit activities suitable for upper elementary/middle school and above can be found under Educator Resources.

Where do we park?

Buses can load and unload in front of the museum. Bus parking is at the football stadium, lot #94. Cars may park in the Mississippi Street parking garage, one block north of the museum at 13th Street and Jayhawk Blvd., next to the Kansas Union. Information about parking fees and a campus map are available on the KU Parking website.

Where can we store lunches and eat?

Sack lunches can be stored near the main entrance, Visitor Services can direct you to the designated area (lunches should be consolidated into boxes or other storage containers). Consumption of food and drink in the museum is prohibited. Groups can eat lunch at the Kansas Memorial Union, next to the museum; to reserve space contact 785.864.4651 or eventservices@ku.edu. To arrange a picnic space in a Lawrence city park call 785.832.7923.

Are there special items we can purchase for students?

The museum gift shop, Fossilogics, has a wide selection of museum souvenirs, educational toys, games, books and more. Themed grab bags can be purchased for your group. Please call Fossilogics at 785.864.4450 to order or for more information.

If we are taking school programs, do we also have to make a contribution?

The museum has a requested contribution of \$4 for children and \$7 for adults, but does not charge admission. Typically, groups that book school programs as part of their visit do not make an additional museum contribution unless they are able to do so. Groups that do not book programs are encouraged to make a contribution as outlined above. Contributions can be made at the Visitor Services information desk at the main entrance of the museum. Payment can be cash, credit card or check (made out to the KU Natural History Museum). Visitor Services can provide receipts for contributions upon request.

Here is a list of frequently requested contact numbers:

Visitor Services/Gift Shop — 785.864.4450

Spencer Museum of Art (to arrange a visit) — 785.864.4710

Food Service, Kansas Memorial Union (to arrange space for lunch) — 785.864.4651 or
eventservices@ku.edu

Allen Fieldhouse — 785.864.7919

Booth Family Hall of Athletics (to arrange a visit for school groups) — 785.864.7966

DeBruce Center — 785.864.9750

Campus Tours — 785.864.3911

Prairie Park Nature Center — 785.832.7980