
2026

South Dakota's Largest Classroom Field Trip Guide



Where **FRIENDS** and **FAMILY** meet.



Dear Teacher:

Welcome to the South Dakota's Largest Classroom. This year's program will be held September 2 - September 4. The gates open at 7:00 AM and the education programs will begin at 9:30 AM and last until 2:30 PM. There are some programs scheduled after 2:30 PM so please feel free to stay as long as you wish. During your field trip, you and your students will have the opportunity to visit learning centers intended to educate, entertain, and encourage lifelong learning.

This field trip guide includes the basic information you need to plan your trip, as well as descriptions of many exhibits and "hands-on" experiences designed around agriculture, technology, and basic life skills for elementary school students.

Enjoy your trip to the South Dakota State Fair!

Sincerely,

Candi Briley

Candi Briley
SD State Fair Assistant Manager

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For more information:
Candi Briley
(605) 353-7354
candi.briley@state.sd.us

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Tickets

Admission to South Dakota's Largest Classroom is free for all teachers, chaperones, and students taking part in the education program. Teachers and students will receive wristbands for the day signed up to attend. The wristbands are different colors each day, so if you signed up for one day and decide to come the other day instead, your wristbands are not valid. You must contact Candi Briley at the State Fair Office to make schedule changes.

If you receive a **BLUE** wristband, you signed up for Wednesday. If you receive a **LIME GREEN** wristband, you signed up for Thursday. If you receive a **GREY** wristband, you signed up for Friday.

Check In

A State Fair staff member will greet you upon arrival at Gate 6. Schools can arrive anytime in the morning.

Please use Gate 6 to enter the grounds. If you would like to discuss entering a different gate, please contact Candi.

Schedule

Teachers can plan their own day out. Please refer to the provided planning sheet to plan your day.

Parking

Busses and cars will enter the grounds through Gate 6 located on the northwest side of the fairgrounds. Bus and car parking will be available at Gate 6 in a specified location. State Fair Security will assist you in parking. Parking is free.

Restrooms

Restrooms are clearly marked on the map. Special accommodations available upon request.

First-Aid Station/Security

The first-aid station and security office are marked on the map, and located on the west end of the grandstand.

Map

A map of the fairgrounds is included with this guide.

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Lunch

Lunch is sponsored by the SD Education Association, Dakota Provisions, Old Dutch, Country Hearth and Midwest Dairy Assoc. Everyone in attendance will receive a turkey sandwich, chips and milk or water. Lunch will begin to be served at 11:50 am by the NorthWestern Energy Freedom Stage. On Thursday, due to Salute to Veterans, please don't arrive earlier than 11:45 am.

Lunch is served until 12:30 pm.

Lost Children

Before leaving your school, children should be advised to find the nearest South Dakota State Fair security officer should they become lost.

All lost children will be taken to the Security Office (353-6644) located at the Grandstand.

Sensory-Friendly Experience

If your school is attending the event on Wednesday, please note that the Sensory-Friendly Experience program is also happening. Please be mindful that these participants may also be at your activities.

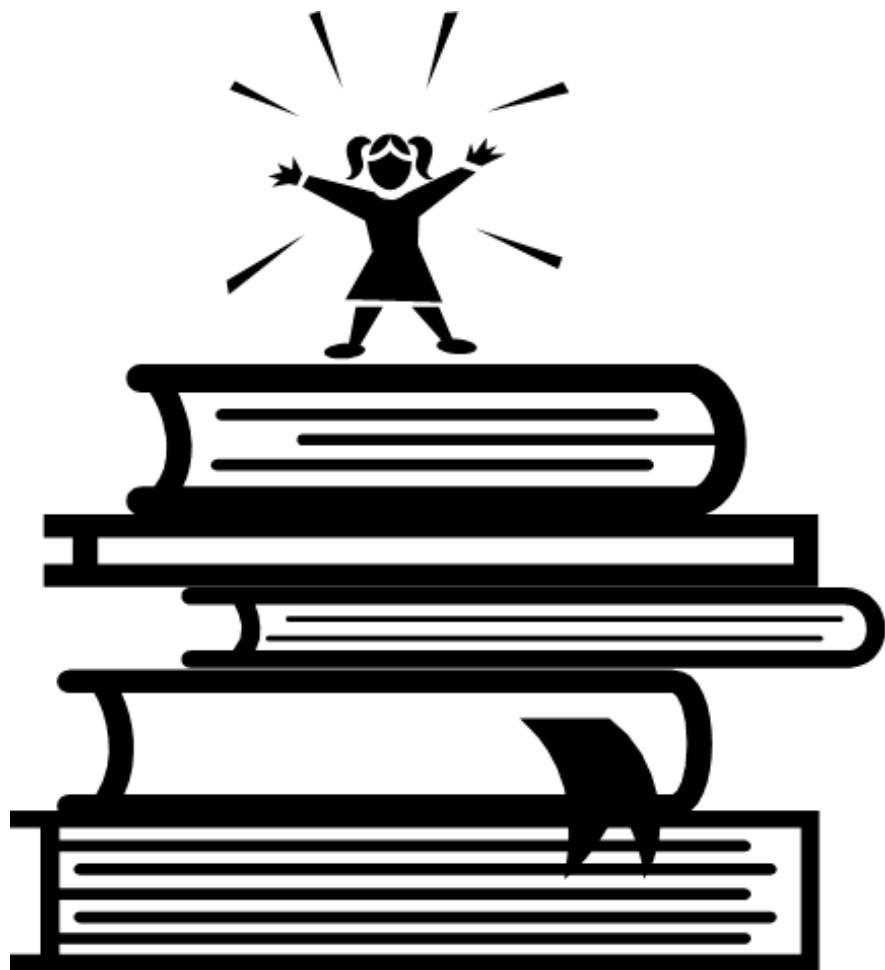


Field Trip Tips

Here are some helpful hints to make your field trip fun and easy:

1. To check-in, please unload bus and meet State Fair representative at Gate 6.
2. Have all teachers, chaperones, and students put on their wristbands before arriving at the South Dakota State Fair. This will help you get through the gate with ease and get to the fun faster!
3. If possible, encourage your students to wear a school t-shirt or the same color shirts for easier identification.
4. HAVE A GREAT TRIP! Please ask our staff members if you have any questions!

Learning Centers



Learning Centers

The SHED Activities

Come visit The SHED where you can see over 16 different breeds of sheep and learn all about sheep and wool. The Education Center will feature all sort of interactive displays and activities for all ages – with special events planned for each day! Try your luck at a scavenger hunt or take a picture showing a sheep. The SHED is located at the south end of Flag Avenue and is **open daily at 9:00 am**.



FFA Ag Adventure Center

Never been to a farm? Well that's okay because the FFA Ag Adventure Center will bring agriculture to life for visitors! This space brings the farm to them. Make this a “must see” location on your trip to the fair! The reinvented FFA Ag Adventure Center has areas dedicated to pigs, beef cattle, dairy cattle, chickens, soil & range conservation, wheat, soybeans, and corn. No matter what time you visit, there is sure to be an exciting event. At any given moment, you may witness a sow give birth, bottle feed a calf, or watch baby chickens hatch. There are many interactive activities like milking a cow and feeding pigs. There are additional special activities planned for each day – Visit often! **Open daily at 9:00 am**



Antique Tractors/Equipment

You won't want your students to miss the antique tractors and equipment display this year! Learn how to churn butter, make rope, and more! Located **west of Farm Bureau Dakotaland Stage**.

Learning Centers

Delta Dental Interactive Educational Booth

Come test your dental knowledge. Delta Dental of South Dakota will host an interactive educational booth inside the Arts & Education Building. Dental trivia games will be played and prizes will be awarded for the winners. **Wednesday and Thursday, 10am - 4pm.**

One Room School House

Kids can see how classrooms have changed. Check out the One Room School House **east of Dakotaland Museum.**

Touchstone Energy Interactive Tent

Step into South Dakota's Touchstone Energy interactive tent at the State Fair and experience fun, learning, and excitement for all ages! Watch as skilled linemen demonstrate pole climbing techniques. Explore a variety of electric scooter & electric bike and discover the latest in EV lawn mower and garden tools. Kids will love Safety Town, digging for treasures at the 811 booth, and testing their luck at our Plinko game for a chance to win prizes and an exclusive East River Electric Cooperative cookbook. Dive into the world of empowering efficiency and spark young imaginations with leading safety and kids' education along with our two mascots Willie Wiredhand and our Lineman. There's something for everyone under our tent — don't miss it! **Thursday only - opens at 9 am**



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 

Learning Centers

Pied Piper of Percussion

Get ready to Wiggle, Jiggle & Jam with Steve Gryb, “The Pied Piper of Percussion” all the way from Miami, Florida! Steve’s high-energy show, “The Rhythm is Going to Get You!”, invites kids and families to become part of the performance with hands-on instruments like tambourines, maracas, drums, and more for an interactive music experience like no other.

The show will be held at **12 pm** on the **NorthWestern Energy Freedom Stage Wednesday—Friday**.



Watch the shows while eating lunch! Lunch is served from

11:50 am - 12:30 pm Wednesday through Friday. Due to Salute to Veterans on Thursday, please don't arrive earlier than 11:45 am. Lunch is turkey sandwiches, chips and milk or water. Lunch sponsors are SD Education Association, Dakota Provisions, Country Hearth, Old Dutch, and Midwest Dairy!

Elephant Encounters



This captivating exotic animal production offers both an inspiring and educational experience, showcasing the majestic Asian Elephants in all their natural glory. While all the behaviors you'll witness are authentic and instinctive, they are presented in a way that offers a unique form of entertainment that is seldom seen by the public. Throughout the program, you will gain an insightful understanding of these magnificent creatures, learning about their origins, social structures, mating rituals, feeding habits, and the close-knit family dynamics that define their lives in the wild.

Located on North Cotton King Ave.

Wednesday through Friday - 10:30 am and 1 pm

Learning Centers

SD Farmers Union Safety Trailer

The SDFU Farm Safety Trailer is a portable, hands-on classroom dedicated to educating rural youth across South Dakota. Complete with an ATV simulator, grain bin safety, PTO safety, electrical line safety, general farm safety and more, the trailer was designed based on research and creatively addresses common safety concerns. Preventing accidents through fun and interaction is the No. 1 goal of the SDFU Farm Safety Trailer. Demonstrations are **at 11 am, 2 pm and 4 pm on Wednesday - Friday. The trailer is located north of the Dakotaland Museum.**



South Dakota Farm Bureau Scavenger Hunt

Anytime during the fair, pick-up a scavenger hunt worksheet at the South Dakota Farm Bureau Cares Trailer, on the west end of South Dakota Farm Bureau Avenue, or in the FFA Ag Adventure Center and embark on a fun journey to learn more about South Dakota farm animals.

Posters with answers to the worksheet questions will be hung on the outside of the animal exhibit buildings and within the FFA Ag Adventure Center. Once complete, return the worksheet to the FFA Ag Adventure Center or the South Dakota Farm Bureau Cares Trailer to win a prize!

Document your scavenger hunt journey on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter with #SDFBfairhunt!

Noah's Way Exotic Animal Petting Zoo

Noah's Way Exotic Petting Zoo will feature at least 40 animals of various species. Animals may include camel, zebra, nilgai antelope, oryx antelope, eland antelope, water buffalo, watusi, zebu, alpaca, African crested porcupine, cavy, coatimundi, lemur, giant tortoise, sheep, and goats. The petting zoo is located in the **MIP Building.**

Learning Centers

SD Game, Fish & Parks

Fish, flowers, critters, and other cool displays can be found at the South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks fair site.

They have live fish in the cement pond as well as live fish in our aquarium displays.

Teachers/students can walk through the small, fenced-off wetlands display.



Bonkers for Boxcars: The Inside Scoop

Have you ever wondered why there is an old boxcar sitting on the SD State Fairgrounds?

The Dakotaland Museum will give you the scoop in this interactive presentation.



Executive Director Louise Van Poll will tell the story about the boxcars which held 40 men or 8 horses and the role they played in Europe; how the American people sent 700 boxcars full of food to France in 1947; and how the French people responded by sending these boxcars full of gifts to say Merci, thank you, to the United States. She will conclude with a brief history about this particular boxcar, and how it ended up in Huron.

Wednesday through Friday at 1 pm at the boxcar on Third Street next to Game, Fish & Parks

Learning Centers

SD Department of Education

Book Reading

Join SD Secretary of Education Dr. Joseph Graves throughout the morning for a read-aloud of A Picture Book of George Washington. Children are invited to listen to the story and leave with their very own tricorner hat!



Hand Painted US Flag in the Horticulture Building

Put your handprint on the special art project building the US Flag! All materials provided to make your hand a special part of this project!

Wednesday and Thursday, 10 am - 12 pm

Coloring Contest in the Horticulture Building

Markers and pictures for coloring will be provided in a designated area for kids to come and show off their talent at coloring a patriotic picture to display in the building. **Open daily.**



America250: Come Declare Your Independence

Kids can declare their independence by signing the copy of the Declaration of Independence with feather pens. This will happen immediately after Pied Piper of Percussion so schools can easily participate! **Thursday at 12:45 pm on the NorthWestern Energy Freedom Stage**



Learning Centers

Fine Arts

Students can view youth/adult entries. Students will have the opportunity to meet authors and artists in residence. Authors and artists in residence are people from South Dakota who share their art with fairgoers. Located in the Arts & Ed Building and Horizons Hall.



Photography

Displays of the different types of photography, including the computer manipulated styles. See the beautiful landscapes of South Dakota in many different aspects. Located in the Arts& Ed Building.



Dakotaland Museum

Admission into the museum is FREE!

4-H Exhibits & Activities

See all the 4-H projects in Nordby Exhibit Hall!



Teacher's Notes

A Special Thank You To Our Sponsors:

