

Port Aransas Field Trip 2018
Lain/Murray "A" - March 26th & 27th
Stover/Roberson "B" - March 28th & 29th

This packet will hopefully tell you everything you need to know about the trip. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child's homeroom teacher.

Why Port Aransas?

As you know, the 4th grade has the opportunity to take an overnight trip to the University of Texas Marine Science Institute (UTMSI) in Port Aransas. Our students have been studying about the different habitats since kindergarten and they will now have the chance to see all of the habitats first-hand. There are some students who have never even seen the ocean. **We will show your child:**

- where to find wetland areas and their purpose;
- the different plants found in the wetlands;
- where to find the sea grass beds and the type of grasses that are common along the Texas coast;
- the purpose of our rock jetties;
- what can be found on the sandy beaches;
- and discover some of the animals found in our open ocean.

We want you to understand that this trip is optional and if you or your child is uncomfortable about going, he/she will stay here at Barton Creek and attend class with one of the other 4th grade classes that will remain at school and do normal school related activities.

What does your money pay for?

The cost for the field trip is \$145 per student. This includes the chartered bus, the boat trip on the UTMSI research vessel, all meals, including snacks and drinks on the bus, overnight at the Mustang Island Conference Center, admission to Presidio La Bahia in Goliad, and admission into the Texas State Aquarium. The cost for parents attending is \$55 per adult for those staying at the Conference Center.

This includes your meals, hotel room, and admission into the aquarium and Presidio La Bahia. If you are in a hotel/condo, your cost is \$35 to BCE and then pay for your hotel room.

All money and forms are due by February 9th.

If there is a problem and you cannot afford to send your child, please let Mrs. Wager know, as we have some scholarship money available. This information is strictly confidential.

Want to help out?

We cannot do this field trip without parental support, so we hope you will consider going. We need one adult chaperone for every 4 students. If you are interested in attending the field trip, please let your homeroom teacher know. The names of the parents attending, who are interested in being a chaperone, will be put in a hat and the "lucky" 4 or 5 parents will be notified that they will be in charge of a group. Even if you are not chosen as a chaperone, we welcome you to come and learn along with all of us. **Your child must stay in his/her group and not explore with you alone, but you are welcome to stay with them and help the chaperone.** When we find out how many parents are going, we will send home a list so you can make plans to car pool, as parents are not allowed on the bus.

We need to be at school by when??

We need your child to be at school by 6:10 AM on the day of departure. When you bring your child to school, it will still be dark and the students will be excited, so please do not just drop them off. Please help us make sure that every child gets on the bus with ALL of their provisions. We will leave school by 6:30 AM and drive to Goliad.

What does Day 1 look like?

We will arrive at Presidio La Bahia around 9:30. We will watch a short movie, have a scavenger hunt in the museum, and explore the grounds. Each group chaperone will be responsible for sharing important information and answering questions in a student packet, that we will provide. There is a gift shop at the museum. If you would like to send money with your child, he/she needs to be responsible for the money. **Teachers & Chaperones will not hold any money.**

We will leave Goliad at 11:30 AM so we can be at the aquarium by 1:00 PM. We will be eating our FULLY DISPOSABLE lunch at the

Fannin Memorial. If we are running late getting to the aquarium, we might need to eat our lunch on the bus, so please send it with your child. We will then explore the aquarium for 2 ½ hours. If you are a chaperone, we will need your assistance at the aquarium, as we will not have docents this year and you will need to guide your group around the aquarium. There will be time to visit the gift shop, so you might want to send some extra money with your child. We will leave the aquarium about 3:00.

Our next stop will be the Seagrass Beds. This is the first chance for the students to get in the water. Each student should have his water shoes in a baggie in their backpack (not in their suitcase under the bus.) We will not be getting into the suitcases at this time. If your child does not have on water shoes, they will not be allowed in the water. Crocs do not work as they get stuck in the mud and the kids come up barefooted. We will get off the bus and the students will find their chaperone. We will have a short overview of what we will be doing and what we will see. The chaperones will have a Ziploc bag with a plant and wildlife identification packet, and a Discovery scope. We would like for you to take pictures of the students as they make their discoveries. Please keep up with everything in your bag, as you will need it both days. Parents are not responsible for the direct teaching of the habitats - that is our job. We need you to help the kids "discover" the new plants and animals we will meet and keep all the students close and safe. They will have assigned things to look for to complete their book. If you are coming as a chaperone or parent and willing to get a little wet, please come prepared to help find things in the water at the sea grass beds. When we get back on the bus, the students will take off their wet shoes, put them in their baggie, and put on their dry shoes. ****The students must wear shoes at all times on this trip (except to shower and sleep).****

Our next stop will be at the Mustang Island Conference Center, where we will check into our hotel rooms, unpack and catch our breath from the busy day. At 7:00, we will walk the short distance to the beach for an evening of beachcombing, playing in the sand and water, and a hot dog roast. Children will not be swimming while at the beach. They will only be allowed in ankle deep water. The students can wear flip flops or water shoes on the beach, but they cannot take them off at any time!!!** If the weather is not cooperative, we will go to plan 2, which will be decided by the teachers. Remember, flexibility!!!

We will return to the conference center, shower, and get ready for bed around 9:00. Lights out around 9:30. ***Once the students get

to the dorm, they are not to leave the dorm for any reason (well, maybe a fire or earthquake)!!!! Any student found outside running around will have their parents called and we will ask them to come pick their child up. The student will not be allowed to participate in the second day activities.***

What about Day 2?

The second day will start bright and early. The schedule explains how the day will go. Day 2 is very hectic and we must have you on time!!! We will have breakfast at the Conference Center at 6:30. Group A will leave for UTMSI at 7:10 for the boat trip on the Katy. Everyone going on the Katy must wear closed-toe shoes (even parents).

Group B will stay at the conference center where we will do activities related to the ocean and do an art project. At 10:00, the bus driver will bring the Group A back to the conference center where they will work on ocean activities and the art project and take Group B to UTMSI for their boat trip.

At 12:00 everyone will get all of their belongings packed up and put on the bus for the return trip to BCE.

LUNCH: 12:30-1 PM. A boxed lunch will be provided by Subway. If your child has special dietary needs, please include this on the information sheet for your child. Also if any parents who are attending have any special dietary needs, please include them.

Academic and Behavioral Expectations

- This is not a trip to the beach in the sense of a "vacation" or an "end of the year fling." It is an academic trip tied to specific marine biology objectives. While we hope everyone has lots of fun, our goal is to have a hands-on/out-in-the-environment learning experience related to our ocean studies. Each student will have a journal and will be expected to keep it current and explain the different habitats visited. This will count as a Major grade.
- This is a school field trip and all the rules which apply at school will apply on this trip. The University of Texas does not allow students below the 6th grade to normally attend this field trip, but because we have assured them that our students are

responsible, they have allowed us to come. The students are reminded to respect themselves, respect others, and respect the property around them.

- Each student will be in groups of 3 or 4 per adult chaperone. Students are required to stay within voice range of their assigned adult. This means that the adult should be able to get the child's attention and speak without raising his or her voice. The chaperone is to stay within a visual range of their child's homeroom teacher. The teacher will be supervising and teaching the groups. The teacher has the ultimate responsibility and authority. If you hear him/her whistle, ALL stop and look!! **The students are to stay with their chaperone at all times - they are not allowed to go off with their parent away from their group.** While at UTMSI, please do not take your students down to the jetties, as they are slippery and dangerous.
- Should discipline become necessary, the following steps will be followed:
 - FIRST - Warning from the chaperone
 - SECOND - Warning from the child's teacher, a notice to the school principal, and the parents will be notified
 - THIRD - Student will be escorted by the teacher during the next activity.
 - FOURTH - Parents will be called and asked to come pick up their child. They will not be allowed to participate in any more activities during the trip.
- As a chaperone, your duty is:
 1. to keep our students safe and focused
 2. to stay in sight of the teacher when appropriate
 3. to use this opportunity for small group learning
 4. to set a friendly, yet firm tone as an authority figure
 5. to remember that whatever you allow your group to do, 40 other students will want to do
 6. to supervise and get the students settled in at night
- For safety reasons, your duty as a chaperone is NOT:
 7. to provide special privileges or vacation-like fun
 8. to shield kids from discipline
 9. to make some great buys at the gift shop for your child if the other kids aren't allowed to shop

Safety and Medical Issues

- We want all parents to rest assured that we have taken every safety precaution possible for this trip. Children should be reminded that safety begins with following the rules and staying with their assigned group.
- The students will **NOT** be allowed to be in the water above their ankles. If a student does go into the water above the knees, they become your shadow and are totally out of the water for the activity. Our goal on this field trip is to teach them about the ocean and they can frolic in the water with their parents at a future time. The teachers and some of the parents will be doing activities that require getting into the water, so we really need help in keeping the kids out of the water.
- The students must wear shoes at all times. They need extra shoes that can get wet. **Close-toed shoes MUST** be worn on the KATY vessel and the seagrass beds. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Parents selected to go on boat, also need to remember to bring close-toed shoes!
- The bus is large and comfortable which should make motion sickness unlikely. If your child is prone to motion sickness please indicate it on your medical release form along with what seems to help. Please include a supply of medicines needed for the trip. The teachers are not allowed to stock pile medicine, so you need to include aspirin, etc. in a Ziploc plastic bag labeled with your child's name and teacher. If your child needs an inhaler, the chaperone will carry it with them, so it will be with your child at all times.
- All medications will be administered by the teachers unless the parent is on the trip. For medicine, please put in appropriate plastic pill container with child's name and official label from the pharmacy on it. Teachers will have individual first aid kits and we will have one big one for the whole trip.
- Please do not send a sick child on the trip. If any child does become ill on the trip, we will contact the parents. We do have facilities where sick children can rest.
- Wear sun screen. We will remind them to put on sun screen at least 3 times a day. Please make sure that they are not allergic to the sun screen.

Facilities

We will be staying at the conference center. Each room will sleep 5 people (1 adult and 4 children). We have reserved 14 rooms. We will house 44 students and 11 parent chaperones at the conference center. I have a block of rooms being held until February 26th at Plantation Suites for \$79 plus tax. If you are interested in a room there, please call 361-749-3866 and ask for a room under Barton Creek Elementary.

What to Bring

You will find a list attached of things to bring. Please do not pack more than the students can carry by themselves as they will be responsible for getting their belongings off the bus and into the dorms without assistance. A duffel bag is much easier to carry than a hard suitcase. The students will need 3 different bags - a fanny pack which they will wear constantly with sun screen, sun glasses, water bottle, etc.; a day backpack/bag which will be kept on the bus with reading materials, pencils, CD players, Game Boy, cards, small stuffed animals, etc.; and their overnight bag which will be kept under the bus during the bus ride (please do not pack water shoes in the overnight, as we will need them at the seagrass beds).

PLEASE NOTE: Please mark any items with your child's name. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR DAMAGED ITEMS! All games mentioned above will only be allowed to be used on the bus. These items will also stay on the bus at all times. Please do not send expensive jewelry or clothing

In Conclusion

We feel we have put together a field trip that has excellent educational opportunities at the lowest expense possible, with LOTS of fun! We thank you for all of your help and support as we plan for this trip. We hope to see lots of parents with us!

Sincerely,

The 4th Grade Team