FIELD TRIP CHAPERONE RESPONSIBILITIES

The National Center for Atmospheric Research’s field trip program would not be possible without the assistance of chaperones like your self. Along with teachers and event leaders, we consider you our partners in ensuring that each student’s experience is educational and enjoyable, and the overall group’s visit is a resounding success. What is expected of a chaperone can vary from one field trip location to another and often from one teacher to another. Consequently, we have listed what we view as the duties and responsibilities of each chaperone visiting NCAR.

BEFORE THE VISIT

❖ Find out about us. Explore the UCAR and NCAR Website. Watch the video, Connections so that you can answer basic questions from students about the organization. If possible, visit us in advance of the official field trip. Remember, the best chaperone is an informed chaperone!
❖ Find out what the teacher or event leader expects of you in addition to our requests:
  o Will you drive students or will you travel by bus?
  o If driving, is it necessary for me to provide details regarding my car insurance?
  o Are driving directions and parking information available?
  o How many students will be in your group? Do any of them have special needs?
  o What is the scheduled length and itinerary for the field trip?
  o Should I pack a lunch or is NCAR’s cafeteria available?
  o Will everyone be given a nametag?
  o Confirm the date and time of departure with the teacher/event leader.
  o Confirm where you will meet the group before leaving on the field trip.
❖ Will the group be hiking during the field trip? If so, are students and chaperones aware of appropriate attire, sunscreen, and water bottle needs?
❖ If a student misbehaves or is disrespectful of fellow students, NCAR staff, chaperones, or the physical facility during the field trip, what is the discipline policy?
❖ Provide the teacher with your cell phone number in case of unforeseen events in route to NCAR or back to your site of origin.
❖ Although not prohibited by NCAR, we highly recommend that chaperones avoid bringing their student’s sibling or siblings whenever possible. This allows chaperones to give their undivided attention to students in their care. Please check with your student’s teacher or event leader who will confirm the policy to be followed.

PREPARATIONS ON THE DAY OF YOUR VISIT

❖ Follow the Boy Scout’s motto, "Be Prepared!" Pack a few things that may prove invaluable such as tissues; a small first-aid kit that includes Band-Aids, sunscreen and wipes; an umbrella; a camera or video camera; a wrist watch; water; and a pen and small pad of paper.
❖ Essentials to bring include a cell phone and cell numbers of the teacher/event leader and NCAR’s front desk; directions to NCAR’s Mesa Lab; a list of students in your group; essential information that the teacher/event leader has provided chaperones; money; and a lunch if needed.
❖ Typically a field trip to NCAR will last anywhere from two to four hours and include three to five distinct events including:
  1. Tour of the facility and supercomputers
  2. Science Learning Lab, pre-chosen at the time of scheduling
  3. Exhibit time
  4. Weather Trail and/or Mesa Trail hike (optional)
  5. Lunch at NCAR (optional)
DURING THE FIELD TRIP

- If you are driving and transporting students, please go directly from the location of origin to NCAR and vice versa to avoid being late in either direction and unnecessarily worrying others.
- Please follow the time guidelines and meeting locations set forth by the teacher or event leader. It is helpful to wear a watch in order to stay on schedule.
- Get to know the names and personalities of the students in your care. Make sure that they also know your name.
- Stay with your assigned students at all times. Make sure that they know this expectation as well.
- Instruct all your students to go immediately to the NCAR Front Desk if lost or separated from the group. The front desk staff will ensure that the student is escorted back to his/her group promptly.
- Students in middle school or younger are to be escorted to the restrooms. If you have both boys and girls in your group, work with another chaperone so that one may escort the boys while the other escorts the girls.
- Please turn off or mute your cell phone during the field trip as a courtesy to the Visitor Program staff. If you must take a call, please step outside of the classroom if it occurs during the Learning Lab to avoid a disruption.
- If staying for lunch, please help students use NCAR's recycling, composting, and trash bins. If you are unsure what is recyclable or compostable, please ask for assistance from Visitor Program or Cafeteria staff.
- Students are not allowed to use the cafeteria to buy drinks or lunch unless the teacher or event leader has made prior arrangements with NCAR’s Event Services staff for the entire group. If a student or students forget their lunch, please notify the teacher and Visitor Program Staff so that food can be arranged.
- Chaperones may use the cafeteria as long as another chaperone, teacher, or event leader can supervise their students while they do so.
- Please know that you are an important component of a successful field trip. Model respectful behavior; encourage students to question, investigate, and talk about what they see and experience.
- Establish a positive rapport with your students but ensure that they know you will enforce the behavioral expectations set forth.
- Encourage a love of nature and foster observational skills by including a walk on the Walter Orr Roberts Weather Trail with your students during the field trip.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Please be sure to enforce and reiterate NCAR's student behavior expectations with your group. These will be reviewed with the students upon arrival but are listed here for your advanced review:

- Enter the building quietly and sit on the entrance rug while your teacher or event leader signs in with NCAR’s front desk staff.
- Because NCAR is a place of business, please use inside voices at all times both in and outside the facility.
- Always walk while inside the facility.
- Stay with your chaperone and group throughout the visit.
- If separated from your group for any reason, please go immediately to the NCAR Front Desk and notify the NCAR receptionist who will promptly ensure that your are escorted back to your group.
- Questions and questioning are highly encouraged during all components of the field trip, as is active exploration of the various exhibits and the Walter Orr Roberts Weather Trail.
- Most important of all, have fun!

Please have students leave backpacks on the bus or in the cars in which they came to NCAR. It is best to bring student lunches into the building if the group will be eating lunch at NCAR.