We are excited that you have chosen The Farmers’ Museum as your field trip destination! Our thematic tours are a wonderful way to incorporate standards-based, hands-on learning into your established classroom curriculum.

We ask that each visiting group leader review this document, even if you have visited in the past. We frequently update our policies and procedures, and include that information in this document. Please consult the Educator’s Guides for additional information about each individual tour, which can be found on our website.

WHAT IS THE FARMERS’ MUSEUM?
As one of the oldest rural life museums in the country, The Farmers’ Museum in Cooperstown, New York, provides visitors with a unique opportunity to experience 19th-century rural and village life first-hand through authentic demonstrations and interpretative exhibits. The museum, founded in 1943, comprises a Colonial Revival stone barn listed on the National Register for Historic Places, a recreated historic village circa 1845, the Empire State Carousel, and a working farmstead. Through its 19th-century village and farm, the museum preserves important examples of upstate New York architecture, early agricultural tools and equipment, and heritage livestock. The Farmers’ Museum’s outstanding collection of more than 23,000 items encompasses significant historic objects ranging from butter molds to carriages, and hand planes to plows. The museum also presents a broad range of interactive educational programs for school groups, families, and adults that explore and preserve the rich agricultural history of the region.

FIELD TRIPS TO THE FARMERS’ MUSEUM
The Farmer’s Museum offers a variety of engaging school programs throughout the academic year. Each program is rooted in New York State and Common Core Learning Standards, yet offers students learning opportunities that aren’t possible in the classroom. By exploring our Historic Village and interacting with our staff, students make real-life and classroom connections that stay with them long after their visit ends.

TOURS
A wide variety of thematic tours are available at The Farmers’ Museum during the months of September, October, and April. Generally, tours are guided by our Museum Teachers and last approximately two hours. A stop at the Empire State Carousel is built into each tour experience; stopping to shop at Todd’s General Store or our Museum Gift Shop, or a lunch break, are not included in this time frame. If you would like to take advantage of this unique shopping opportunity or our lunch space, please let Education Staff know.

Check our website for more details about the thematic tours that are currently available! An Educator’s Guide for each tour can be found on our website. These Guides detail the tour experience, and also provide valuable pre-and post-visit lesson plan ideas and worksheets to help tie your visit even more closely into your classroom curriculum.

If you would prefer a more general tour of the Historic Village rather than one of our theme-based tours, Highlight Tours are available. These tours generally last one to two hours. Please contact Education Staff to discuss planning your visit!

Groups
Typically, we ask that you divide your students into roughly equal groups of 10-15 prior to arrival, unless otherwise directed by Education Staff ahead of time. Each group must have at least one adult chaperone with them at all times. You will tour around the Historic Village in
these groups with a Museum Teacher, but will rejoin your school as a whole for your scheduled lunch time.

**Planning Your Visit**

When planning your visit, be sure to consult our website to see the many programs we have to offer! Our school programs are available cyclically throughout the academic year; while many classes like to take their field trips in the spring, don’t forget that a field trip in the fall allows your students to remember their visit all year!

We suggest thinking about the following questions when planning your visit:

- What program best fits my curriculum needs?
- How much time can I spend on-site at the Museum?
- How can the Education Staff help me plan a smooth and engaging trip?

Reservations are required for all school programs. It is best to contact the Education Department well in advance of your field trip. We suggest contacting us a few months ahead of time to ensure schedule and program flexibility. You may do so via our website, or by telephone at (607) 547-1461.

After speaking with Education Staff, you will receive a confirmation worksheet. Please review this document to be sure all your reservation details are correct. If anything is incorrect or you need to make changes, please contact Education Staff as soon as possible. At the bottom of the worksheet is a chart detailing the pricing structure for your students, 1:10 ratio chaperones, one-on-one aides, and additional adult chaperones. These are the specific numbers our Admissions team will ask for when you arrive. We suggest taking a final count the morning of your visit, filling out the confirmation sheet with your numbers, and having that handy when you check in.

**Chaperones**

Chaperones provide critical supervision and support during your field trip. We may ask your chaperones to assist us with dividing your students into their groups or overseeing an activity if the need arises.

It is important to consider the number of chaperones you will be bringing with you prior to your visit. Please note that we do not differentiate between teachers and other adult chaperones for the purposes of admissions. That is, any non-student adult who is not a one-on-one aide or required nurse who visits with the school group is considered an “adult chaperone.”

For our purposes, we define a one-on-one aide as any required aide assigned specifically to a student or group of students.

When considering how many chaperones to bring, please bear in mind that many of our historic buildings are somewhat small. Bringing a large number of additional chaperones can sometimes detract from your students’ experience.

**Tours**

If you are visiting for one of our thematic tours, we ask that you bring enough chaperones for a 1:10 adult-to-student ratio. That is, one adult chaperone should be supervising each group of ten students. To help facilitate this, we extend complimentary admission to

"One of my favorite parts of the Farmer’s Museum was cooking inside the farmhouse. I learned how life was back then, and how everything was done. The thing I remember most was the carousel. I loved it! "

—7th Grade Student
teachers/adults at this ratio. One-on-one aides assigned to a specific student and required medical staff are not included in this ratio count, and are always complimentary. Any other teachers/adults above this ratio who attend the field trip will be extended discounted admission, as long as they check in with the group. Please refer to the “When You Arrive” section for more details about this.

**Visiting The Farmers’ Museum**

Each visit presents a unique learning opportunity for your students! We suggest reading through the Educator’s Guides, available on our website, for a detailed description of what to expect when visiting The Farmer’s Museum. If you have any questions about your visit, don’t hesitate to contact Museum staff!

**Environmental Conditions**

School Programs at The Farmers’ Museum explore our special exhibitions and recreated 1845 village. This means that you will spend time inside our historic buildings as well as walking outside to get to and from these buildings. Not all buildings are heated, and many rely on wood-burning stoves and fireplaces. Our walkways are made out of a variety of materials including packed dirt, gravel, wood, and stone. We suggest dressing in layers, and wearing appropriate weather gear, including boots.

**Accessibility**

We have made every effort to make our facilities easily accessible! Many of our historic buildings have ramps and inclines to improve wheelchair access wherever possible, though not all buildings are wheelchair accessible. The site encompasses 34 acres and has dirt and gravel paths, which may make travel difficult for some visitors. Please let Education Staff know in advance if you have any students with accessibility needs, so that we can best accommodate you. If you would like additional information about wheelchair accessibility, please contact Education Staff.

**Amenities**

Restrooms are located throughout our museum campus. At The Farmers’ Museum, wheelchair accessible restrooms are located in the silos of the Main Barn, and at the Empire State Carousel. Additional restroom facilities are located in the basement of Bump Tavern.

Drinking fountains are available for your use at the Empire State Carousel and in the garden next to Bump Tavern.

Crossroads Café at The Farmers’ Museum offers a limited menu of light fare during our main season. This Café has a changing schedule, and can serve a limited number of patrons.

**Museum Manners**

Please discuss the below manners with your students prior to arrival.

- Stay with your group at all times.
- Touch only when a museum guide invites you to do so. No matter how clean they are, our hands have oils and dirt on them that can damage art and artifacts.

> “My favorite part of my visit was going to see the animals and all the chickens ran everywhere.”

—4th Grade Student

- Please respect our animals by not feeding or chasing them. Human food is not healthy for animals and getting chased is very stressful.
- Use an indoor voice in the historic buildings.
- Leave food, drinks, gum, and candy in your bag, or in the Louis C. Jones Center. Absolutely no food is allowed while in historic buildings.
- Ask questions! Museum staff is here to help you learn.
- Look, learn, and have fun!

**Chaperone Expectations**

Please share the below expectations with your chaperones.

Thank you for chaperoning your student’s field trip to The Farmers’ Museum! Chaperones are critical to the success of any museum visit. Today’s visit features one of our
thematic tours, where students will have the opportunity to interact with our knowledgeable interpreters and visit our historic village.

In order to ensure the safety of your students and the success of your visit, we ask the following of all chaperones:

- Remain with your group of students at all times.
- Be an example for your students: exhibit good museum manners, willingness to learn, patience, and flexibility.
- Manage student behavior. You can help us by keeping your students focused on the tour and activities.
- Help us keep our facilities clean and in good repair by supervising students at lunch and in the restrooms. Please make sure all garbage is disposed of properly.
- Keep cell phones, iPods or mp3 players, and other electronic devices turned off or set on silent. Excuse yourself if you absolutely must take or place a call. Make sure another chaperone from your group is supervising your students if you need to excuse yourself.

**VISIT OUR FARM!**

We are excited that you and your students will have the opportunity to experience our farm, including our animals. While visiting, we ask that you remind your students to respect our animals. This includes not chasing or taunting our chickens or turkeys, and not feeding any of the animals. This helps them to stay in the best health possible!

**WHEN YOU ARRIVE**

Please plan to have your bus drop you off at the Main Barn of The Farmers’ Museum. This is the large stone barn by our main parking area. Your bus should pull into the parking lot and come around the outside perimeter; museum staff will be there to greet your bus.

After everyone is off the bus, it will park in the Yellow Trolley Lot, just up the road from our museums. If you turn left out of The Farmers’ Museum, the Yellow Trolley Lot will be on the right hand side of the road, with a large sign. Occasionally we may need your bus to park in a different area, but museum staff will discuss that with you when you arrive.

Since your bus will be parking off-site, it is important to bring all necessary items with you when you disembark. You should plan to bring your lunches, coats, umbrellas, or any other items you may need during your visit.

**CHECKING IN AT ADMISSIONS**

While your group is being oriented, the lead teacher should plan to check in at the admissions kiosk located inside the Main Barn. When you check in, our Admissions team will ask you for your final numbers. They will need to know the tally of students, one-on-one aides, and adult chaperones who are visiting with you on the day of your trip. We suggest using the confirmation sheet that was sent to you prior to your visit to collect all this information on the morning of your trip.
**HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR VISIT**

We are able to accept cash, check, credit card, and purchase orders as payment for your field trip, and do ask for payment when you arrive. We cannot accept payment ahead of time, but you are welcome to forward purchase orders to us to have on hand for when you arrive. In the event you bring payment for more students than attend on the day of your trip, we are able to issue refunds up to $25 in cash that day, or above $25 in check form to be mailed to your school. You will need to fill out a short form for refunds to be issued at any amount.

Please be sure to have payment for your entire group ready to be processed in one transaction. To help with this, please try to consolidate payments down into as few forms as possible. We suggest having one sum of cash, one check, one credit card, one purchase order, or any combination of these to transact total admission for all of your students and adults.

**Paying for Adult Admission**

Any teacher, administrator, parent, or other non-student is considered an adult chaperone for your visit. We offer complimentary admission to chaperones at either a 1:10 ratio (for tours) or one per workshop (for workshops). One-on-one aides assigned to a specific student or any necessary nurse are always complimentary, and are not included in the count of complimentary chaperones. We also extend complimentary admission to any necessary nurse you need to bring with you, and to your bus driver(s). Additional adults beyond the ratio receive a discounted Education rate, which for a tour at one Museum is $9.00 per adult.

It is very important that you collect admission from each adult prior to your visit in order to ensure they receive the discounted Education rate. When you check in your group, you should plan to have a tally of all adults who are with you and should include them when you give Admissions your final numbers. All adults should be included in your group payment, either as one sum of cash, one check one credit card transaction, or on one purchase order.

Any adults who are not included with group payment will not be considered part of your group, and will not be eligible for the Education discount. They will need to purchase admission at the full adult price.

**ORIENTATION**

When you arrive, Museum Staff will greet your group. Please bring all backpacks and lunches into the Louis C. Jones Center, which is just inside the Main Barn of The Farmers' Museum. There will be a table near the front of the LCJC where we ask that you leave all lunches, backpacks, coolers, etc., and return them here after you eat lunch.

At this point, a Museum staff member will orient your group. They will give important details about your visit (including your schedule), and share our most important safety rules for your trip. Afterwards, they will ask for your assistance breaking your students into their smaller tour or workshop groups. If you have a question or concern, ask Museum Staff who are identifiable by their red polo shirts and name tags.

**INTERESTED IN RIDING THE EMPIRE STATE CAROUSEL?**

Each tour and workshop includes one complimentary ride on the Empire State Carousel! This ride is built into your visit, so there is no need to plan for extra time.

**INTERESTED IN SHOPPING AT TODD’S GENERAL STORE OR OUR MUSEUM GIFT SHOP?**

If you're interested in stopping to shop at our 1840s general store or our Museum gift shop, please tell Education Staff when you schedule your visit. A stop at these locations is not built into your visit, so will need to be planned ahead of time.
UNEXPECTED CIRCUMSTANCES

IN CASE OF BAD WEATHER
School programs at The Farmers’ Museum and Fenimore Art Museum continue, rain or shine! We always suggest dressing appropriately for the weather, and encourage rain or snow gear if necessary. While you will be inside buildings at The Farmers’ Museum, you will need to walk between them. Due to our weather policy and demand for our programs, we do not currently take reservations for rain dates.

If your school is closed due to severe weather, please contact Education Staff as soon as possible at (607) 547-1484.

In the case of severe weather or natural disaster where the Museums must close, we will need to cancel your program and will notify you as soon as possible at the contact information you provided when scheduling your visit. We will try our best to reschedule your visit. Please know that if there is severe weather during your visit (including thunder and lightning), the Empire State Carousel may need to close.

If bad weather is predicted for the date of your visit, please feel free contact Education Staff ahead of time to problem solve and make a communication plan.

IF YOUR GROUP IS LATE
We understand that many unexpected factors can influence your arrival time at our Museums. Because we specially bring in staff for school programs and reserve on-site spaces, we ask that you contact us if you know you are delayed. You may reach Education Staff at (607) 547-1484. We will make every effort to continue your programming as scheduled, but may have to make changes to your visit if you arrive late. If you arrive more than half an hour late, we may not be able to accommodate your scheduled program, or may need to make modifications.

IN CASE OF INJURY OR EMERGENCY
Please notify Museum Staff as soon as possible if there is an emergency during your visit. First aid kits and AED devices are available throughout the Museums, and trained Security staff is on call at all times.

CANCELLING YOUR TRIP
If you need to cancel your trip, please contact us at least 48 hours in advance. You may cancel your visit by calling Education staff at (607) 547-1461. Please note that if 48 hours’ notice is not given, your school may be billed for the cost of the program.

If there is an emergency on the morning of your visit and you are unable to attend, please call the Education Department as soon as you are aware. We can be reached for last-minute cancelations at (607) 547-1484.

In the event that you need to cancel your visit due to funding restrictions or budgetary cutbacks, please contact Education Staff. We frequently offer institutional grants that may help make your visit possible!

QUESTIONS?
Don’t hesitate to contact us if you have questions about your visit! We try our best to make every visit the best it can be, and encourage teachers to contact us with questions, concerns, or special needs prior to their visit. You can reach Education Staff at (607) 547-1461 or at schoolprograms@nysha.org.

The Farmers’ Museum School Tours Information