

**KHOC: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Q: I applied to KHOC. How do I know if I was accepted and can schedule a field trip with a free bus?**

**A:** Only teachers who participated in KHOC during the 2023-2024 school year (part of a 3 year cohort) were invited to apply for KHOC for the 2024-2025 school year in a shift to better serve all third-grade classes of an entire school. Bus funds are no longer tied to an individual teacher, rather bus funds will be allocated based on the number of classes from each participating school and the capacity of a standard school bus. **This means that field trips should be scheduled with bus sharing in mind.** Applicants receive written communication from the KHOC Administrator. If you have not received communication, please contact [KHOC@ebparks.org](mailto:KHOC@ebparks.org).

**Q: Can more than four teachers from my school participate?**

**A:** Yes. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, all third-grade teachers/classes of entire schools will be invited to participate in KHOC.

**Q: How do bus fund allocations work?**

**A:** Due to severe driver shortages industry-wide and increasing bus costs, bus funds will be allocated to accommodate the maximum number of classes on the fewest number of buses. In most cases, one full-size school bus can accommodate two classes plus teachers/chaperones. **This means that field trips should be scheduled with bus sharing in mind.** Note: bus availability is limited and cannot be guaranteed.

Bus fund allocations\* per school are as follows:

One participating class	Funds for <b>one bus</b>
Two participating classes	Funds for <b>one bus</b>
Three participating classes	Funds for <b>two buses</b>
Four participating classes	Funds for <b>two buses</b>
Five participating classes	Funds for <b>three buses</b>
Six participating classes	Funds for <b>three buses</b>

*\*Assuming capacity of a full-size school bus. Bus funds will be allocated according to field trip requests.*

**Q: Do all teachers in the program need to attend a Virtual Teacher Orientation?**

**A:** No, only one teacher from each approved school must attend one Virtual Teacher Orientation. Teachers can choose to attend any orientation session. Attendance will be recorded, and bus funds will be allocated to teachers/classes of **an entire school** following successful completion of the orientation by at least one teacher. However, all teachers – *especially those new to KHOC* – are encouraged to also attend a virtual orientation session.

**Q: What are the printed materials (booklets) for?**

**A:** There are two types of printed resources that each participating teacher will need to obtain, regardless of taking a **Self-Guided** or **Naturalist-Led** field trip: a **KHOC Teacher Guide** and a **KHOC Student Booklet** (one booklet per student; available in English or Spanish.) The Teacher Guide is designed to help

teachers incorporate nature-based lessons into the classroom. The Teacher Guide also prepares teachers to host their class on a field trip. The Student Booklets contain various interactive lessons or “challenges” (10 in total) that connect students to outdoor concepts.

**Note:** Participating in KHOC requires completing the Introductory lesson **and** 3 of the 10 lessons (“challenges”) outlined in the Teacher Guide and Student Booklets. Teachers can select those lessons which are most supportive of their classroom learning goals.

**Q: How do I obtain the printed materials (booklets)?**

**A:** Printed materials are distributed by mail to the attention of the lead teacher for the school.

**Q: If I’m not eligible to apply this year, can I still get KHOC booklets for my class?**

**A:** Please contact us with your request for booklets at [KHOC@ebparks.org](mailto:KHOC@ebparks.org). If we have extras after supplying this year’s participants, we’ll be happy to distribute these.

**Q: What’s the difference between a **Self-Guided** field trip and a **Naturalist-Led** one?**

**A:** **Self-Guided** field trips are hosted exclusively by the teacher without oversight from a Naturalist. A Self-Guided field trip can occur at any East Bay Regional Park; however, there are four designated (pre-planned) field trips designed specifically for the KHOC program. A Teacher Kit (backpack) may also be checked out in advance of a field trip. Teachers participating in their second or third year of KHOC are *encouraged* to opt for a **Self-Guided** field trip, thus yielding Naturalists’ time to teachers who are not yet comfortable instructing outdoors.

**Naturalist-Led** field trips are hosted by a Naturalist at a Visitor Center (or specific park) of a teacher’s choosing. Teachers arrive with their class and the Naturalist delivers a program on a topic pre-selected by the teacher. Teachers are encouraged to observe how Naturalist staff engage with students in an outdoor setting to enhance their own skills instructing outside.

**Q: What’s a Teacher Kit how is it used?**

**A:** A Teacher Kit is a backpack which contains resources, guides, and equipment a teacher might find useful when hosting their **Self-Guided** field trip. A Teacher Kit can be reserved (at least a week in advance of a planned field trip date) from one of four designated Visitor Centers. Use of a Teacher Kit can be demonstrated by Naturalist staff upon pickup from a Visitor Center.

**Note:** Teacher Kits are to be used on **Self-Guided** field trips only.

**Q: When should I schedule my field trip and what are the best odds at getting a bus?**

**A:** It is **highly** recommended to plan your **field trip for completion by mid-March** for best chances of securing a bus. There is steep competition for school buses among schools throughout the Bay Area towards the end of the school year and availability becomes severely limited.

**Q: I applied for a **Naturalist-Led** field trip, but I have not heard back. Who can I contact for status?**

**A:** In your application, you requested a program hosted by a specific Visitor Center. Program scheduling is coordinated by an Administrative Specialist at each Visitor Center and communications about your program are generally done via email. Please contact that Visitor Center and inquire with the Administrative Specialist.

Visitor Center and staff contact information can be found here: <https://www.ebparks.org/parks/visitor-centers>.

**Q: I have my field trip date confirmed, but I have not heard back about transportation. Who can I contact for status?**

**A:** Please reach out to the Parks Transportation office at [ParksTransportation@ebparks.org](mailto:ParksTransportation@ebparks.org) or at (510) 544-2205.

**Q: What happens if I cannot get a bus for my field trip?**

**A:** Parks Transportation staff make absolutely every effort to secure transportation for every request through contracted bus companies and through school district fleets; however, there is the occasional situation where bus transportation is unfortunately not available. If there is sufficient time available (generally six weeks or more), a field trip date can be rescheduled, and transportation requested for the new date. **Please note that bus availability is limited and cannot be guaranteed.**

**Q: I am still confused about how this all works. Is there someone I can chat with to better understand what I need to do?**

**A:** We understand that the KHOC program can be confusing and overwhelming with its many elements and steps. Please reach out to [KHOC@ebparks.org](mailto:KHOC@ebparks.org).

*For additional resources, please refer to <https://www.ebparks.org/khoc> or email [KHOC@ebparks.org](mailto:KHOC@ebparks.org).*