

BEEC School Programs 2024-25



Thank you for choosing Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center! We're very much looking forward to our time with you and your students. We're in our 30th year working with local classrooms, so for many of you the following are reminders. For folks new and old to BEEC, please read carefully and be in touch if you have questions!

At BEEC our mission is to foster experiences that inspire connection to the natural world and its many inhabitants; our School Programs are designed to both accomplish our mission and help your students meet Next Generation Science Standards and connect with the Expeditionary Learning curriculum at their grade level. Most BEEC programs happen outside, either in the forests and fields of our property on Bonnyvale Rd in Brattleboro, or on your school grounds and surrounding natural areas. A few of our programs happen in classrooms. For program descriptions please refer to our website: <https://www.beec.org/what-we-do/school-programs/class-programs/>

Questions? Please be in touch with your BEEC Naturalist Educator:

Ellen Peters Ellen@beec.org, Jill DeVito Jill@beec.org, Shaliq Harvey Shaliq@beec.org
or School Programs Coordinator: Kristina Weeks kristina@beec.org

Frequently Asked Questions

Will my programs happen at BEEC or at my school?

Programs can happen at BEEC or at your school. It would be wonderful if your class could come to BEEC for at least one field trip during the school year! There are a few programs that are site specific, such as to a vernal pool or to the geology at BEEC.

When and how should I sign up for my programs?

As soon as possible! The sooner you sign up, the better chance you will get your preferred dates. Your BEEC educator's google calendar will be shared with you in an email. You may book your programs directly using the 'appointment slots' feature on the calendar, or by emailing your educator or edu@beec.org.

How many chaperones do we need?

We've found that it's best to have a ratio of at least 1:10 adults to students, and more adults is usually better. Please plan on having or bringing at least that many adults (staff and/or parents). Please communicate to your chaperones that BEEC's Naturalist Educators will be counting on them to help support the learning and all-around positive experience of the group.

What do students need to bring and wear?

Please review with your students and chaperones clothing and footwear that will keep them comfortable on the outdoor field trip, and review together the 'Note about Ticks' (included below). Basically: long pants, long sleeves, and hats, in fabric/layers appropriate for the season. Sturdy shoes for moving about on uneven terrain in the field and forest. Everybody should bring a full water bottle.

What do classroom teachers need to bring?

Teachers need a class roster, including emergency contact info for all students, and a first aid kit from the school nurse, including any prescribed medications needed for students. If your class usually eats a snack at the time of your BEEC program, please bring that snack, and let your Naturalist Educator know ahead of time so that they can build a snack time into your program.

What about bug spray, sunscreen, and hand sanitizer?

Follow your school guidelines for applying bug spray and sunscreen, and for having hand sanitizer available for your students. If possible, ensure that sprays and lotions are applied before your program begins. If you are unable to do this, let your Naturalist Educator know if you'll need a few minutes to do this, so that they can plan accordingly.

Who will do the teaching (and manage my class) during our BEEC program?

BEEC's Naturalist Educators are experienced teachers excited and equipped to lead BEEC programs. They will refer to you for guidance and support if a student or your class needs extra support during the program. BEEC programs are designed to be accessible to most learners. While the Naturalist Educator will be "in charge," teachers know their classes best and are encouraged to communicate with their Naturalist Educator if there's something they want to add or something we should do differently!

What if I have a student with significant learning differences or needs?

Please notify your Naturalist Educator if you have students for whom the program may need to be significantly modified. We're happy to work with you to create the best learning experience for you and your students.

What should I tell my class before our BEEC program?

We've found that teachers reviewing general field trip expectations, as well as the specifics outlined above for outdoor learning, helps everybody have a more pleasant and educational time. BEEC programs are designed to align with the units that many of you are teaching, so students will probably already have some familiarity with vocabulary and concepts. If you have students who need more purposeful previewing, please be in touch with your Naturalist Educator.

How do we get to BEEC?

Most classes come to BEEC via bus. We know that can be pricey! In the past teachers have come up with such creative solutions as soliciting parent drivers, requesting transportation funds well in advance from your principal or school's parent organization, or "buspooling" with another class. Some teachers have been able to successfully coordinate BEEC programs with other classes in their school to save on bus costs. Be in touch with your Naturalist Educator if you are considering this option so that we can ensure adequate coverage for multiple groups at the same time.

How will we be greeted by our Naturalist Educator?

If you are coming to BEEC for your program, your Naturalist Educator will greet you at the parking area, and guide your group to our courtyard where everyone will circle up for a welcome, and information about your program. If your program is happening at your school, your Naturalist Educator will let you know ahead of time the best way to meet and gather depending on your program.

Can we come early or stay late (like, for lunch)?

Yes, school groups are welcome to come early or stay later at BEEC after their program. Please let your Naturalist Educator know if you are interested (in case other groups have the same plan!). Regarding trash, etc. BEEC is “carry in, carry out.” We suggest bringing a few plastic containers to transport your waste back to school where you can sort it into the appropriate bins.

What if it looks like bad weather?

We’re able to successfully do most programs in most weather. If you’re unsure, please be in touch with your Naturalist Educator. Factors we consider when rescheduling: strong winds, lightning, frigid temperatures, etc.

What about photos?

Many teachers take photos of their students during a program. This is welcome and encouraged - so feel free to bring your cameras and devices. Please share your photos with us, with student permission! We recommend that students leave their devices at home or on the bus.

What about Medical Emergencies?

Classroom teachers are expected to know what’s in their first aid kits and how to use them. BEEC staff will support you in addressing the emergency and calling your school nurse, and 911 if necessary.

What if my Naturalist Educator isn’t feeling well or can’t do our program for some reason?

BEEC staff will be in touch with you ASAP to reschedule your program.

Can I bring the BEEC lesson back to my school?

BEEC Programs belong to BEEC, please don’t replicate materials etc. to use on your own.

What if I have feedback for my Naturalist Educator?

Feel free to communicate with your Naturalist Educator about things that went well, and suggestions that you have for how to better support your students’ learning experience. During the year you can use this [Feedback Form](#). At the end of the school year all teachers will receive an end of year feedback form. We encourage everyone to take the time to offer feedback through this format. Also, you may be in touch with BEEC School Programs Coordinator - Kristina Weeks kristina@beec.org - at any time.

Note about Ticks



Greetings Teachers, School Staff, Families & Students,

BEEC is pleased to be working with you to support your outdoor science studies and encourages you to follow these tick prevention suggestions.

How to dress for being outdoors:

- Wear light colored clothing so that ticks will be more easily seen.
- Wear fabrics with a fine weave (harder for ticks to latch onto).
- Wear long sleeves and long pants, and tuck pant legs into socks.
- Apply tick repellent to clothes and/or exposed skin.
- Check for ticks periodically while outdoors, and before going indoors.

When you get home:

- If possible, place clothes directly in clothes dryer for 15 mins on high heat (without washing them).
- Take a shower and do a full body tick check (paying special attention to scalp & neck, ears, back, underarms, belly button, waist & hips, pelvic area & between legs, behind knees).

Recommending repellents is a challenge since the information on safety and efficacy is often conflicting. What we do know is that Lyme disease can be a serious and debilitating illness, especially if not detected right away. There are insect repellents that use DEET, and repellents that use essential oils, and clothing can be treated with permethrin. Please contact your health care provider for their recommendations.

If you find a tick that is attached, remove it using tweezers or tick-pulling apparatus by grasping the mouthpart of the tick close to the skin and pulling firmly straight out. For the next 30 days, keep watch for rash and any flu-like symptoms. Some people keep the tick in a dated, labeled ziplock bag so that the tick can be tested. Contact your health care provider about tick testing and regarding any symptoms.

Ticks are active when temperatures are over 28 degrees Fahrenheit. Using repellents, doing frequent tick checks while outdoors, and instituting an every twelve hour full body tick check routine, can help us feel less anxious about ticks and the possibility of becoming infected.

Learning to safely enjoy our beautiful, natural world together is so important. We are looking forward to exploring the fields and forests with you!