

Parent Guide to 5th Grade Science

Welcome parents! Here is your guide to science in your child's class this year.

***Remember** the most important science resource is your child's teacher. Contact them to find out more!*

How Is Science Taught in the School District of Philadelphia Today?

You may find that science is taught very differently from the way that you learned it in school! Pennsylvania's new science standards and the School District of Philadelphia's new K-12 Science Instructional Guide put **student ideas about science** at the center of the classroom. This approach allows students to be scientists --instead of just **learning about** science, they are **figuring out** science!

For example...

Old way: Students copy drawings of food webs for different environments.

New way: Students construct scientific arguments about how matter and energy move through ecosystems in different ways.

Old way: Students review the characteristics of various rocks and minerals.

New way: Students gather evidence from rock formations to help determine the order in which rock layers were formed.

As the science standards are implemented in schools and districts, they will enable students to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of science beyond memorizing facts, and
- Experience similar scientific and engineering practices as those used by professionals in the field.

What Will Your Child Be Figuring Out This Year?

Some of the big ideas students are figuring out in 5th Grade include:

- When matter changes, does its weight change?
- How much water can be found in different places on Earth?
- Can new substances be created by combining other substances?
- How does matter cycle through ecosystems?
- Where does the energy in food come from and what is it used for?

How Can I Help My Child Learn and Grow in Science?

Studies show that family involvement is one of the biggest predictors of success in school. That's why parental involvement is so important. Seek opportunities to explore science at home and in the community with your child. Encourage them to keep asking questions, just like scientists. Let them know you don't have all the answers, and together try to find them. We also encourage you to get involved at your child's school and connect with teachers to learn more about changes in science instruction as they occur and help inspire children by exploring careers in STEM fields.

Also, check out the National Science Teaching Association's parent page:

<https://www.nsta.org/science-resources-parents>

You'll find tips to support science learning at home, links to student competitions, recommendations for science trade books, and much more.