



FULLERTON
SCHOOL
DISTRICT

Great Schools
Successful Kids

November 12, 2015

Dear Parent or Guardian:

In September 2013, the California State Board of Education formally adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to replace the previously adopted 1998 California Content Standards for Science. These new standards aim to increase the depth and rigor of science instruction in California classrooms, while providing students with opportunities to meaningfully explore the manmade and natural world in which they live.

The Fullerton School District has been forward-thinking with respect to NGSS professional development for teachers. To date, all teachers in grades 3-8 have participated in introductory training and grades K-2 will follow during this school year. The professional development for teachers is ongoing and represents research-based practice for science instruction. In addition, to guide the district in its work, the Fullerton School District has a five-year plan for NGSS implementation.

At the classroom level, implementation of the NGSS will occur very gradually as teachers develop and further hone their pedagogy over time. For example, this year the junior high school teachers will implement engineering, 5E inquiry-based lessons and connections to science literacy. Science content will gradually and systematically shift between grade levels as the district moves forward in its implementation.

New instructional materials to support the NGSS will become available within the next few years. Currently, publishers are waiting on the State to finish the new California Framework for Science Education, which will soon begin the public comment process. Until the framework is finalized and published, we will support instruction with NGSS-aligned supplemental materials.

Moreover, the State of California is in the process of producing a new NGSS-aligned science assessment. The current timeline available online suggests that the new assessment will be ready for field testing during the 2017-2018 school year. Until a new assessment is ready for field testing, the State of California is required to administer the old California Standards Test for Science.

As a parent, it is important to note that the CST for Science is not aligned to the standards currently adopted by the State Board of Education. Thus, the assessment may not be an accurate reflection of your child's achievement in science as classroom instruction shifts to support the current Next Generation Science Standards. This does not mean that your child is not receiving a high-quality science education. Much to the contrary, the Fullerton School District is committed to our mission of ensuring that the community works together to develop scientifically literate lifelong learners.

Should you wish to learn more about the NGSS, you are invited to attend a parent information evening on Monday, December 14, 2015, 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Ladera Vista MPR.

Sincerely,

Emy Flores, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services