Almond Science Fair 2010

WHO: The Almond Science Fair is open to all students, grades 5-6.

WHEN: April 5-6, 2010

WHERE: The Almond Multi-Purpose Room

WHAT CAN I DO?

While participation is *optional*, all students in grades 5-6 are encouraged to participate. Students can work independently or in groups of up to 3.

Choose an area of life, earth or physical science that interests you. Then narrow to a subtopic and then a single idea. It will probably fit into one of these broad categories:

Botany	Chemistry
Zoology	Physics
Environment	Engineering
Behavioral/Social	Earth/Space Science
Biochemistry/Microbiology	Medicine/Health

ABOUT THE DISPLAY

You will deliver your project to the Multi before school on Monday, April 5th. A project includes:

- self-standing display board
- notebook or journal used during experiment
- small model, item or material used, or photos

HOW DO I SIGN-UP?

Fill out the proposal form and return it to your classroom or the school office by Monday February 8, 2010.

PARENT INFORMATION

In order to help your young scientist be successful with a project, you should make sure the projects is ……

- interesting to him/her
- realistically doable within the available time frame
- at his/her ability level and is age-appropriate
- can be explained by him/her to judges and teachers
- a NEAT and FUN learning experience.

If your child commits to participating in the Science Fair, please take the time to understand the scope of his/her project. This year, the Science Fair is a "parent-driven" event, and we, the co-chairs would really appreciate having you volunteer and help make it a success.

REMEMBER YOUR ROLES

- The STUDENT is the PRIMARY RESEARCHER. His/her role is to:
    1. choose the topic
    2. plan and conduct the experiment
    3. record data
    4. write results and do artwork for display

- The PARENT has three lesser roles:
    1. LAB ASSISTANT – help gather materials, assist with construction and offer limited technical advice.
    2. CONSULTANT – make suggestions, give advice, and explain your reasoning. Remember, consultants do not make decisions.
    3. CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD – may reject projects on the basis of high cost, lack of proper research facilities or equipment.

TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR DISPLAY BOARD

Your exhibit should be attractive with decorations that serve a purpose. One purpose is to get the viewers attention immediately so he'll glance at it and want to stay and look at the display in more detail. Your display should do most of the explaining for you!

To get attention, use A Short Title in large, neatly made letters. A single special object is also good to attract attention. Photographs, especially of something too large or unsafe for the display, can help tell the story of your project. Draw a sketch or picture if it fits your topic.

Use bright colors! Colored paper can be a frame for the type. Contrasting colors can point out an important part of the project. Use colors that have something to do with your topic. Examples: Yellow and green for a botany project or red for heat and blue for cold. Multicolored graphs or data tables attract attention. Remember to keep them accurate and neat, neat, neat!

MAIN IDEAS

Summarize your ideas so you are able to get the entire story on the display board in large enough lettering to be read by everyone. The display includes almost all the same parts as you used in planning and conducting the experiment. At minimum it should include:

- The question being asked
- Your hypothesis
- The materials and procedures
- The data and results
- Your conclusion

You may also decide that facts learned in research, a summary, or new questions are important to include.

TIPS TO HELP YOU START YOUR SCIENCE FAIR PROJECT

Wondering where you will get an idea for a project?

- Children have all kinds of questions about the natural and physical world. Often about everyday things we take for granted. "There are seeds in my grapes, I wonder if purple grapes have fewer seeds than green grapes?" "How does that pendulum clock keep time?" "I wonder what lives near that pond?"

Jot down things you see, hear and think about. Capture it in writing before it slips away.

- Find ideas in libraries and media centers. Leaf through science and nature magazines. Flip through some science books that catch your interest. Think about labs you have done in class. Can you take that topic and investigate in a new direction? Use your favorite search engine and surf the Net on a topic that interests you.

Caution! Avoid a major mistake! Libraries may have books of preplanned science fair projects. Get ideas, but don't pick a project and copy it. Don't repeat someone else's work. Make it your own project.

- As you read and learn about a topic, you will get more ideas and can try them out on adults and friends. Don't give up on a good idea. What may first seem impossible may be scaled down and carried out. Ask a teacher, parent, or expert if they know another way to try it!