

Fall, 2008

Dear Parents:

I'm pleased to be able to teach your child science this year. Eighth grade science is a full-year lab-based course which includes topics in life and physical sciences. Learning objectives align with the Arizona Science Standard, with specific learning objectives for each unit located in the student notebook. I encourage you to attend the Smith Open House on Thursday, August 21, at 6:00 p.m. At that time, you will learn more about the curriculum and get some ideas on how we can partner together to make this a successful year for your child.

According to the *National Science Education Standard* (NAS, 1996), "Learning science is something students do, not something that is done to them." I couldn't agree more. In learning science, students will be actively involved working as individuals and in teams to make observations, acquire knowledge, generate explanations, test ideas, and communicate results.

Many of the activities and laboratory experiences require the use of specific materials. Below is a list of the **materials** that your son or daughter needs to bring to class each day in order to be successful in 8th grade science.

- calculator
- colored pencils
- ruler (6 or 12 inch)
- pencils (& extra lead, if mechanical)
- large eraser
- lined notebook paper
- 3-ring binder with dividers
(may be shared with other classes)
- pocket folder with clips (to turn in work for grading) *NEED BY FRIDAY 8/15*
- red pen (for grading)

Please contact me, or the Counseling Department, if assistance is needed to obtain materials.

I have attached a copy of our **Classroom Guidelines** which contains a wealth of information for parents. Also, a **Student Information Sheet** is attached to this letter. Please help us effectively communicate this year by completing the reverse of this form. Your son or daughter is responsible to complete the front side. The due date for completion is shown at the top.

I hope learning science is a very rewarding experience for your child. Please encourage your son or daughter to talk with me if he/she has any concerns, and to come in before or after school for additional help, if needed. If you have questions throughout the semester, please call 480-472-9946, or e-mail at emgratki@mpsaz.org. New this year will be a **class website** which can be accessed at <http://hmmatters.com/gratkins>. Check it out!

Sincerely,

Ms. Eileen Gratkins
Smith 8th Grade Science