



## NEW SCIENCE STANDARDS HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED

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If you're like most parents, you know your children need to start learning science as soon as they start school. After all, their success in the 21st century depends on their being equipped with critical thinking, problem solving and analytical skills.

Did you also know that California is in the middle of a dramatic change in how science is taught in order to emphasize those skills? It's based on a new set of state standards for what kids need to know and be able to do called the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

California State PTA is committed to helping you – and all the parents in California – learn more about NGSS. We already have some good basic information about the science standards on our website at [www.capta.org/next-gen-science](http://www.capta.org/next-gen-science).

Over the next year, we'll be working on a written guide that will dig deeper to describe how science is being taught and what kids should be learning at every grade level. We're also putting together a resource bank that will help you find local organizations and activities wherever you live in California.

Science is central to how our children can understand and make sense of the world. These new standards are designed to ignite their curiosity and interest in science and engineering, especially among students who don't traditionally think of themselves as "science kids."

Changes are coming to many California classrooms. Do you know what's happening in your local schools?



## STEAM LEARNING AT YOUR SCHOOL

This year at the California State PTA Convention in Monterey, we were able to provide hands-on science projects and experiences that incorporate the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This was a model of an activity that you could bring back to your school to increase family engagement around the new science standards.

We had multiple stations around the room:

- Hands-on activities facilitated by volunteers

- Short, 15-minute presentations by experts on science topics
- Local vendors and experts with tables to share their products
- Short science videos on a loop that were designed to inspire people to do more science once they got home

The California State PTA team found amazing and easy-to-do experiments online. We called vendors, museums and businesses in the local area to see if they would donate their time to either present during the talks or host a table. You could also contact a local college or ask parents who work in the sciences to help at the event. We wanted everything to be hands-on and interactive, so we included things like the paper airplane toss which also doubled as our registration table (the participants put their name and information on the plane before they tried to get it into the basket!).



We hope that you will try your own version of STEAM Extreme. If you do, please share how it went at [www.bit.ly/PTAstory](http://www.bit.ly/PTAstory).

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