



Dear Parent,

Though the date of our school's science fair is several weeks away, it's time for your child to choose a science fair project. I'd like to share a few valuable tips to help make this year's science fair experience a positive one for you and your child. Thank you in advance for your enthusiasm and support!

Sincerely,

★ **How do I help my child choose a project idea?** First and foremost, this is your child's decision and it should be based on his or her personal interests. You can help by suggesting that your child first select a science topic he or she finds interesting. Guide your child in thinking through how an investigation of this topic might unfold. What supplies will be needed? Are they affordable? Are there safety issues? Does your child understand the topic well enough to construct a hypothesis? Science fair proposals are due on _____.

★ **What is a practical timeline?** This is probably where your influence is most needed. Work with your child to set a deadline for the project to be completed, preferably two or three days before the due date for science fair projects, which is _____. Then, working backwards from your due date, allow one to two weeks for preparing and assembling a display. Next, estimate how much time is needed for setup and data collection. Double or triple this time to account for retesting; experiments don't always work out the way we think they will! Map out the timeline on a calendar. Add a few days to gather needed supplies, and you and your child will have a workable timeline.

★ **What is a parent's role?** You'll probably have more than one role! Shopper, lab assistant, encourager, listener, and perhaps a timeline enforcer. The most important thing you can do is to give your child your support and encouragement. Participating in a science fair is an invaluable experience for your child!

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Note to the teacher: Fill in your signature, the due date for science fair proposals, and the due date for science fair projects; then make copies of this letter for your students.