

# Kulshan Middle School Seventh Grade Science

Ms. Mueller (Room 305)  
Ms. Lester (Room 301)

[Laurie.Mueller@bellingshamschools.org](mailto:Laurie.Mueller@bellingshamschools.org)  
[Margaret.Lester@bellingshamschools.org](mailto:Margaret.Lester@bellingshamschools.org)

Extension 4735  
Extension 4731

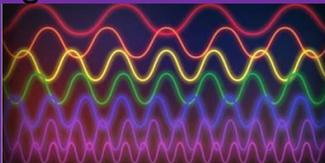
Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to Seventh Grade Science! You may have heard the Bellingham School District has adopted new and exciting Science curriculum which is very closely aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards and we are excited to launch into it. Our new curriculum engages students in figuring out, rather than just learning about. **Core ideas** in Earth science, physical science, life science and engineering are arranged over the years so students can build their understanding over time and see the connections between different ideas and across disciplines. To figure out these core ideas, while building the skills that will help them make sense of the world around them, students engage in the same **practices** that real scientists and engineers do. For example, students will develop and use models, analyze data and make evidence-based arguments. They also learn to make sense of core ideas using **crosscutting concepts**, which are useful ways of thinking about and making connections across different areas of science and engineering; thinking in terms of systems or cause and effect would be examples of crosscutting concepts.

Each unit has students engage as scientists or engineers in making explanations or designing solutions to a real-world problem.

Our units in seventh grade will be:

<p>Geology on Mars</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How can we search for evidence that other planets were once habitable?</i></li></ul>
<p>Plate Motion</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Why are fossils of Mesosaurus separated by thousands of kilometers of ocean when the species once lived all together?</i></li></ul>
<p>Plate Motion Engineering</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How can we design an effective tsunami warning system?</i></li></ul>
<p>Rock Transformations</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Why are rock samples from the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains composed of such similar minerals, when they look so different and come from different areas?</i></li></ul>
<p>Chemical Reactions</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Why is there a mysterious reddish brown substance in the tap water of Westerfield?</i></li></ul>

<p><b>Metabolism</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What is causing Elisa, a young patient, to feel tired all the time?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Metabolism Internship</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How can we design health bars that meet the metabolic needs of patients or rescue workers?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Matter and Energy in Ecosystems</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why did the biodome ecosystem collapse?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Light Waves</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why is there a higher rate of skin cancer in Australia than in other parts of the world?</i></li> </ul>

### Making the Grade

Our standards-based grades communicate each student's progress towards mastery using a 1-2-3-4 scale:

1 – Not Yet	2 – Making Progress	3 – Got It!	4 – WOW!
<p>Student work <b>does not meet standard.</b></p> <p>This score indicates that <u>much more learning and support</u> is needed to reach mastery.</p>	<p>Student work <b>approaches standard.</b></p> <p>This score indicates that <u>more learning and support</u> is needed to help students reach mastery.</p>	<p>Student work <b>meets standard.</b></p> <p>This score indicates that the student has <u>shown mastery of the skill, concept, or habit!</u></p>	<p>Student work <b>exceeds standard.</b></p> <p>This score indicates that <u>students have learned the skill, concept, or habit with greater complexity, depth, or independence.</u></p>

Scores will be posted in Skyward to track student progress towards specific skills, concepts, and habits in four categories:

<b>Science and Engineering Practices:</b>	These skills are <b>what scientists and engineers do.</b>
<b>Cross-Cutting Concepts:</b>	These concepts illustrate <b>how scientists think.</b>
<b>Disciplinary Core Ideas:</b>	These ideas are <b>what scientists understand.</b>
<b>Student Success Attributes:</b>	These habits <b>help students be successful in school.</b>

### Staying in Touch

This year, your student's **laptop and planner** will be our main tools for communicating information about daily stamps, assignments, assessments, and resources for study. The best way for families to help their student stay on track is to sit down with their student and talk about science on a regular basis, using the science notebook and science stamps in the planner for talking points.

The student notebook will mostly be in **Amplify** (an online curriculum platform) but some of the work also be done in **OneNote** (an online notebook).

The planner and stamps are a quick visual tool intended to show whether a student is doing his/her job or not. A **blue** stamp indicates that the student completed a task satisfactorily (complete, on time and followed directions). A red stamp indicates that the work was late, only partially done, or didn't follow directions. No stamp means that there is insufficient evidence of task completion. **Missing stamps can always be made up within a week of the due date.**

### **Absences**

It is the student's responsibility to find out what he/she missed due to an absence. Some ways to go about this are:

- Email the teacher and ask for work, if feeling well enough to work from home.
- Call a friend.
- As soon as you return to school, talk to the teacher in the morning.
- Make arrangements with the teacher to work outside the school day if you need extra support or materials.

If you have questions or concerns about your student's learning or experience at school, please don't hesitate to contact us either by email or phone.

Looking forward to the year,

Ms. Mueller and Ms. Lester