

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Stephen Buchs, Director of Curriculum 6-12

TO: District 301 Board of Education, Dr. Tim Kilrea and Dr. Kyle Schumacher, Interim
-Superintendents

DATE: Sept. 10, 2025

RE: Textbook Adoption for MS Science 6-8 - \$151,249.15

MATERIALS:

- TCI Science, MS 6th grade - Space, Planet Earth, Weather and Climate
 - o Qty - 387 per yr for 6 years = total \$48,645.00
- TCI Science, MS 7th grade - Adaptations, Cells and Genetics, Ecosystems
 - o Qty - 409 per yr = total \$50,669.00
- TCI Science, MS 8th grade - Forces and Energy, Matter, Waves
 - o Qty - 388 per yr = total \$48,737.00

Rationale:

6th Grade - Overview of the TCI Science Program and how it incorporates the NGSS standards for Middle School From: <https://www.teachtci.com/blog/tci-and-ngss/>

TCI's phenomenon-based Planet Earth, Weather and Climate and Space Unit Storylines provide real-world problems for middle school students to connect their learning with their own experiences. Hands-on investigations enable students to explore, explain, and make sense of phenomena.

The topics included in the TCI resources meet the needs for our curriculum.

TCI's engineering challenges and investigations engage students to design solutions directly relating to Disciplinary Core Ideas. The consistent engineering design process in Bring Science Alive!'s engineering challenges provides a clear road map for approaching design problems. Using it, students will decide when to define the problem, develop possible solutions, and optimize their designs.

Each engineering challenge focuses on one or two easy-to-learn engineering skills. After completing the program, students will have a full set of tools for tackling any design problem.

Each and every lesson focuses on at least one Science and Engineering Practice, one Disciplinary Core Idea, and one Crosscutting Concept. Each dimension is selected to support learning as it relates to the performance expectation.

Specifically for the Weather and Climate Unit:

The Weather and Climate Unit covers The Atmosphere and Energy, Weather, and Climate. This unit incorporates the NGSS standards as described above. TCI also includes engaging ways for the students to learn. Each chapter contains a video of the phenomenon to investigate, text for students to read about the science information, the text level can be modified which is helpful for our lower level readers, the text can be read to students who struggle with a low reading level, students can take notes electronically over the reading, the main idea of the text is provided as is the highlights of the reading, vocabulary cards are available for each unit and lesson games are available as well. NGSS Assessment questions are available as well.

7th Grade - The Adaptations book is broken down into 3 units that cover Earth History of life on Earth, Evolution of Life on Earth and Human Impacts on Evolution, which explain how humans affect living organisms. The next book Cells and Genetics, has five units that cover Traits of living things, Bodies that explores body systems, Cells, Genes, and Changes in Genes, The last book, Ecosystems has three units: Resources in Ecosystems, Energy and Matter in Ecosystems and Humans and Changing Ecosystems. The three books cover all of the NGSS standards and the Illinois Mandate for middle school science by looking at various ways humans impact Earth. TCI has a Spanish speaking version of text.

A pilot was done in the Spring of 2025 using the TCI materials for one unit, and the following things seen in the pilot are what make TCI the first choice for 7th grade science: Has engaging games and activities for students, and students stated that the TCI materials were engaging and very understandable; the assessment pieces in TCI would give a good foundation on which to build common assessments; TCI has an easy to use online interface for students and students stated they liked using TCI's online materials much better than the online Savvas materials piloted; TCI's systems have embedded professional development teachers can access at any time to learn how to use their systems or get their questions about systems use answered; TCI's materials integrate with Canvas very well.

8th Grade - TCI is NGSS based with regard to content. It also incorporates the overarching theme provided by phenomenon; however, it isn't always 3 Dimensional with regard to its

approach. It is not set up according to the current District organization of topics, so this would require time to rewrite the scope and sequence according to the 8th grade TCI organization framework. However, the TCI unit on waves was piloted in the spring of 2025 and the following characteristics made it the first choice for the 8th grade team: Has engaging games and activities for students, and students stated that the TCI materials were engaging and very understandable; the assessment pieces in TCI would give a good foundation on which to build common assessments; TCI has an easy to use online interface for students and students stated they liked using TCI's online materials much better than the online Savvas materials piloted; TCI's systems have embedded professional development teachers can access at any time to learn how to use their systems or get their questions about systems use answered; TCI's materials integrate with Canvas very well.

Pilot information supplied by: Sheila Pollastrini, Lisa Blake, Jill MacDonald

Textbook Information:

6th Grade

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Space
- Copyright: 2018 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-073-9

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Planet Earth
- Copyright: 2019 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-070-8
- Edition 1st

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Weather and Climate
- Copyright: 2019 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-076-0
- Edition 1st

7th Grade

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Adaptations
- Copyright: 2019 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-061-6

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Cells and Genetics
- Copyright: 2018 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-064-7
- Edition 1st

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Ecosystems
- Copyright: 2019 TCI

- ISBN: 978-1-58371-067-8
- Edition 1st

8th Grade

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Forces and Energy
- Copyright: 2019 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-079-1
- Edition 1st

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Matter
- Copyright: 2018 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-082-1
- Edition 1st

- Name of Text: Bringing Science Alive! Waves
- Copyright: 2018 TCI
- ISBN: 978-1-58371-085-2
- Edition 1st

Recommendation:

The TCI textbooks are recommended for purchase beginning for the 2025-2026 school year. These books will be a new resource for our students and staff. This selection is going to bring a long overdue change to 6-8 science that aligns to NGSS which is not in our current textbook resources. Another area to mention is the hands-on approach or embedded lab based activities that are part of the design of TCI's model. This does come with a yearly cost for consumable items but active learning is a must in education today. This is a 6 year purchase.