Davis Science Fair
Suggested Timeline for Experiments

Remember, these are only suggested dates. Keep in mind your family schedule, especially holiday plans that might necessitate an earlier start, and the amount of time your actual experiment will take; many take only one day but growing plants takes weeks.

By early November – Select a Topic

- Brainstorm a list of Topics you might be interested in investigating
- Narrow that list down to 1-3 topics, with specific ideas for each. Consider: Is it feasible? Do I have enough time? What help will I need, and who can I ask for help?

By the end of Thanksgiving Break – Most Research completed, identify your experimental Problem & formulate your Hypothesis

- Draft Problem/Question – specific & testable
- Start your Research – use scientific sources & record all sources
- Definitions – of any important terms in your problem, and any scientific principles that inform your hypothesis
- Draft Hypothesis – your best guess, educated by your research, to answer the question

By the end of Winter Break – Design & conduct your Experiment, record Results, begin formal write-up

- Complete background research
- Design an Experiment with a single variable to answer the question posed in your Problem – use a control group and an experimental/variable group
- Experimental Procedure – list step-by-step so that another scientist could replicate your experiment
- Materials – list the materials you will use in your experiment
- Finalize your Problem & Hypothesis – before you start experimenting
- Perform your Experiment & record the Results – write down the measurements from every trial, any unexpected complications, and any changes you might have had to make to your experimental procedure.
- Take photos as you go – of your setup, and as the experiment progresses. Ask an adult to take some action shots of you executing your experiment and taking measurements.
- Start typing or writing neatly your Problem, Hypothesis, Procedure & Materials, for inclusion on your display board.

By January 17, 2017 – Organize/analyze Results, write Conclusion, complete formal write-up including References & Acknowledgements

- Results – Neatly present your data in a meaningful way using a chart or/and graph, for use on your display board.
- Finalize Conclusion paragraph – What does your experimental data mean? Use the results to answer the question posed in your Problem. Was your hypothesis correct or incorrect? Why do you think that might be? Were there any unexpected difficulties or problems in your experiment? Share any thoughts for follow-up experiments.
- Print photos, to include in your notebook or on your display board.
- Continue typing, or writing neatly, the headers and all the necessary information for your display board.
- Acknowledgments & References – list all the people who helped you & what they did, and list your research sources.
- Title – come up with a title for your project.
- Review the last section of the "Davis Science Fair Project Hints" to make sure you're as on track to finish as you think you are.

By January 22, 2017 – Complete your Display Board & practice presenting your project

- Organize your display board neatly and in a meaningful way. Double check to make sure you have included all 10 required elements before you begin attaching items to your display board.
- Ask adults you know to listen to you present your project.

Davis Science Fair 2016 Dates

Tuesday, January 24, 2017 – Turn in your Science Fair Project Display Board

Bring your completed Davis Entry Form, AERSF Research Form (AERSF form for 3rd-5th grade scientists only), display board, lab notebook, and any other project "parts" you want to include in your display to school with you, and turn them in before reporting to class.

Wednesday, January 25, 2017 – Project Judging

You will be called out of class some time on Wednesday morning to present your project to a small panel of judges. The judges will be making sure your project includes all the required elements (see the AERSF Elementary Project Judging form in your information packet), but will be most interested in hearing about your experiences conducting a science fair project and what you discovered. Your project display board and everything you turned in with it on Tuesday morning will already be set up in the cafeteria for you.

Thursday evening, January 26, 2017 – Science Fair Exhibition & Awards Presentation, 6-7pm

This evening is to celebrate you and your accomplishments! Project awards will be presented & you will find out if your project (3rd-5th grade only) will advance to the Austin Energy Regional Science Fair. You will also have time to look at all the other science fair projects. Invite your family and friends to come see your project and celebrate with you!

Friday, February 3, 2017 – Take Project Boards Home

Projects will have been on display in the library for a week. Please take them home no later than Friday, February 3.

TBD – Scientist's Party

Celebrate your success one day after school with popsicles, Legos, and a Chemistry Circus!

Austin Energy Regional Science Festival Dates

If your project is chosen to advance to the **Austin Energy Regional Science Festival (AERSF)**, at the Palmer Event Center, project check-in is on **Friday, February 17** and the Festival, including judging, awards, and exhibition is on **Saturday, February 18.** Everyone is invited to attend AERSF to look at the projects, participate in the "Explore Science" activities, and see the opening of the awards ceremony. Parking in the Palmer Event Center garage is free for AERSF attendees.