

OUR FIFTH-GRADE VISIT TO THE GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY

Our fifth graders recently embarked on an unforgettable learning adventure at the Griffith Observatory's in-person School Program—a remarkable, standards-based experience unlike anything else in the known universe! Students explored state-of-the-art instruments, hands-on exhibits, and captivating presentations in both the Samuel Oschin Planetarium and the Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon Theater.

One of the highlights of the trip was a special deep-dive into the fascinating world of comets. Students learned that these “dirty snowballs” are small, icy travelers made of interstellar ice, dust, and rock. They discovered how comets orbit the Sun, form brilliant glowing tails as they heat up, and hold important clues about Earth’s early formation. Many were amazed to learn that comets contain water, ammonia, organic compounds, and even amino acids—materials connected to the origins of life and still influencing Earth’s ongoing story.

This experience beautifully reflected our CALLED values, especially Challenging Case Studies and Engage Each Other. Students were pushed to think critically about real scientific questions as they observed, compared, and interacted with authentic STEM tools. At the same time, they practiced collaboration and curiosity, engaging one another in rich conversations about what they were seeing and learning.

The day was truly inspiring—sparking wonder, deepening scientific understanding, and fueling our students’ enthusiasm for STEM. It’s a field trip they won’t soon forget!

