

MIDDLE SCHOOL TAKES ON THE CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER: STEM IN ACTION!

Our middle school students recently spent an unforgettable day at the California Science Center—where science wasn't just something to study, but something to touch, test, explore, and experience! The day was filled with hands-on learning and high-energy discovery as students split into two dynamic groups: one taking on the physics-packed Roller Coaster Challenge and the other diving into biology through a real cow eye dissection.

For many students, the dissection lab was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to explore anatomy up close. Hannah Fletcher shared her excitement: "My favorite thing about the science center was dissecting the cow eye." When asked why, she explained, "Because it's really cool to learn more about human nature."

Her curiosity and willingness to dive into challenging content highlighted our CALLED value of Analytical Action—approaching big questions with hands-on investigation and deeper thinking.

Across the center, the Roller Coaster Challenge team was all about engineering, teamwork, and physics in motion. Students experimented with ropes, tracks, loops, and four different types of balls to understand how friction, weight, and speed affect motion. Isaiah described the experience with enthusiasm: "For the roller coaster, it was really, like really fun. We used ropes, and four balls—one rubber, one plastic, another plastic one we didn't use, and a ping pong ball. We built a whole loop and tested which ball could make it around. The rubber one went faster because it's heavier and has less friction."

He went on to reflect on the whole day: "The California Science Center overall was also really fun. My favorite part was the Island Zone with all the games—and we got to see a queen ant!"

This kind of collaborative experimentation beautifully showcased our CALLED value of Engage Each Other, as students worked together, problem-solved, and supported one another through trial and error. From biological exploration to engineering innovation, this field trip turned abstract concepts into real-world experiences. Our students left inspired, energized, and eager for the next challenge—proof that when learning comes alive, curiosity takes over!

