

Dear Families,

Our class is beginning the Science Companion® Earth's Changing Surface Unit. The Earth's Changing Surface Unit guides students through a hands-on exploration of the processes that shape the earth's surface and encourages them to build on their natural sense of wonder and curiosity about their world. As they observe, describe, and experiment, children hone their science process skills, as well as begin to discover the various landforms that shape the earth's surface and learn how they were created.

During the Earth's Changing Surface Unit, the students will:

- Discover that the earth's surface is constantly changing and that landforms are a result of those changes.
- Build models of rivers, glaciers, hoodoos, sand dunes, mountains, and volcanoes to demonstrate how water, wind, ice, and internal earth forces shape the earth's surface.
- Learn how weathering, erosion, and deposition break down, move, and build up the earth's surface, and explain how those processes create different landforms.
- Explore how abrasion breaks down rock.
- Develop ideas about how their local landscape features were formed and how they change through time.

You and your child can explore this rich topic together at home by:

- Reading geology-related science books together that your child checks out from the class Science Center or the local library.
- Visiting the web site at [www.ScienceCompanion.com](http://www.ScienceCompanion.com) to find a list of recommended web sites about landforms and the processes that shape the earth's surface.
- Perusing the *Earth's Changing Surface Student Reference Book*, which provides readings, diagrams, photographs, and other resources designed to enhance your child's classroom learning.
- Working together on the **Family Link** activities and homework that are sent home from time to time. Your child may also want to repeat and vary some of the activities we do in class, as well as explain what they discovered and learned. Try to encourage their independent experimentation at home.

The Earth's Changing Surface unit will encourage students to develop a view of the earth's surface as dynamic and constantly changing. We hope the children will bring their discoveries and enthusiasm home, inviting you to learn alongside them—asking questions, discussing their work, and sharing their adventures in science.

Sincerely,