

Getting Ready for the 2023 & 2024 Solar Eclipses

What Did We Learn from 2017



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Three Major Takeaways

1. Celebrate our success – many teachers and their students had outstanding experience

Celebrate Our Success

We used the information and companies that were recommended in NSTA's article regarding the eclipse. We had a fabulous time, we invited parents to join us and picnicked outside on blankets. We had a blast!

Celebrate Our Success



NSTA.org



Celebrate Our Success

NASA's Eyes on the Eclipse software was a useful tool, as were other resources on its website. . . . Solar System Ambassadors did a great job of supporting eclipse viewing events.

Celebrate Our Successes

We had a viewing party at school for our community and the biggest struggle was finding enough glasses to purchase in advance to provide them for our community audience.



Celebrate Our Successes

A group of students and I were able to get money fronted to us to purchase (legit) eclipse viewing glasses. We sold them for \$1 and made a small profit for future projects. We taped a small flyer to each pair to help communicate the details of our viewing times. It was really fun and we easily sold out (500 pairs).

Eclipse AUGUST 21, 2017
EXPERIENCE THE 2017 ECLIPSE ACROSS AMERICA <http://eclipse2017.nasa.gov>

SAFELY WATCH THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

 *IN STYLE!* 

\$1.00 each

On Monday, Aug 21st
here in Boise
THE ECLIPSE WILL LAST FROM
10:10am - 12:50pm
MAXIMUM COVERAGE OF 99%
WILL OCCUR AT 12:27 am

Visit the Green Team
at the concession stand
during break
every Tuesday and Thursday
until they run out!

Celebrate Our Successes

We planned an entire day of STEM events for our students centered around the sun, moon, shadows, UV light, etc..

To prepare we ordered NASA APPROVED glasses in May prior to the end of the previous school year for EVERY student and staff member.

I invited a meteorologist to the school to speak to the kids ahead of time about what to expect, how to view safely, etc.

We had an eye doctor come to the school and talk to all our students about eyesight and how and why we protect them from the sun the morning of the eclipse.

Celebrate Our Successes

We set up a sound system outside to play music and everyone had a bag of Sun Chips while they waited 😊 (we also had Moon Pies for snack that day).

I began talking to my administration about the eclipse about 6mo ahead of time, and then about how students could safely view since they would be at school during the actual eclipse. I am fortunate that my principal is very supportive of science and we worked together to make it a fantastic, once in a lifetime experience for our students and families.

Three Major Takeaways

1. Celebrate our success – many teachers and their students had outstanding experience
2. Did great job of getting information to teachers and miserable job of getting to school administrators

School Administrators a Bottleneck

Our Curriculum Department prepared the teachers and shared very informative resources. They advertised to campuses which type of glasses to purchase and shared links on where to purchase.

All came to a crashing end when our district leadership (superintendent) determined that the risk would be too great for our students. So I would say superintendents need to be coached on the value of students observing phenomena in the natural world.

School Administrators a Bottleneck

I spent the time to research proper eye safety, made sure I purchased accurate solar film glasses, and sent home a permission slip to parents to give them the option of opting out.

At the last minute, the district released a statement that we could watch it online, but we could not take our children out due to safety concerns and issues.

My admin was gracious enough to cover classes so that adults could go out to see it, and we had some parents take their students out of school to watch the eclipse at home, but the majority of my students missed out.

School Administrators a Bottleneck

Need to send a letter to every curriculum director and superintendent in the USA; all 15,000 school districts, or so.

The one issue that happened locally and at other sites was ignorance on the part of administrators who would not let students out to see the total or partial eclipse because students would stare at the Sun and damage their eyes.

School Administrators a Bottleneck

I do know that educating the administrators is super important, not just the teachers. We had some schools in Ohio that just cancelled school that day, because they were worried about the liability if a kid looked directly at the sun and damaged their eyes.

We had one principal who was supposed to walk their students a couple of blocks to a nearby park and have a program there. They were to receive their glasses when they arrived. The principal refused to let the students come unless they were given their glasses ahead of time so kids could wear them to walk to the park. We needed to explain to her more than once how that was not a good idea because the students would be able to see nothing on their walk and I could guarantee there would be more injuries if the kids tried walking to the park with the glasses on.

Three Major Takeaways

1. Celebrate our success – many teachers and their students had outstanding experience
2. Did great job of getting information to teachers and miserable job of getting to school administrators
3. Amazon's last minute announcement of not being able to verify the quality of glasses sold on their site caused panic in many schools

Amazon A Major Problem

The biggest problem that I know of was school systems in Georgia who purchased glasses from Amazon and they could not be verified as the proper level of protection.

Entire systems had to stop their plans to view due to safety concerns.

Amazon A Major Problem

Maybe the googles could come with some kind of authenticity card from NASA.

We had a viewing party at school for our community and the biggest struggle was finding enough glasses to purchase in advance to provide them for our community audience.

It would behoove NASA to make more glasses that were more readily available to both public and private school districts by request

Three Recommendations

1. Continue to do the Quality work we did with teachers
2. Start early to plan major effort with school administrators (e.g. present at state and national associations of school administrators – AASA, NASBE, NASSP, NAESP; get info into their journals)
3. Work with Amazon early to set up quality control mechanism for glasses sold on its site

Upcoming NSTA Eclipse-Related Events

- 1. April 14, 2022** (9:00pm – 9:30pm ET)
NSTA Chat (#NSTAchat) about getting ready for the 2023 and 2024 eclipses
- 2. October 20, 2022** (7:00pm – 8:00pm ET) –
Register for the free NSTA Science Update webinar: *Getting Ready for Two Spectacular Solar Eclipse* (<https://my.nsta.org/event/science-update-getting-ready-for-two-spectacular-solar-eclipses-in-north-america>).
- 3. Many more to come in the future**