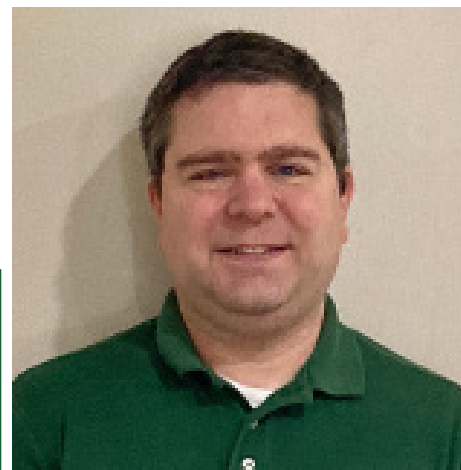




The President's Paragraph: Notes from HASTI's President

Preparing for the Eclipse

Craig Williams



In each issue of The Hoosier Science Teacher, we invite the president to share some thoughts as an introduction. In this issue, HASTI's current President Craig Williams shares his thoughts about challenges and opportunities in 2023-24 for science teachers in Indiana.

In my June President's Paragraph, I encouraged all of you to think about how to teach your students to ask good questions. As we reach the midpoint of the school year, how are you doing in this regard? Are you providing students with phenomena to investigate, rather than just presenting a scientific principle and giving them practice problems? Are you giving your students a chance to document their learning via journals, posters, and presentations and not just homework assignments and tests? Do you begin each class with the mindset that you will learn something new from the students, not just them learning from you?

There is a really big natural phenomenon that is just a few months away—the April 8th total eclipse. Maybe you haven't had a chance to prepare for this, and perhaps you are feeling overwhelmed. Don't worry—HASTI has put together resources for you! This is too big an event to skip over. Here are three things you can do now to be prepared.

The first thing is to make sure you are yourself educated. Maybe you feel like you know very little about eclipses. Don't worry! There are a collection of links posted at the [HASTI eclipse website](#) that can help you get started. IDOE has a comprehensive page with lots of [eclipse lesson plans](#) and activities for different age levels. NSTA has posted an [Eclipse Guide for Educators](#).

In addition, there are some key things that you want to figure out. In your city or town, what is the start time of partiality? Will your location experience totality? If so, when will it start, and for how many minutes will it last? Has your school adopted a special schedule for the day?

The second thing that you can do, once you have educated yourself, is to talk to others! One of the things that has come up again and again in various eclipse related planning meetings is the importance of making sure your administrators are well informed. In the past, there have been documented instances of school administrators deciding at the last minute to hold all students inside during the time of an eclipse. The best course of action is not to make assumptions about your principal or administrator. On the one hand, don't assume that they will be reactionary and not allow any students outside on the day of the eclipse. On the other hand, don't assume that they are so enlightened that they would never dream of depriving students of the opportunity. Instead, take this opportunity to educate them about the importance of an eclipse, as well as its ability to inspire awe. Talk about the many ways that an eclipse can be viewed safely. There is a great guide for talking with administrators that is posted at [NSTA's Eclipse](#) page. Check it out!

Full listing of authors and contacts can be found at the end of this article.



Published by the Hoosier Association of Science Teachers, Inc. (<https://hasti.org/>) ISSN 2475-451x

© Williams, 2023. **Open Access** This journal is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial NonDerivative 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction without revision in any non-commercial medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license.

The third thing you can do now is figure out what equipment will be needed so your students can safely observe the eclipse. If you attend the upcoming HASTI/ICTM conference, you will receive a classroom set of glasses that can be used to observe the sun directly (when it is completely blocked by the moon, it can be safely viewed without glasses, but only for those few short minutes of totality). If you think you will need more than that for your students at your school, now is the time order. Don't wait until February or March—the companies such as American Paper Optics, Rainbow Symphony, and others may well be sold out!

[Here is a list of approved eclipse glasses vendors!](#)

We have links to videos on the HASTI page that shows how to create simple pinhole viewers as well. Come to the conference in February to talk to other teachers to get even more ideas.

Finally, I leave you with a challenge: at our HASTI/ICTM conference in February, connect with your colleagues from around the state in a way you have not tried before. If you have never stayed after the last talk of the day, I encourage you to come to the Exhibit Hall Sneak Peek on Sunday evening, or to the Board Game Night on Monday evening. We have a number of field trips available—give it a try! Another terrific opportunity to meet people and expand your network is to volunteer. We will need help at the check-in desk, hanging signs, moving projectors, and many other tasks. Helping is a way to meet new people and help out your organization. Whatever you do, I hope you find the upcoming conference enjoyable and enlightening. I hope to see you there!



Photo by Lisa Kern, 2017

Author

Craig Williams (craig.williams@nwesc.k12.in.us) is the 2023-24 HASTI president. He teaches Physics at Northwestern H.S. in Kokomo, IN.