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Vandy scientists want to make science fun for Metro students

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Reported by Regina Raccuglia - [email](#)

NASHVILLE, TN (WSMV) - Just one week after we learned that ACT scores across the state have dropped, at least one Metro school is taking a new approach at making science and math fun.

Leah Potter's hands-on approach with second graders may be the reason they're learning to love science. But Ms. Potter isn't a Metro school teacher.

She's a Vanderbilt scientist.

"You've got to bring it down to their level, but it's totally doable," she said.

Potter is part of the Scientists in the Classroom partnership with Metro Schools. The program helps first through 12th graders drop their fears about math a science by having fun.

And for students like Arayna Clark, it works.

"Excited and extremely forgetful, because I love science," Clark said.

Hattie Cotton STEM Magnet Elementary is the first elementary school in Metro to use the program. As Metro Schools leaders face a problem with low math and science scores, they hope this may be a long-term solution.

"Not every kid learns by learns by being hammered by a text book. It's the things you really experience that help you remember," Potter said.

The program has been in place for about 12 years, but they've never been able to come into an elementary school. Now, they can thanks to some Race to the Top [funding](#).

"By helping these kids learn science and math, that's also going to improve their reading and test-taking ability. And I think it will be really good for their education overall," Potter said.

15 scientists will be working in eight Metro schools this year.

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