

The John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School has had an exciting second year. We welcomed the addition of 50 students and their families from Batavia Public School District. Along with these students, we welcomed two teachers from Batavia Public School District. As we are finishing another successful year, I wanted to highlight what is currently happening in our school and some events which are upcoming.

On March 8th, we held our Energy Fair. Over 300 people from our communities attended, including over 100 STEM Partnership School families. The event was held as part of our NEED Energizing Student Potential (ESP) Grant which helps to educate students about energy conservation. STEM Partnership Students shared a variety of projects from their Energy unit. Families were also educated on ways to conserve energy their homes.

On March 15th, parents of incoming 3rd graders from our partner districts were invited to attend our Parent Informational Meeting. During this meeting, prospective parents heard a presentation from STEM Partnership School administration and teachers, corporate and not for profit partners, and Aurora University STEM faculty. Each partner district also answered questions specific to their district during breakout sessions. Parents were given the opportunity to tour the STEM Partnership School and walk the Aurora University campus.

In regards to our unique STEM curriculum, elementary students are currently working in their Geology and Space unit and Weather, Climate, and Human Impact unit. In third grade, as part of their Weather and Climate unit, students will be investigating clouds. Fourth graders will be studying rocks and where the Earth fits into our universe. In fifth grade, students will be learning about stars, the sun, and the moon.

In middle school, students are currently finishing up their Forces and Motion unit and ending the year in their Weather and Climate unit. Sixth graders are studying the physics of sports and games. We have representatives from IMSA coming to give presentations about different sports. They will also be analyzing baseball bat materials. Our seventh graders are studying transportation infrastructures and will be engineering rockets. Our English Language Arts teacher is also working with Aurora University to design lessons focusing on building bridges. She will be connecting this project with material science which was the focus in their last unit. In eighth grade, they are studying robotics and building robots using Lego Mindstorms.

We will be finishing up PARCC testing this week, and make up assessments being given the following weeks as needed. Last year's PARCC results will be incorporated in this year's evaluation report that Dr. Elizabeth Oyer of Evalsolutions Inc. is currently working on. As part of our evaluation, in March, Dr. Oyer held focus groups with Aurora University faculty, teachers, students, and parents. Teachers are also continuing to administer pre and post assessments and collect student work samples to submit to Dr. Oyer.

On April 9th, approximately thirty STEM Partnership school students in grades 5th through 8th participated in the ComEd/Exelon Mathlete's Day at SciTech Museum in Aurora. The day consisted of stations where the students designed DaVinci parachutes and engineered their own flight machines that they were then able to fly in SciTech's vertical wind turbine. They explored and used Lego Mind Storm equipment and participated in a M & M half life and radiation activity. They learned all about nuclear energy and how ComEd supplies our energy. They were able to get into a ComEd truck bucket and put on their uniform. This event was a great way for students to apply some of the concepts that they learn at our school.

On April 13th, Ken Schroth with the City of Aurora provided professional development for the teachers during our School Improvement Day for our upcoming weather and climate units. The discussion focused on emergency weather preparedness and flooding in Aurora.

Our Coding Workshop for teachers, staff, faculty and parents made possible through the Schmidgall Foundation was held at the end of February and the beginning of March. We had approximately 30 teachers, including some STEM teachers and teachers from our partner districts, along with AU faculty and STEM parents. A coding after-school club will be offered in the fall for STEM Partnership School students. The clubs that we have had this year include: Chess, FTC Robotics, Lego Robotics, Yearbook, MathCOUNTS.

Our second year has been productive and eventful. Our students look forward to coming to school and learning more about the topics that most interest them. We continue to look for ways to grow as a school and welcome the community into our students' learning in the coming years. Starting in August, I will begin sharing quarterly articles regarding the STEM Partnership School.

Arin Carter, Director
John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School

Upcoming events:

- 8th grade is going to **Scheck and Siress** as part of their Forces and Motion unit. They will study a 7 access robot and be doing design with CAD - April 21st
- Elementary field trip to the **Planetarium at Waubonsie Valley High School** as part of their Geology and Space unit - May 2nd
- 6th grade field trip to the **Kane County Cougars** game & meeting with coaches to observe the physics of baseball and discuss purchasing of bats based on materials as part of Forces and Motion unit - May 4th
- **CBS Mobile Weather Lab** will visit the school in May 23rd
- **8th grade Ceremony** - May 24th at 6 pm in Perry Theatre