



60 kits have been ordered and arrived so far. Teachers will be learning how to use their new kits on Friday during professional development. The students are super excited!

STEM Grant Awarded

Last week, we were awarded a STEM grant from the WCSD Foundation from the Delmar Yoder Estate. We already had our wish list created, ergo ordering for the first round of kits was done in a few clicks. We already have some of our items and are incredibly excited! Teachers had an opportunity this week to open up their kits and play around so they could begin learning how to use them with students. We are looking forward to the meaningful, engaging, memorable, hands-on learning! Included below is the article from last week's Knightly News.

Press Release

Subject: St. James School receives \$10,000 STEM Grant

By: Meghan Hamilton, WCSD Foundation Board Member

The Washington Community School District Foundation awarded a \$10,000 grant to St. James Elementary School during a check presentation ceremony on October 6, 2021. The funding was

part of the Delmar Yoder Estate that was endowed to the WCSD Foundation. Mr. Yoder was passionate about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), and his intentions were for the funds to support students of all ages of the Washington Community School District in this area. Since 98% of St. James' students transfer to the Washington schools after grade 5, the Foundation concluded that this project would fall in line with Mr. Yoder's goals.

St. James School Principal Rebecca Clarahan had applied for the grant in August 2021, sighting the school's request for additional funding on several STEM projects. The STEM materials purchased will be used for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. As part of the new curriculum, students will have the opportunity to learn hands-on about robotics, crystals, hydropower, structural engineering, physics and pre-coding.

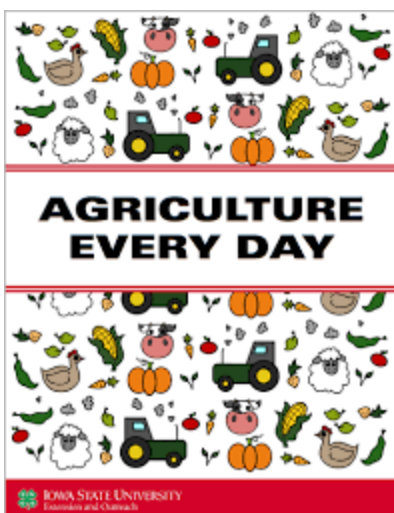
"Last year our first-grade students started working with basic coding in our technology class, using academic language to explain what they were doing," said Clarahan. "Now we can have hands-on learning that will take place with our students, with the ability for progression from easy to more challenging activities, especially with the coding."

The students will be exposed to real life applications and how their core subjects work together. The grant will allow them to have early instruction in different science elements such as chemistry, inertia, friction and physics, which are not normally covered until later in middle or high school.

"Students love science and hands-on activities. One of our responsibilities is to prepare students for jobs that we do not even know exist yet," said Clarahan. "By giving them access to these kits, students will be able to expand their knowledge and interest base. They can incorporate what they know from their lives and interests, into what they are doing in school. This will spark some real excitement and engagement."

In addition to classroom STEM kits, St. James School also plans to have a school science fair this year.

Foundation President Jeff Cuddeback noted that additional STEM funding is available for all schools within the Washington Community School District. Interested teachers are encouraged to speak with their school administrator to submit an application, which should be emailed to wcsdfoundation@gmail.com.



Agriculture in the Classroom

Students in preschool thru fifth grade will have monthly agricultural instruction from Diane Rinner through the Iowa State Extension Office. Some of the topics include:

- Prek - strawberry DNA, grain moisture content, test tube hydroponics
- K - turkeys; farm to fork, egg hatching unit, farmers and gardeners
- 1st - corn to cereal to cotton to blue jeans, vermicomposting

- 2nd - hungry Iowa caterpillar, dairy products - liquid to solid, mighty soybean/seed germination
- 3rd - wheat milling, adventures of Flat Aggie, how much is dirt worth
- 4th - history of agriculture, family farms then and now, futures farming
- 5th - apple grafting, test tube hydroponics, soybeans to car parts, garden in a glove, keeping soil in its place



I stopped by third grade during science. I learned how to tell the difference between male and female crayfish. All of the students wanted me to touch the crayfish or to hold them. They thought it was very funny that I didn't get too close or want to touch/hold them. In six years, I haven't yet. I am glad that the students are so BRAVE and curious! The girls really giggled about how nervous I was! Students could identify parts of the crayfish and tell how to hold them, where to pick them up. It is always a treat to see our students fully engaged in their learning!

After School Tutoring

A flyer for after school tutoring was sent home with students this week. Please see the attached flyer to sign your student(s) up. At this time, the information available includes:

- Tutoring will take place at St. James.



- Tutoring will be Wednesday and Thursday.
- We start in January after the winter break.
- A snack will be provided from 3:15-3:30pm.
- Instruction will take place from 3:30-4:30pm.
- Math and reading are the areas of focus.
- **Students must be signed up by October 25, a FIRM deadline so we can continue to make plans.**



THANK YOU

Thank you to Brandon and Meghan Hamilton for donating two basketballs, two soccer balls, and two footballs for use at recess! Their generosity is greatly appreciated!

Children's Mass

Mass is at 8:25am on Wednesdays. Visitors are welcome to join us in person. Masks are recommended for all guests. You can also join us via Facebook Live.

Mass Schedule:

Wednesday, October 20	Mrs. Clarahan/Mrs. Marek
Wednesday, October 27	Mrs. Fritz
Wednesday, November 3	Mrs. Heisdorffer
Wednesday, November 10	Mrs. Luers/Mrs. Moeller
Wednesday, November 17	Ms. Matheson
Wednesday, November 24	Mrs. Timmins
Wednesday, December 1	Mrs. Sheetz
Wednesday, December 8	Ms. Spears
Wednesday, December 15	Ms. Matheson
Wednesday, December 22	Mrs. Fritz



Calendar:

Wednesday, October 20	School board meeting 6:30pm
Friday, October 22	End of 1st term; Grades due; Vision screening
Monday, October 25	Begin 2nd term
Tuesday, October 26	Report cards sent out
Thursday, October 28	Halloween Harvest Hooray
Friday, October 29	No school; Professional Development

Friday, November 5	Early dismissal 1pm; Professional Development
Monday, November 8	No School; Professional Development
Thursday, November 11	Preschool-5th grade conferences 3:30-7:30pm
Monday, November 15	Picture re-take day
Tuesday, November 16	Preschool-5th grade conferences 3:30-7:30pm
Wednesday, November 17	School board meeting 6:30pm
Friday, November 19	Early dismissal 1pm; Professional Development
Wednesday, November 24	Early out; Thanksgiving break
Monday, November 29	No School; Teacher Comp Day

FYI -

Preschool Orientation has been moved from Wednesday, February 9 to Wednesday, February 2.

We have St. James School decals for sale in the office. They are 3" in diameter and would look fantastic on your vehicle(s)! Show your St. James Pride and support by purchasing a decal for \$3.00. Let us know if we can "stick it to you."

