

THE STEAM MACHINE



Mary Gage Peterson Elementary's Monthly STEAM Update

Kankakee Farmers share experience

In preparation for the upcoming *Kids Day at the Farm* trip in March, our 4th grade students hosted some visitors from the Kankakee County Farm Bureau. The farmers shared information about the different roles and responsibilities that go into their farm as well as the different types of crops that are produced on the farm.

Stay tuned for an update after these students visit the Kankakee farm in a few weeks!



100th Day of School

AT-HOME STEM ACTIVITY

Peterson students will reach the 100th Day of School on Wednesday, February 8th. Celebrate with your students by attempting this at-home STEM activity from invent.org!

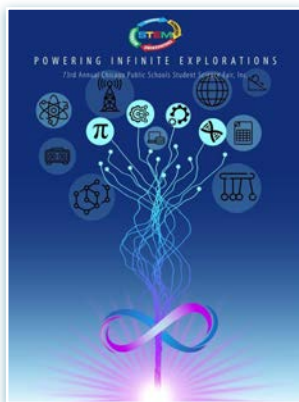
Materials Needed:

Index cards • Masking tape • Pennies

At-Home Instructions:

1. Sketch out possible designs for an index card tower that can hold 100 pennies.
2. Challenge your student to make the tallest, most stable tower possible. Consider folding and rolling the cards in the tower.
3. Carefully place 100 cents, one penny at a time, on the tower.
4. Once the tower is stable and complete, think back on what else students have accomplished in the first 100 days of the school year!

Students advance to Regionals



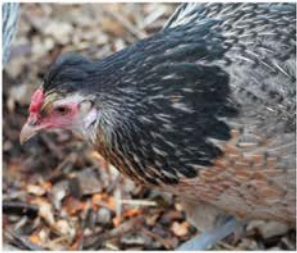

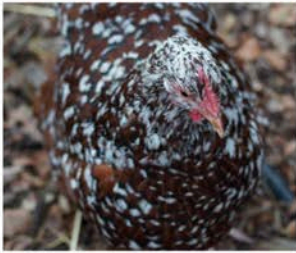
After placing in the top three at our Peterson STEM Exhibition last month, several students completed the requirements to advance their research projects to the Chicago Public Schools Regional STEM Fair where their work will be judged alongside that of students from other CPS schools in our region.

Students will receive scoring feedback from the judges with the chance to advance to the city-wide STEM Exhibition in March. Best of luck to all of our Peterson student researchers!

Peterson Chicken Coop residents identified!

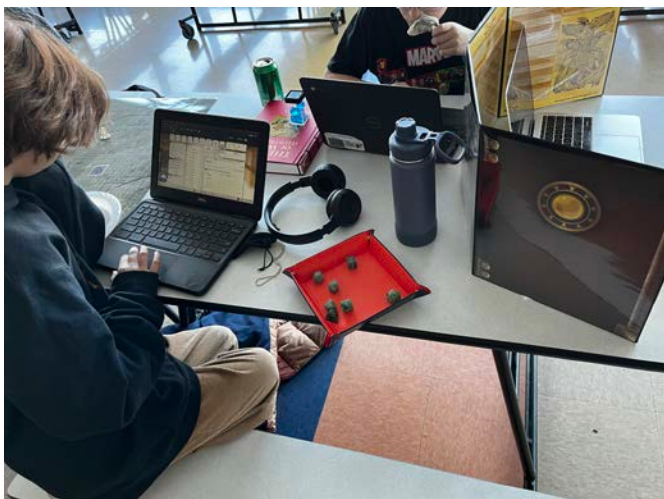
The friendly fowl who have made our Peterson Chicken Coop a home were recently identified thanks to the help of our 4th grade students! These students had the chance to learn about the different parts of our school coop including how the chickens get their food and water, why the chickens use the roosting bar, and how the chickens get in and out of their coop. "What's left," you ask? The chickens needed help picking their names!

Our 4th grade students all brainstormed ideas for the perfect name and shared their ideas with classmates in their homerooms. From there, each homeroom voted on a name for one of our feathered friends. Here's our newest-named chickens!

Room 125	Room 127	Room 128	Room 130
			
<i>Meet Beanie!</i> Cream Legbar Chicken	<i>Meet Skylar!</i> Silver Laced Wyandotte Chicken	<i>Meet Habibi!</i> Partridge Penedese Chicken	<i>Meet Dots!</i> Jubilee Orpington Chicken

D&D Marathon Goes the Distance

Mr. Tournis and the D&D Club recently embarked on a marathon gaming adventure on a Saturday afternoon in the Peterson cafeteria. Dungeons and Dragons, or more commonly abbreviated as D&D, is a fantasy role-playing game where students are able to create their own characters who get to experience different adventures in a fantasy setting. Students alternated between the tabletop game boards where the game is played and their individual computers where their characters are designed. This version of socially-interactive roleplaying helps critical thinking and problem solving abilities, honing math skills, as well as getting students in the habit of telling detail-oriented stories.



Concluding Design Thinking

Middle school students in grades 6-8 are finishing up their exploration of the CPS Maker U Curriculum this month. The curriculum was designed by the Department of STEM to provide students with leveled learning opportunities across multiple disciplines.

Students collaborated to find solutions to problems through a series of steps known as the Design Thinking Process. Stay tuned next month to see our final results from the Design Thinking Course! Advisories will earn badges to display their group's work, and students will also receive individual digital badges that they can add to the email signatures to showcase their hard work!



STEAM Career Spotlight

I AM A **POPULATION GENETICIST**



I love hip hop and spending time with friends. I named my plants after rappers. I host a podcast. I grew up with little privilege and had to work my way through college. I use genetics and technology to build a more inclusive world.

JANINA JEFF, PHD



January's STEAM Career Spotlight featured Dr. Janina Jeff, a population geneticist who studies the human genome to help create technology that can help develop treatment for certain diseases. Dr. Jeff specializes in focusing on researching specific populations that have been historically underrepresented across genetics research.

Teachers then have resources available to talk more about our career spotlights in the classroom.

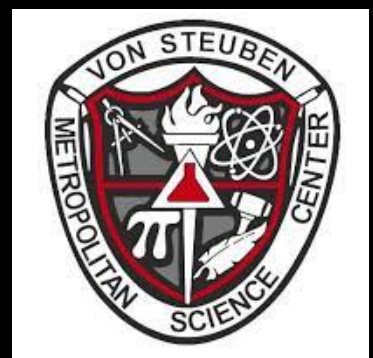
If you want to talk more about Dr. Janina Jeff and population genetics at home, scan here!



Upcoming!

CTE Exploration Day

Next month, select 7th and 8th grade students will have the opportunity to attend the CTE (Career and Technical Education) Middle School Exploration Day at nearby Von Steuben High School. Von Steuben, in collaboration with Illinois Project Lead the Way, offers a pre-engineering course of study to catalyze lifelong interest in science, technology, engineering, and math.



Can you support our STEAM programming?

Do you have ideas for any events, field trips, guest speakers, assemblies, or other opportunities that could supplement our Peterson STEAM programming? Are you interested in volunteering with one of our initiatives? We are always looking for ways to elevate our student experience!



If you are interested, please contact Mr. Mitchel Meighen, our STEAM Specialist, at msmeighen@cps.edu.