

Ukulele Music

Keith: welcome to LeeCoSchools Edcast number 12 with the Project Lead the Way the parent Expo

Kyle: yeah so it was really cool we got to go out to one of our elementary schools East Smith station Elementary School and at the end of their four week program each of the grade levels had to present a project yeah it's all project-based learning and student driven learning which we'll talk a little bit about but every one of the grade levels had this really unique thing that they were either a problem they were trying to solve or or something that really highlighted

Keith: saving a tiger

Kyle: right I think current second graders had a tiger that had fallen into a pit and I had to they discuss machines simple machines and the combination those machines and how to how to achieve that task I know the first graders had

Keith: it was preventing landslides or something

Kyle: preventing landslides right they had to structure rocks and trees in a way that if a lot of water came down the houses wouldn't give way and so a really really cool curriculum for them to be involved with especially at such a young age so it was it was fantastic this is gonna be a little bit of a mini episode just because of the amount of time we had

Keith: and it's gonna be a little bit noisier cuz we're recording

Kyle: we're live on the scene

Keith: live on the scene in a gymnasium full of children so it might be a little louder than you're used to from us to stick with us because I promise the projects that we get people talking about it's really cool absolutely and if you want to learn more about Project Lead the Way you can listen to episode 1 of our podcast which is with the PLTW coordinator for this year you can learn all kinds of information about that and so keep that keep your eyes open next spring for sign up to try and get your children into it if you were interested in doing that and if at the end of this podcast you have any question comments complaints criticisms compliments colloquialisms conundrums or concerns as always you can find us on the web at www.lee.k12.al.us/edcast you can find us on twitter @LeeCoSchools you can find us on facebook at facebook.com/leecoschools you can find us on the Lee County app where we have our own icon or you can email us at edcast@lee.k12.al.us...Kyle...

Kyle: here we go

Funky Transition Music

Keith: alright so we are here at East Smith station Elementary for the PLTW parent Expo is that correct

Kyle: yeah I think so this is at the end of their four week long event each grade level had these curriculums where and so looking around the room here we've got these really unique egg drops for the kindergarten we've got this is a second grade is an engineering module and it's they're like working with landslides so they had to design something that would keep some type of structure that would keep the houses from falling off in the end of the pit they've got trees and rocks and everything

Keith: when when water is poured on him to keep him from sliding down

Kyle: we've got over here we've got robotics there's a little robot so they've got driving around some tasks today over here they've got what I was told by one young lady earlier was a complex machine with a fulcrum and a pulley and a lever and their goal is to try to lift the tiger a certain amount so tons are really cool stuff going on here and this is just at one of the schools we had nine schools this this summer

Keith: Wow

Kyle: that were doing that so so we'll just we're just going to talk a second so we're staying here with Christie Blythe

Keith: media specialist here at East

Kyle: right so tell us what we just watch we just saw there's a bunch of stuff on tables here to sort of give us a picture

PLTW Parent Expo: so this was our engineering expo that is a culmination showcase event of our PLTW project lead the way Summer Academy so with each module that the kids did with every grade level they wanted to share their final projects the processes and the thoughts and the collaboration with their classmates that it took to get to this point in the module they go through they built our knowledge they experiment with things so they do the engineering model a lot a little bit of the scientific model and then we have these fabulous products where they actually get to create and then test to see if what they have created actually accomplishes the goal for the outcome they're aware of the outcome from the start so they have that mind of what the goal is at the end

Kyle: it's like this table right here we've got

PLTW Parent Expo: this is a kindergarten module and they had to build houses that actually withstood wind they had different materials to construct their houses trim function another thing that they had to build was something that would hold an egg come in mrs. Ligon and talk to us about it for a moment but the kids experience

Keith: so we're being joined by Miss Ligon

PLTW Parent Expo: our module was structure and function okay so Jack and the Beanstalk after reading that then they had to create with pipe cleaners and a Beanstalk that would hold the egg you know but Stan holding the egg at the top

Keith: so do they kill a giant at the end of the summer

PLTW Parent Expo: and then we went with the three little pigs and then we did group houses for each pig had a miniature blower that after we built it in it rod we had to see if it would withstand the force from the blower okay nice so and we found that stick house is the strongest and then then that we had a story with the PLTW story that the problem was creating a paintbrush that would be that would paint dots straight lines and flat lines so that was the other project that year they created their paintbrushes names

Kyle: and these are the kindergarteners

PLTW Parent Expo: kindergartners going into first grade yes it was a joy

Kyle: so how do you think pltw went this year

PLTW Parent Expo: oh I think it went really well making it well yes I've also been joined by Miss Rogers third-grade

Keith: what did the third graders do

PLTW Parent Expo: the third grade group built simple machines and tested magnets for the most part so they started out by having a task to just build something that could move a load before we introduce any kind of simple machines and then they had to build each individual simple machine using the one of the apps on the iPad and they had to follow the video and it showed them step-by-step how to build it they did all on their own using the vex kits then the third thing they had to do is build a compound machine using any two simple machines of their choice which is a little bit of a struggle for them in the beginning sure yeah transfer the force from one simple machine to the next simple machine and then the final project will then the third project was the magnet so they tested a bunch of different magnets and they found out what was magnetic and what was not and then the final machine I had to build a machine to move a tiger and it had the tiger was trapped they did an introduction story in the beginning about a tiger being trapped in a moat so their machine has to lift a tiger four inches it has to move the tiger and set the tiger back down safely in another area and they had to include a magnet and they also had to include at least two simple machines most of all of the machines were actually successful yeah it was really good

Kyle: well so every table here has something very different from each other but each one is very interesting so you know your table there has got these really tall things with string and hooks and tigers and stuff and so it's really cool looks like it was a lot of fun

PLTW Parent Expo: the kids really enjoyed it and it was fun for us too super simple and what it was fun to watch the kids have fun

Keith: so are y'all going to teach it again next year?

PLTW Parent Expo: yes! absolutely. we've actually had other teachers who did not sign up for this summer come to me and say hey if y'all are doing this again next summer we are interested in teaching because they could see how much fun the teachers were having, their own children, how much fun they were having each day at the camp we are super excited about our first annual summer academy and we look forward to

Keith: y'all are going to be like the hipsters though like we were in it before it was cool

PLTW Parent Expo: and East is actually the only school in the district that is going to be piloting the PLTW program during the school year this year with our third grade all the teachers are going to be teaching Project Lead the Way modules to their kids during

Kyle: and so it's very similar curriculum to what you did here this summer

PLTW Parent Expo: exactly the same thing yes we just have four modules so they will do a module per nine weeks so the kids will get implements PLTW stem actually in the classrooms for third grade but if that's successful then we're going to add on other grades is our long term goal to be a pltw school and our fourth grade teacher mrs. Phelps who has just joined us she is actually going to be teaching the module in her classroom this upcoming year even though 4th grade isn't a pilot because she actually enjoys the program that much.

PLTW Parent Expo: it's fantastic it's probably the easiest science program I've ever taught and everything is there you don't have to do a bunch of extra which I mean regular classroom teachers do extra i can supplement with the stuff we are and do this in the kids are actively engaging their in terms of their own learning so with my group they had to learn about restraint systems seatbelts the history of the seat belt why they're important and they had to build their own car and their own restraint system and their egg passenger had to be able to travel down a ramp the end of collision and not crack and two of them cracked so that means we know they had just minor injuries if they were really humans versus when there were no restraint systems so they were they loved it that was they they were all about trying to build that car so that their their passion would be safe that's really cool I mean I was able to tell them you know when I was a kid we didn't have seatbelts in the car you know not that old and we didn't have to be built in the car and they can't believe that so we learned about how Volvo created the first seat belt and things like that and say they they've had a really good I'm really looking forward to using it they learned of course about kinetic and potential energy and collisions we had collisions with our vehicles before we put the eggs in them to see the impact of of what a collision does and how energy transfers so it's a really good unit a really good program

PLTW Parent Expo: posing real world problems to the kids so that they can actually get real-life situations that they're trying to solve you know that's how every module and the program works they have activities a project and it always built to a real-world problem and it fits the curriculum like it's aligned with the standards correctly where sometimes we have programs that don't always align this one does you have to supplement and with this I'll supplement from some of the other stuff we have we also supplement with a lot of Safari montage and a lot of Bill Nye there's Magic School Bus things like that even at fourth grade they love that stuff and it gets it to where they can really understand it and then we use some of those about kinetic and potential and then they fully understood the whole impact of a collision and what happens so it's very very beneficial

Keith: that's awesome yeah so next year they're gonna learn about airbags that what is next year for the little eggs put a m80 back there and boom!

PLTW Parent Expo: it kept them so engaged that was not, I told Mrs. Blythe, it's very hard to be hands-off as the teacher and let the kids really do it on their own this allows me to step back and actually get to enjoy what they're doing where cuz they're responsible for their own learning yeah that's a big deal

Kyle: well that was gonna be my question is how did that change your experience you how long you've been teaching for a while

PLTW Parent Expo: I've been teaching eighteen years

Kyle: right so with with this shift how does that change the way that you teach

PLTW Parent Expo: I feel like now I will definitely be better at allowing them to be responsible for their own learning and for me I'm very analytical I like it a certain way with this I just let them go and saw that they could do it and I feel like this been this will be good for our kids who have special needs our ELLs it fits every student group we have where I can let them be responsible for their own learning and I'm going to change I'll have to change myself and back off a little bit but this allowed me four weeks to practice it

Kyle: and with them being in charge of their own learning it kept them engaged more you think

PLTW Parent Expo: absolutely and it allowed for me to be able to assess I see where I can use this in the classroom to assess what they're doing just you know not a formal assessment but still see that they're really learning and ask good questions it's gonna be great and I'm really planning to help I'm gonna do the fourth grade module we already have and then I'm gonna see if I can borrow the third grade ones and just work through them so the kids are learning the process then they the next year it'll make me a little better at it too

Kyle: I can speak from a parent side that every time Talen came home he always had something fun to tell me and it seemed like he was engaged and then seeing the set that you guys have here it really looks great now people would be upset if they didn't sign up for next year

PLTW Parent Expo: we hope to have a larger population of our kids here next year word of mouth we're gonna advertise on our ESPN news little snippets pictures quick talks with kids and teachers to get that exposure that awareness out about the program so hopefully next year we will have more of the children that are exposed to PLTW

Kyle: yeah that's great

Keith: absolutely that's great well thank you all for sitting down or not sitting standing up with us thanks for chatting with us um and this is awesome and continue to be awesome

Ukulele Music