



Press Release

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Washington Elementary Students Display Tech Skills during Family STEM Night

Lynwood – Building toothpick towers with mini-marshmallows, guiding tiny robots with iPads and creating lava lamps with common household items, Washington Elementary School students demonstrated for their parents a comprehensive knowledge of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects during a Family STEM Night on Feb. 7.

Parents attended a series of workshops, and were introduced to the extensive K-6 STEM curriculum at Washington, as well as to digital resources to best support their children at home. Among the popular exhibits were an inflatable planetarium and a mobile gaming truck. Students were entered in a drawing for a tablet.

“We want Washington families to know that they play a crucial role in their children’s education and that we are here to assist them when they have questions or concerns about our digital platforms,” Washington Principal Shamell Wilson said. “Whether they want to check their child’s grades, learn about Google education tools or receive tips on digital citizenship, our doors are always open.”

Washington students begin training in STEM subjects as kindergartners, learning how to conduct a simple Google search. Each grade level learns a new concept – from programming robots to computer coding to Google Apps – augmented by hands-on activities that integrate critical thinking and collaborative learning.

Washington third-grade student Yuridia Lopez displayed her problem-solving abilities, winning a toothpick tower competition with a tower that measured over a foot tall. Lopez, who enjoys constructing projects with slime, had a simple solution for building her tower.

“I looked at a picture of a toothpick tower and I tried to make it just like that,” Lopez said. “I like to do science. You create and learn things.”

Students oohed and aahed as a STEM instructor from the afterschool program Think Together showed students how to construct a lava lamp with water, vegetable oil, food coloring, Alka Seltzer and a tiny light. A volunteer from the National College Resources Foundation challenged students to build a barge using only aluminum foil, masking tape and straws. Prizes were awarded to the students who could float 10 marbles on their boats.

Parents were introduced to the Aeries Parent Portal, an online communication tool that allows easy access to grades, test scores and attendance rates. They also examined online education support tools like Thinkcentral.com (for math) and Journeys (for reading), and received advice on providing cyber safety for their children.

“Washington’s STEM programs are empowering our children to dream big and establish high expectations, as they

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develop the 21st-century technology skills necessary to compete for jobs,” LUSD Superintendent Gudiel R. Crosthwaite said. “The innovative thinking at Washington is indicative of the support throughout our Lynwood Unified community.”

Washington’s Family STEM Night was the result of a School Site Council (SSC) meeting in which members addressed the need to better support parents who want to help their children but have schedule constraints or are unfamiliar with the Washington curriculum. As teachers added their input, they realized the necessity for organizing a family night that incorporated all STEM classes and activities, including educational workshops for the parents.

“As STEM education continues to expand, it is imperative that students begin to learn the basics of technology as they would with their ABCs and multiplication tables, and our children continue to amaze us with the ease that they absorb this information and apply it to their projects,” LUSD Board President Alfonso Morales said. “Washington Elementary understands that for students to succeed, a combination of teacher and parent support is required.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

021418_LUSD_STEMNIGHT_1: Washington Elementary School students construct lava lamps from common household items, adding food coloring to a glass containing water and vegetable oil during a science demonstration at the school’s Family STEM Night on Feb. 7.

021418_LUSD_STEMNIGHT_2: Washington Elementary School third-grader Yuridia Lopez holds a toothpick tower she created for an engineering demonstration during Family STEM Night on Feb. 7.

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★ People of great character who inspire and lead by example ★ The instilling of courage to be creative ★ The transformative