

NEWS & NOTES

from Elementary Instructional Technology

Introducing Elementary STEM

Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, all students in grades K-6 will participate in a STEM class during their specials rotation, which will replace the computer lab special. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, and this class will engage students in deeper learning about scientific and mathematical concepts, with an infusion of technology and an emphasis on real-world, authentic learning. STEM class will incorporate two grade-level units from the PA Science curriculum and will involve students in many hands-on learning and experimenting opportunities. Students will continue keyboarding activities (Qwertytown) during regular classroom time, and creativity and productivity skills with Google Drive and Office products will be exercised through project-based work in different content areas. Students will also continue to receive digital citizenship lessons during library special, in STEM, and through guidance lessons. Mr. Shugar (NH), Mrs. McCabe (BB), and Mr. Larkin (BR) are looking forward to leading these STEM classes and igniting our students' love of learning!

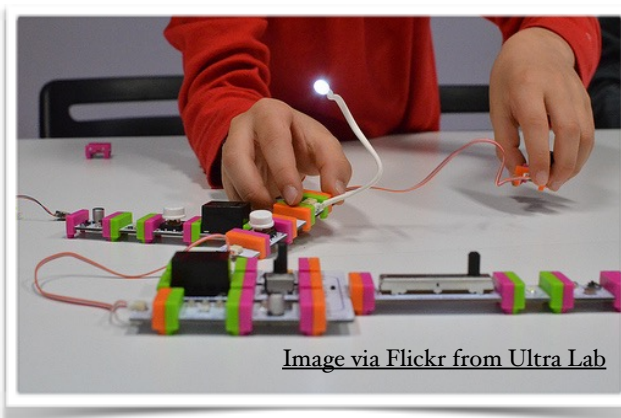
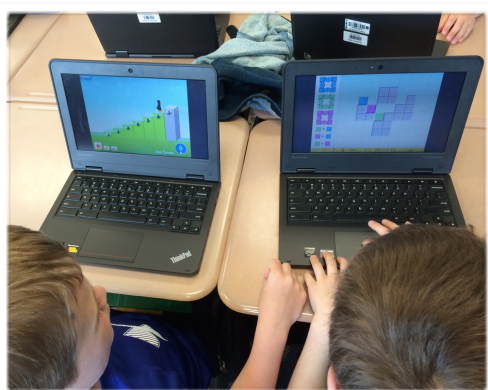


Image via Flickr from Ultra Lab



Challenge Your Minds with ST Math this Summer!

While we hope your children spend ample time running, playing, jumping, leaping, exploring, boating, fishing, swimming, and frolicking outdoors this summer, there may be an occasional rainy day or two when they might find some time to go online and engage with their favorite math game, **ST Math**! "JiJi Math" is available for students to use over the summer, and they even host a Summer Challenge!

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Your child's school will send home information about how you can access ST Math from home this summer, along with a Summer Break Challenge form. This will allow students to track their accomplishments in the program, and they can hand it into next year's math teacher when they return to school.



You can also visit <http://mindresearch.org/gameathon/> online and sign up your child to participate in the 2015 Game-a-thon. This year's theme is "Math Your Own Adventure," and the Game-a-thon *"challenges students to design, build and share a game that features creative and unusual solutions to mathematical problems."* Top entries are invited to participate in the 2015 math fair in Chicago!

Many of the other programs your children use at school are available for summer access. Visit your child's Symbaloo page to find links to the activities. If you are ever unable to sign into a program, it may be due to summer account maintenance. Please try again or contact me if you have a specific question about program access. Symbaloo pages are found on our district website under Operations (top menu) -> Technology Services -> Elementary Student Links (on the left).



Rotational Learning

Beginning next year, all Elanco grades 1-6 classrooms will be using the rotational learning instructional model in language arts and math classes. This model is a way to organize the classroom and small group rotations to ensure students are receiving instruction targeted to their specific academic needs, as well as have them engage in collaborative learning activities with classmates and complete independent learning activities. Students will rotate among station groups (similar to the way many students have participated in small group instruction in the past), and will engage with the teacher in a **direct instruction**

group, work on projects with peers during the **collaborative station**, and interact with digital content providers such as ST Math, KidBiz, and Reading Eggs during their **independent station**. Student progress on all activities will be monitored and used to design and adjust instruction to best meet the needs of the learner. This model helps ensure our students are active, engaged learners throughout the day!

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