



Henry County Schools Pleasant Grove Elementary STEM School

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Located in Metro Atlanta off I-75 at the northern end of Henry County, Pleasant Grove is one of 27 elementary schools and the only STEM Certified School in the county. We received STEM Certification in April of 2016 and since then our doors have been open to anyone wanting to see STEM in action. As a Title I Distinguished School, we focus on closing the achievement gap with all learners. Through the unique design of our STEM education program, we have experienced significant gains in Science on the Georgia Milestone Assessment. Our school Partners in Education program has grown immensely as well which aligns closely with the long-term goals of our STEM endeavors. The excitement and fun is not just for the teachers and students, but it extends to parents as well. Our school has increased overall parental involvement as *everyone* seeks to be involved with the STEM initiatives happening at Pleasant Grove.



On a visit to PGE you can observe students engaged in learning in the outdoor science lab or collaborating in the hands-on Science Center. Students may be actively engaged and participating in integrated STEM units or competing in a challenge during a monthly Engineering Day. You may also observe the playful activity of the Monarch butterflies, the inquisitive elements of pond life, the tantalizing pizza garden, the innovative GMO garden, and functioning rain barrels that help to keep our garden fresh and vibrant. Through these many activities, teachers and students are immersed in learning opportunities aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence. The students follow the engineering design process to Explore, Design, Create, Try and Improve until they have developed a solution or can articulate the outcome of their learning experience.

Outside of our integrated STEM Units and monthly Engineering days, the school's focus is on Environmental Education with an emphasis on solving real-world problems through Ecology and Technology. Each grade level participates in a yearlong problem-based learning unit that provides students with the opportunity to think critically, creatively, and collaboratively, while working outdoors and in our science lab. These projects conclude at the end of the year in conjunction with Georgia STEM Day with a Student Entrepreneur Market. Students sell items related to their yearlong study in the garden during this event.

The cornerstone of the STEM program here at PGE is our Science Lab. Through our Science Lab students are able to work in a co-teaching environment engaging in multiple hands-on labs connected to our integrated STEM



Units. Students gather all of the required knowledge to not only master the standard but to also articulate their learning experience. They then produce a prototype to meet the unit's design challenge. In combination with the science lab, students also engage with the community through mentorships, guest speakers, and field trip experiences. And as if the school year is not enough, PGE offers a STEM Summer Camp every June to students rising to grades 1- 5. The camp was designed to encourage basic engineering skills and to reinforce science and mathematics concepts in a fun and hands-on environment.

Through all of our rigorous learning opportunities, one thing remains constant, and that is teaching our students to persevere despite difficulty and to work rigorously to achieve success. Here at PGE we are one team, with one goal, and that goal is student success!

Anyone interested in visiting PGE's STEM program should contact Principal, Tracie Copper, or Science lab teacher, Lisa Mitchell, at 770-898-0176.

