

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Students Showcase Their STEAM Club Creations Through Annual Festival

Charleston, SC – Students and teachers at Ashley River Creative Arts celebrated their fifth annual STEAM club festival on Friday, May 17, 2019.

STEAM is an approach in education that utilizes science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics that allows students to use their critical thinking skills to further their understanding of problem-solving and collaboration with others.

“STEAM mimics the real world more so than subjects in isolation,” said Jennifer Waldron, STEAM program coordinator, and teacher of the year. “It increases the complexity of thinking because you are using a cross-curricular approach.”

The STEAM club at Ashley River was formed about five years ago when Waldron noticed that leading a robotics club had some limitations on student creativity and was merely competitive. She created the STEAM club which is led by students but monitored by Waldron and Matthew Carrington, a fourth-grade teacher.

The festival was held during the school day and allowed club members to showcase projects they worked on throughout the year.

Every year the theme for the festival varies due to the technologies available and student interests in creations. This year the theme was more focused on construction and creating games out of cardboard.

Some of these creations included a paint catapult, robot maze, stop-motion animation, programmed LEGO inventions, Makey Makey musical instruments, and more.

The festival allows these inventions to be presented but also influence other students to join, including minorities within the STEAM field.

“It was showcasing work, it was getting the population of our school aware and excited about STEAM, but it was also a recruiting tool because I wanted students to view it as ‘wow this is fun I don’t have to be an amazing coder’,” said Waldron.

It also has a positive impact on students within the club.

Office of Strategy and
Communications

Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Erica Taylor
Chief of Staff

"I think one of the things they get out of it is they understand what it's like to be a teacher first of all," said Carrington. "They definitely get communication skills. A lot of the students that we work with are not natural presenters, and we see that they come out of their shell during the year but especially at the event because they are passionate about what they are doing and want to show off to people."

Due to the positive impact of the club, the school is implementing STEAM learning into everyday learning next year at the school and Waldron, and Carrington hopes this will eventually influence the community to do the same.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.