

U N I O N E N D I C O T T TIGER TRENDS

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STEM curriculum continues to grow at UE

Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) are all taking priority in UE elementary schools with the introduction of new STEM labs in each building. From kindergarten to fifth grade, students are experiencing all the aspects of STEM and having fun, too.

Whether it be learning how to fly paper airplanes, building a snowflake or discovering what objects sink faster in cold or hot water, students are finding that STEM involves all sorts of skills. Hands-on activities give students the opportunity to see their experiments come to life and learn why certain outcomes occur. They investigate, hypothesize, experiment, predict and summarize throughout the different lab experiments. Not only are students learning all aspects of STEM, but they are practicing reading, writing and speaking skills as they work on their experiment, write down outcomes and summarize to the class their findings.

And it's not just elementary students who are benefiting from STEM. This year, both AGM and GFJ hosted STEM Day. High school students from different clubs and groups spent part of the day at each school to talk about ▶

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Tiger Pride-Rich Traditions & Boundless Opportunities

A message from

Superintendent Dr. Suzanne McLeod



As hard as it is to believe, we are in the second half of the 2016-17 school year. And it's just as hard for me to accept that we're well into the second half of the decade. Time seems to pass faster every school year. This is

why I continue to focus on how important attendance is in our schools. The school years pass too quickly and, if a child misses even two days a month, it can seriously affect their overall success.

At UE, we use many opportunities to recognize high achievement, including honor rolls, scholar-athlete events, and distinctions at the annual graduation ceremony. However, this year, we are broadening our recognitions to include excellence in attendance. Perhaps, when you drive down Main Street, you have seen the new electronic sign celebrating students at various schools with perfect attendance for a given month? Perhaps you have attended a board meeting when board members recognize students with excellence in attendance? These are our efforts to note this really important achievement.

And, while perfect attendance is certainly exemplary, sometimes illness strikes. We understand that. Recently, I asked our principals to analyze their attendance data to look at how many students have had three or fewer absences this school year. I'm very happy to report that, on average, we have over 75 percent of our student body in that category with some grade levels well up into the 90th percentile. If we can maintain this high attendance rate throughout this school year, we are confident our students will be wildly successful in achieving their learning goals.

Thank you to all who are making this happen.

Attendance matters! ^{UE}

Tiger Ventures hosts SUNY Best

Tiger Ventures at LWV recently welcomed SUNY Best to its school to discuss the new school and innovation in K-12 education. SUNY Best is made up of members of the local business community and academia with more than 130 members attending the monthly meeting, which focused on learning and entrepreneurship.

Dr. Suzanne McLeod, UE superintendent, Allen Buyck, Broome-Tioga BOCES district superintendent, Dr. Jason Andrews, Windsor superintendent, and Dr. Tonia Thompson, Binghamton interim superintendent, talked about the innovative programs they are working on in their respective districts as well as ways businesses can be involved in educating students on careers, career readiness and pursuing a higher education.

Following the presentations, visitors toured classrooms, the new Maker Space with computers and a 3D printer, as well as the business incubator wing where start-up companies serve as mentors to the students in exchange for rent-free space to develop their new business.

This new approach to learning engages students as they explore businesses, learn skills and work alongside area professionals starting their own new adventure.

Coordinator Ron Fisher said in the short time these businesses have been up and running the connection with students is already obvious. He added, "We use a phrase here: "Leaders of their own learning." And that's what we're really targeting; those students who would benefit from a smaller environment. Connecting them to these professionals brings students into the fold, really bringing them along in their education."

Currently, five businesses are up and running with room for a few more.

To learn more about Tiger Ventures, call 607-757-2149. ^{UE}



UE Superintendent Dr. Suzanne McLeod speaks during the SUNY Best presentation, hosted by Tiger Ventures at LWV.

“STEM,” from page 1.

STEM in relation to their club. Students from Project Lead the Way, Medical Pathways, Science Olympiad and many others set up displays and demonstrations as they talked with the elementary students



about STEM. Students also got to see the UE TigerTronics team put their robot through its paces.

The STEM labs are funded, in part, through UEEF grants. Equipment and supplies will continue to be added as this important part of the UE curriculum grows. ^{UE}

Attendance, participation key to success

Whether it's sports, music or academic activities, participation is an important part of student success. What is even more important is being in school all day, every day so that students keep up with school work and can participate in all the activities afforded them here at UE.

Across the district, attendance is up, including, on average, 40 or more students with perfect attendance in each building during the first marking period. Seventy-five percent or more have three or fewer absences in each building and some grade levels are at 90 percent.

And while good attendance is important, so is participation in the school community. Each year, UE students are encouraged to participate in the many clubs and groups, allowing them the opportunity to pursue interests outside the classroom. For example, from grades five to 12, students participate in multiple music groups such as chorus, band, orchestra, marching band and musicals. Other groups, such as student council, key club and student government, often involve helping out in the community as well.

In sports, both at the middle and high schools, 621 students participated in a modified, junior varsity or varsity sport last school year. The district currently offers 25 sports teams over three seasons.

Getting involved and staying involved in school help students find success in and out of the classroom. ^{UE}

Snap shot for marking period one

40 or more students with perfect attendance in each building

Sports participation

Varsity:

288 students & **95** played both seasons

JV:

143 students & **53** played both seasons

Modified:

190 students & **47** played both seasons

Nearly **1,415** students from grades four through 12 participate in a musical group.



JFS Student Council conducted a supply drive for the Broome County Humane Society.



UEHS students practice during a dress rehearsal of last year's musical "Footloose."

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Help desk answers student questions

Students with a knack for technology are putting their skills to good use as members of the Student Help Desk, located in the JFS Library.

After applying to be on the team, student must provide letters of reference, maintain good grades and attendance, and be considered responsible and organized.

The help desk team answers technology questions for students and staff, explores new software and apps, and keeps a blog with technology news and tips. The team is also available to travel to classrooms and labs to provide extra tech support. Help desk members volunteer during lunch and study hall times.

Librarian Liz Howes oversees the team. She said, "Technology is a central part of our teaching and learning. I want to create an opportunity for our help desk students to take on a leadership role, help their school community, and sharpen their technology skills all at the same time."



Student Help Desk team members are Morgan Berg, Jordan Charles-Pierre, Katiana Dallard, Kayla Fedor, Isabell Figueroa, Morgan Folli, Jeremy Kabanek, Logan Mertens, Ella Nixon, Madeline Reynolds, Colleen Richardson, Erica Smart and Mitchell Taylor. ^{UE}

UEHS Musical



**March 23, 24 & 25 - 7:30 p.m.
March 26 - 3 p.m.
at UEHS**

Jennie F Snapp's fall production of "Shrek Jr." was a huge success. Three nights of packed shows, wonderful performances, and lots of laughs were provided by the cast and crew. Over 80 students were involved in this production, making it one of the middle school's largest productions yet.

Next up for the UE musical program is UEHS's spring production "Rock of Ages." Over 60 students will be in the cast and dozens will be part of the production crew. This is a new release for high schools, making UE one of the first schools to perform this show. ^{UE}