

Hazelwood Elementary recently held STEAM Day. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math and is a current focus in education. STEAM activities help prepare students for the world they will enter after their schooling ends. According to the *NY Times* (Lohr, 2017), “a country’s proficiency in science, technology, engineering and mathematics is vital in generating economic growth, advancing scientific innovation and creating good jobs.”

With this in mind and with the help of Darcy Grimes from NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching) located in Cullowhee, several HES teachers organized a day of learning fun for the students at Hazelwood. Students moved through several STEAM activities that were set up around the school. HES parents also came for STEAM day to engage with their child and the activities. At each station, students got hands-on experiences which involved critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Here are some examples of the stations:

Makey Makey - During this activity students connected a circuit board to a banana and were then able to make music using an attached keyboard.
Snowball Launch - Students were challenged to design a catapult using a variety of materials, and then used the catapult to launch cotton balls! Finally, they used measuring tools to determine the distance their ‘snowball’ traveled.
DASH - Students were introduced to this robot that can be made to move using voice commands and also helps teach basic coding (software writing). This station was made possible by the Barnes and Noble STEM Bus.
Squishy Circuit Trees - Students used play-doh and circuits to power an LED light.
STEAM Challenge Cards - Using recyclable materials, students worked in teams to create a structure to solve a problem. Creativity and collaboration abounded at this station.

We look forward to hosting more STEAM Days in the future to help our students connect with the world around them and for their futures ahead.