

# SURRY COUNTY SCHOOLS

## NEWS RELEASE

Tracey H. Lewis, Ed.D., Director of Communications  
P.O. Box 364  
Dobson, North Carolina 27017  
336/386-8211 Cell: 336/401-1873 Fax: 336/386-4756  
E-Mail: lewist@surry.k12.nc.us

### **For Immediate Release**

July 12, 2018

DOBSON, NC - Surry County Schools' teachers and students have been busy during the month of June participating in a variety of summer camps and enrichment opportunities. Four summer Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) Camps were offered to students at no cost to them or their families. Transportation was provided free of charge and students enjoyed a hot, healthy lunch each day provided by School Nutrition. The STEM Camps were designed for elementary and middle school students, for a total of 106 students who participated in rich experiential learning.

The theme for the elementary STEM Camps was *Sustainability and the Design Process*. Elementary STEM Camps were offered at Franklin Elementary, Pilot Mountain Elementary, and Rockford Elementary. Teachers, Jennifer Collins, Jolean Edmonds, and Samantha Cox facilitated the camps for the purpose of elementary students to explore and experience the engineering design process. Teachers guided students through hands-on activities including building a solar oven, which they used to cook s'mores, designing a shoe, and utilizing sustainable mining processes, where students had to "mine" the chocolate chips from a cookie.

Ag Camp was offered to middle school students from all across the district at Gentry Middle School, with partnership from the Cooperative Extension. Teachers, Jamie Mosley, Michael Culler, and Matt Love served as the facilitators of Ag Camp, enabling middle school students to explore different agricultural practices. Ag practices examined both animal and plant sciences, including specialty crops such as mushroom growing and hemp farming. Students traveled on field trips to a local greenhouse, farms, and businesses including Wayne Farms, Livestock Market, Johnson Farms, Borrowed Land Farms, and Fungus Farm. The field trips enhanced student learning by providing real-world experiences about how much agriculture impacts all of us on a daily basis.

Jr. Camp Med was also offered to students district-wide and was hosted at Meadowview Magnet Middle School and the home of the Surry County Schools Science Institute. Tammy Taylor and Melissa Hamlin facilitated Jr. Camp Med, which focused on the fields of forensics and anatomy.

This STEM Camp was designed to recruit, educate, and prepare middle school students for careers in the health professions. Highlights of the week included dissection and a field trip to Northern Hospital of Surry County. Some student comments shared while on the field trip at Northern Hospital included, "This has been the best day!" to which another student replied, "This has been the best week of my life!" At the beginning of day three, students came in a little more quietly. When asked if they were bored, students all responded, "NO!" but expressed they were tired. When questioned by facilitators about being tired, one student stated, "I don't think I've had to think this much all year!"

The Science Institute Coordinator/Chemical Hygiene Officer, Mr. Jeff Edwards, oversees the summer camps run by Surry County Schools' teachers. Mr. Edwards is no stranger to creating and implementing tailor-made science experiences for students that engage the mind and encourage problem-solving and critical thinking. Mr. Edwards stated, "Having our students participate in the summer STEM Camps has been an amazing opportunity for students to experience science in action. Additionally, it is always a pleasure to have students at the Science Institute. Students get to learn about science as careers while having fun simultaneously. The students learned a lot and the teachers and I had a great time guiding the learning and exploration that took place. We look forward to the summer STEM Camps every year."

When reflecting upon the STEM Camp, Tammy Taylor shared, "The best feeling in the world was on the last day when some of the kids came up to me, gave me a hug and said they were going to miss me. One student even asked to take a selfie with me! How cool is that? As a veteran teacher of 27 years, that part never gets old." Surry County Schools is proud to offer these enrichment opportunities for students. The summer is a great time for students to explore topics of interest and inspire a love for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math in a fun and engaging way.