



# CURRICULUM

# HIGHLIGHT



## 6 May: STEM at its Finest

Science! Technology! Engineering! Math! There are few things better at Topeka Collegiate than activities that support STEM experiences. Faculty and staff are diligent in ensuring engaging activities that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. Lower School science is a strong example of this, and Ms. Mary Kate Baldwin, LS science instructor, is a champion of the cause.



This year, as in years past, the third, fourth, and fifth-grade students participated in STEM activities in a cooperative between Topeka Collegiate and Washburn University. Students Teaching Students is the program, provided to us through a grant to Washburn. The class (which is specific to science methods in instruction) is a semester-long class. Students in the education program at Washburn, with guidance from a professor, provide instruction to our students each semester. The joint effort between Ms. Baldwin and WU addresses a few facets of the Collegiate science curriculum.

In the first semester, the third and fourth-grade students traveled with Ms. Baldwin and Dr. Rantz to the Washburn campus. Two parts of their curriculum were at the center of their experience. WU education students prepared four learning centers around the themes of space and weather, with all third and fourth-grade students rotating among these centers. According to the format, the activities are to be planned and taught by these WU students, providing them practice in teaching and the Topeka Collegiate students opportunities to reinforce the curricular objectives in these areas of study.





This semester, the fifth-grade students made their way to the Washburn University campus for their turn. The two units of study for them were volcanoes and earthquakes, both of which receive concentrated attention in Ms. Baldwin's classes. As this is a different semester, the WU students enrolled in the class are not the same students who taught the first semester. These lessons, therefore, were designed differently, but student engagement was at the same high standard one would expect at Topeka Collegiate.

STEM activities provide valuable learning experiences. We are grateful for the opportunities provided to us through the cooperative efforts of Washburn University College of Education and our own Ms. Baldwin.

**Would you like to suggest a curriculum highlight?**

Email Academic Dean, Mr. Flax, at  
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