



CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHT



25 March 2022: Waiting, waiting, waiting...Hatched!



The second-grade curriculum provides students with a broad range of participative learning opportunities. Hands-on, creative and engaging units make for excitement among the students each year. Part of that curriculum includes learning something about agriculture in Kansas. The teachers have worked with the Shawnee County Extension Office in the past, with the students attending the *From Farm to You* field trip. However, this field trip was discontinued due to the pandemic. Ms. Shelly Robinson, the technology teacher, also works for the Kansas Corn Council. She has provided the second grade with agricultural presentations as part of this strand of the curriculum.

But every year, a most anticipated and exciting time in second grade is their unit on Chicken Embryology. Again, in cooperation with the Shawnee County Extension Office, the second grade gets fertilized chicken eggs, and they begin their watch. The eggs (each group started with about a dozen) are placed in the incubator in February, and for the next 21 days, students monitor the development of the chicks inside the eggs using a daily growth chart. They learn what part of the chick is developing each day. Around the end of the second week, they begin to candle the eggs to look for signs that the chick is alive and growing. They are looking at the air pocket, blood veins, and movement.



On Day 21 they begin listening for peeping through the eggshells and watch for cracks made by the chick's egg tooth. And the excitement continues to build! Every time we were on a snow day, students were concerned about the eggs, and the first place they checked upon returning to the building was the incubator. All students in both second-grade classrooms this year were completely engaged and made sure to share the progress of the eggs with their parents each morning and afternoon. The children were learning a lot about chickens, including how to care for them.



There was a great deal of disappointment when none of the eggs in one of the classrooms hatched. Students were so sad...until they heard the peeping from the incubator in the other classroom. Cheers! Smiles! Excitement! Being greeted by three brand new chicks had the students all fired up, and no one passed the room without being invited in to see the additions to the class.

The lower school students benefit so very much from all of our hands-on and exploratory classwork at Topeka Collegiate. Mrs. Bammes and Ms. Anello have done a tremendous job with this unit of study, and we are all looking forward to the next great second-grade experience in the weeks ahead.

Would you like to suggest a curriculum highlight?

Email Academic Dean, Mr. Flax, at mflax@topekacollegiate.org.