

McMinnville 21st Century CCLC Program

During the summer of 2021, the educators in McMinnville, gathered together to creatively problem solve around ways to engage students in unique and engaging learning opportunities within their community. Scott Johnson, McMinnville's Lead After-School Program Coordinator along with the summer learning leadership team, made up of Brian Crain Facilities Director, Kourtney Ferrua Curriculum Director, and Jill Long District Grant Writer led the district in partnering with local organizations to provide approximately 1,300 students and their families with innovative summer learning experiences. Provided through both in-person and online platforms, the summer programs incorporated the use of technology as a means for supporting students in design thinking, creative problem solving, and collaborative exploration.

McMinnville partnered with Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum, Chemeketa Community College, and OSU Extension Services to provide unique and engaging learning experiences for students. Each of their summer programming opportunities highlighted the power of digital learning and community partnerships while enhancing student learning and family engagement.

Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum: Camps focused on aviation and space were held over two-week periods with 90 students enrolled in each camp. Students who participated in these summer camps were identified through collaboration between Johnson's team and school counselors in an effort to ensure that students who would not normally have this opportunity were able to attend. Evergreen provided the curriculum and staff, and McMinnville School district provided bussing and food in order to ensure that there were no barriers to participation. These summer camps offered students full-day on-site instruction with real life examples of what they were studying. Having the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning with technology and instruction from staff at Evergreen created life-long learning experiences for students and allowed them to learn about the design thinking process, and programming in collaboration with their peers in ways that would not have otherwise been possible.

Chemeketa Community College: Camps were held that provided students with opportunities to learn about and explore robotics through an Ozobot and Drone program. This summer camp was held on the McMinnville CCC campus which provided ample space for flying drones and provided students with hands-on learning in designing and programming robots. The district intentionally connected with English learners, migrant students and their families for participation in this summer camp. The district worked closely with the transportation department to provide bus service and ensure that all students were able to be on-site for their learning. Students learned through the design process that failure is an opportunity to learn and re-evaluate their design - a learning experience that was gleaned through building and exploring robotics, but applies to all content areas.

OSU Extension Services: In an effort to be intentional about family engagement, McMinnville School District partnered with OSU extension services, Yamhill County, and Roth's, in order to

provide online cooking classes for students and their families. Through partnerships and grant funding, each family that participated was provided with meal packs that allowed them to cook enough to feed their entire family. Staff at OSU initially taught classes, however, McMinnville staff were able to observe and learn so that they could sustain the program at the district. Creating the online cooking classes was just one way that McMinnville School District created intentional communication with families during the response to COVID-19. While there were elements of the pandemic that were challenging, using technology intentionally allowed for more two-way communication with families and an increase in engagement in summer programs from students and families who were not traditionally involved.

While the COVID-19 pandemic created a unique need and opportunity for creativity, Johnson and the staff in McMinnville have continued to apply what they learned during last summer around intentional communication with families, creating partnerships with organizations, and engaging in a collective effort to truly create learning conditions where all students are able to thrive. As Johnson says, "This wasn't me, I am one piece of the wheel." The 2021 summer programs in McMinnville were successful because of partnerships and collaboration between the administrative team, facilities director, curriculum director, building level coordinators, community partners, and the students and families involved.