

NEWS from



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RIBBON CUTTING FOR DESIGN AND INNOVATION STUDIO

Mount Vernon, Indiana - On December 5 at 9:00 am, Mt. Vernon Junior High School hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Design + Innovation Studio. This initiative was completed in partnership with Vincennes University and Purdue's Indiana Manufacturing Competitiveness Center (IN- MaC). Dedicated to STEM and early career awareness, the Design and Innovation Studio provides students access to Industry 4.0 technology and other cutting-edge innovations. Students can also use the studio's 3D printing, robotics, Spheros, and LittleBits, and can access 61 units and 213 standard-aligned dynamic lessons across five technologies.

The studio model provides students with access to STEM opportunities earlier and facilitates the integration of STEM education with work, community, and the global economy, promoting the acquisition of crucial skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and collaboration. The studio ensures inclusive and equitable quality education focused on early access to STEM technology and a holistic approach to education, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, ultimately preparing students for future challenges.

The IN-MAC Design and Innovation Studios provide various opportunities for schools, educators, students, and industry to discover new ways to explore design thinking, problem-solving, technology, and creative skill sets. The studios provide hands-on experience with additive manufacturing, robotics, coding, engineering, and science learning modules.

Guy Weaver, Project Lead The Way (PLTW) teacher at Mt. Vernon Junior High School, plans to fully integrate the new Innovation Studio into his hands-on STEM curriculum. Now in his 13th year of teaching—and his fifth year in the district—Weaver brings a diverse background in special education, social studies, and computer science. Over the past several years, he has piloted PLTW at Mt. Vernon, gradually expanding course offerings to include Microbits coding for sixth graders, MIT App Inventor for seventh grade, and VEX V5 automation and robotics for eighth grade.

Weaver shared that the new Innovation Studio aligns seamlessly with the project-based structure already central to his classroom. "I'm just basically their facilitator," he explained, noting that the added tools and technology will further empower students to explore and improve their problem-solving skills. "It ties in with everything that I am already doing; it just gives us an extra extension." Weaver explains that his overarching goal is to "connect, cultivate, and create opportunities for students to be involved in an environment of curiosity and creativity through project-based learning."

"The Design and Innovation Studio represents far more than new equipment—it's an investment in opportunity. Thanks to a \$30,000 grant from Vincennes University, our junior high students now have access to the same cutting-edge tools and emerging technologies that are shaping today's workforce. This space allows students to imagine, design, build, and solve real problems, cultivating the critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration skills that will define their futures. Our community should be proud of what this studio makes possible—students are no longer just learning about innovation, they are living it." - Brian Hagan, Assistant

Superintendent of Academics of the Metropolitan School District of Mount Vernon

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Founded in 1870, The Metropolitan School District of Mount Vernon in Mount Vernon, Indiana, stands as a paragon of educational excellence, renowned for its blend of academic rigor, innovative programming, and comprehensive technology integration. Our school district includes five schools in Posey County: Farmersville Elementary School, Marrs Elementary School, West Elementary School, Mount Vernon Junior High School, and Mount Vernon Senior High School. Our district boasts a team of dedicated educators who foster a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment, ensuring every student is equipped for success. With a strong emphasis on community engagement and continuous improvement, we pride ourselves on our extensive extracurricular successes and commitment to sustainability. MSD of Mt. Vernon is not just a school district; it's a thriving educational community where every student is empowered to reach their full potential.



