



STEM Education Works®



THROOP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

WHO THEY ARE

Throop Elementary School, located in Paoli, Indiana, is a part of the Paoli Community School Corporation, catering to students from preschool to sixth grade.

THEIR GOALS

To provide students with access to STEM education and more hands-on learning, Throop Elementary wanted a way to help students develop their problem-solving skills and guide their future career and education decisions.

THEIR SOLUTION

To supply STEM learning opportunities to students in all grade levels, Throop Elementary School partnered with STEM Education Works. This partnership led to the creation of the school's STEM labs and makerspaces where students have access to a variety of STEM technologies and activities.

THE THROOP ELEMENTARY STUDIO

The Throop Elementary School STEM spaces give students and teachers the opportunity to grow core STEM competencies. They offer robotics technologies like the Dobot Magician, a linear rail, and conveyor belt, all of which are designed to teach design thinking, coding, and programming concepts while simulating manufacturing lines. Additionally, the school's labs are equipped with technologies like Glowforge, littleBits, Brown Dog Gadget's Solar Bugs, 3D printers, and Spheros. By introducing these concepts and technologies in the classroom, the school ensures that STEM education is easily accessible and nurtures students' interest in STEM subjects. These STEM spaces also work with the school's college and career readiness standards, preparing students for their future educational and professional paths.

Marsha Wells, High Ability Coordinator and teacher at Throop Elementary School, described how she encourages her students to make their own curriculum as they use the technology. "I give them the technology and I ask them to





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create a user guide. For example, ‘How do you use the Linear Rail?’ and ‘How do you use the Conveyor Belt?’” These user guides inspire students to problem solve as they work with the technologies and create resources that can then aid future students on their STEM journeys.

PARTNERING WITH STEM EDUCATION WORKS

The Throop Elementary STEM spaces have received extremely positive responses from school board members, administrators, parents, and students. “I’ve had absolutely zero negativity. Everyone has been very supportive of our program,” Wells revealed. “Students go home and tell their parents about what they’ve done, and they’re impressed or surprised.”

Wells acknowledged that STEM Education Works has been extremely supportive throughout the entire process. From answering questions to helping her work through technical difficulties, STEM Education Works has been available no matter what. For schools looking to follow Throop’s example, Wells recommends they reach out to STEM Education Works. “That was my first step. That meeting led to all kinds of things that could be implemented into our studio and my classroom,” she explained. “The support from STEM Education Works staff has been extremely beneficial and very much appreciated.”

