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For Immediate Release:

Applying STEAM to Spanish Language at Stratford

By Billy Kupferman, Spanish teacher

Fifth grade FLES students at Stratford School have been hard at work on a project combining Spanish, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics). After learning the vocabulary for stores commonly found in Spanish speaking countries, students studied the plazas commonly found in the countries as well. They learned that the plazas are the center of most Spanish speaking cities and towns, and that a community's stores are very likely to be found in these areas. They also explored the likelihood of people to spend time out of their home, socializing in plazas with friends and families. The students viewed a slide show of pictures of stores and plazas in Mexico to give them an example from one country.

With a firm grasp on the concepts at hand, students then worked in groups to explore the stores and plazas of a Spanish speaking country of their choice using their iPads. They were tasked with paying close attention to details such as architectural design, color of buildings, building material, etc. After agreeing on stores from a specific country and area (for example, a small town in Argentina or a big city in Peru), they began to design their own stores and plazas mimicking those in their research.

When it came to the actual three dimensional physical design of the buildings, the students used techniques that had been taught in their art classes with Mr. George Lucas. They got to work constructing three dimensional bakeries, fish stores, restaurants, gazebos, fountains, churches, and markets, amongst other structures, to be placed together in a plaza that would constitute the center of their community in a Spanish speaking country. All the work and designs were based on actual photos the students found, and the building process was accomplished while speaking in Spanish.

This project gave the fifth graders insight into the common arrangements of towns in the Spanish speaking world and some of the day-to-day activity that exists in such settings. Students came away with a genuine feel for the communities they researched and a better understanding of the architectural design and building process. In addition, they needed to problem solve, build, create, and work together to complete their task. They are extremely proud of their work and have produced some incredible final products!



Caption for 3-22-17STEM 5SA WorkingPlaza.jpg:

Stratford fifth graders hard at work creating plazas in a special STEAM unit combining the Spanish language with science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics.



Caption for 3-22-17IMG_9724SAFLESSTEAMGroup.jpg:
This group of Stratford fifth graders and teacher Mr. Kupferman is pictured with their STEAM project – a plaza in Venezuela.