

MCCSC's EdVenture Camp blends education and fun for the summer: www.heraldtimesonline.com

By April Toler
331-4353 | atoler@heraldt.com
6/11/2013

As she prepared to show a small group of kindergarten EdVenture Campers some artifacts from the past, Sarah Hatcher, Curator of Education for The Mathers Museum of World Cultures, posed a question.

What would campers ask to learn about "how people came to Indiana 200 years ago and how they lived?"

The students quickly responded with kindergarten-age questions like "What could they eat?" and "Did they have trucks?"

After a few more questions, further explaining why vehicles did not exist at that time, the students' interest was further piqued as they moved on to viewing artifacts from the museum.

The lesson, which was extended to all campers, was part of MCCSC's EdVenture Camp which is one of four programs taking place at Fairview Elementary School this year.

Although federal budget cuts decreased the number of students who could attend the camp this year by about half, Tim Pritchett, director of school age care for MCCSC, said he is pleased with this year's attendance and with the opportunities the camp has to offer.

"We still have a lot of things that are unique to this camp like the summer food service program, breakfast and lunch here . and I think the format of it is still really attractive to parents," he said.

Throughout the summer, EdVenture Campers, who are grouped by age, blend educational activities, such as the one from Mathers, with simply fun activities, such as swimming.

This year, Pritchett said the program will also incorporate a lot of science, technology, engineering and mathematics into activities.

It's the combination of educational and fun activities that Pritchett said provides unique experience for students of the Monroe County Community School Corp.

"The other piece that sets us apart is, I think we do a good job with blending educational activities with traditional day camp activities," he said. "So we'll go from a 20-minute reading block to a science project to lunch and then to the swimming pool. Blending all of that together, kids are learning so we're preventing that summer learning loss but they are also doing fun day camp activities."

As the kindergarten students were traveling back in time, the camp's fifth-graders were busy making T-shirts.

When asked to describe what camp is like, 9-year-old Greyson McCartney agreed it was part academics and part summer-time fun.

"It's like a normal school but you get to go on more field trips and stuff," he said.

In addition to EdVenture Camp, MCCSC is also hosting a summer reading camp for second and third graders who need extra support and a separate program for English Language Learners in third through fifth grade.

Approximately 150 students are taking part in the reading program, according to Tommy Richardson, site director for MCCSC's summer reading camp, plus approximately 35 students who are learning English.

Like last year, the program focuses around "The Fluency Development Lesson," developed by Kent State professor Tim Rasinski. The lesson was so successful last summer — it was also used during the school year — that the district decided to bring it back this summer, according to Richardson.

It's also, he added, a lot of fun.

"I had three kids today come up and say 'hey, can I read my poem for you?'" Richardson said. "They are really excited. It's so cool to see them come in the classroom and share."

Students also have a chance to learn from home in this year's Study Island, a virtual learning camp for third through fifth grades.

This is the second year the district has hosted the program, which includes lab time at Fairview for students who need it.

More than 150 students have signed up for Study Island which Richardson said he is excited to see.

"It just provides more opportunity for summer learning," Richardson said. "It provides parents with great resources at home to provide great learning experiences for kids and from a virtual context it makes it more efficient to target instruction because we can see where their strengths and the weaknesses are."

**Greyson McCartney, a fifth grader, reads to Kindergartener, Liem "Duc" Gildan during Summer EdVenture Camp at Fairview Elementary School in Bloomington Wednesday, June 5, 2013.
Chris Howell | Herald-Times**



Salwa "Sally" Spir, center, a fifth grader reads to kindergarteners Calla Hanlon, left, and Adrianna Matta, both 5, during Summer EdVenture Camp at Fairview Elementary School in Bloomington Wednesday, June 5, 2013.
Chris Howell | Herald-Times



Sarah Hatcher, Curator of Education for The Mathers Museum of World Cultures, shows artifacts to kindergarten students in MCCSC's EdVenture Camp.
April Toler | Herald-Times

