

Authentic Learning ...

The entire student body and Cedar Park friends planted the **Minnesota Native Habitat Learning Area** in 2007. Now our students can explore the plants, insects and small animals that thrive in an oak savannah, mesic prairie, dry prairie, tamarack area, ephemeral pond, and big woods right on campus.

The Building Understanding Zone (B.U.Z. Room) is a unique inquiry environment where students can learn from a wide range of math, science, and engineering stations as they ask questions, search for meaning, and communicate their thoughts and findings.

Three times a year students participate in **Environmental Field Studies** at Lebanon Hills Regional Park taught by Dakota County park naturalists and Cedar Park teachers. This in-depth study allows our students to expand their knowledge of the natural world and develop increasing levels of personal responsibility for environmental stewardship.

Twice a year, the **Exploration Program** offers students the opportunity to select an in-depth class on a topic that they want to explore. The class topics are extensions of the regular curriculum, ideas the children want to explore, teachers' passions and expertise, opportunities in the community, and parents' talents.

Cedar Park **Family STEM Evenings** highlight what the students have been working on at school. The whole school is a-buzz with STEM learning. Families participate in a smorgasbord of educational and entertaining activities that are offered by teachers and the community. (These evenings are in addition to the music and band concerts.)

Students can choose from dozens of classes offered in our **Extended Day Activities** (both before and after school). We have three eight-week sessions of after school classes where students can explore aeronautics, broadcasting, chess, dance, electric cars, fishing ...

At the core...

All District 196 elementary schools offer the same rigorous core curriculum in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. At Cedar Park, these important areas are an essential part of each student's day. STEM studies are woven into other classes as appropriate, and students continue to receive rigorous instruction in:

Language arts, which includes reading, writing, listening, speaking, word study and handwriting. Knowledge and skills are acquired through connected experiences between home, school and community.

Social studies, which provides the opportunity for each student to acquire knowledge and develop skills necessary for social, political and economic participation in a diverse, interdependent and changing world.

Cedar Park Elementary - Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) School

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952-431-8360 • www.district196.org/cp
Student day: 9:25 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

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Educating our students to reach their full potential

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Investigate the present ...
invent the future

SCHOOL DISTRICT 196
MAGNET
school

Independent School District 196

Rosemount • Apple Valley • Eagan

Cedar Park Elementary



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING
AND MATH (STEM) SCHOOL

A child's innate ability to explore, experiment, problem solve, and invent is at the heart of Cedar Park's STEM studies. Instead of teaching science, technology, engineering and math classes in isolation, Cedar Park STEM links the students' learning opportunities by using an inter-disciplinary approach as much as possible. Our hands-on learning helps students make the connections between academic concepts and real life. The school's instructional practices value diverse learning styles, provide rich experiences for all learners, and nurture self-esteem and life-long learning.

Cedar Park continues to develop collaborations and partnerships with educational institutions, businesses, and organizations to provide rich learning opportunities for our students. We are very fortunate to be working closely with:

- Dakota County Natural Resources Department
- Lockheed Martin
- Science Museum of Minnesota
- University of Minnesota Institute of Technology ITCEP
- The WORKS Technology Museum



"The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done."

— Jean Piaget



Science

Cedar Park students are actively involved in learning about the world in ways that pattern how scientists explore. The instructional program is inquiry-based to nurture within our students the spirit of curiosity, questioning, reflection, openness to new ideas, and respect for evidence. Our Science Specialists teach students, mentor staff, and bring a wealth of experiences and resources to the classrooms. The Science Labs are well-equipped and model best practices in environmental science by using energy efficient and sustainable products and building practices. Our Minnesota native habitat learning area allows students to explore plants, insects and small animals on campus.

Technology

Technology offers relevant and engaging opportunities for student learning. Cedar Park students learn new ways to create, communicate, problem solve, and collaborate using 21st century skills. Our classrooms are equipped with Interactive boards and LCD projectors. Students have easy access to computers with our mobile laptop carts in addition to the computer lab. Our Technology Specialists teach both students and teachers how to integrate document cameras, proscopes, MP3s, digital cameras, GPS units, and videoconferencing equipment into daily learning. Students participate in real scientific studies and share their findings within our school and throughout the world.

Engineering

Cedar Park students imagine, design, and create just as engineers do. Engineering fosters innovation, invention, and problem-solving skills through hands-on learning. Our Math/Engineering Specialist uses Engineering is Elementary, LEGO engineering, and other challenging activities to integrate engineering design concepts and skills into science and math lessons. Our Math/Engineering room has a multitude of construction resources for student use, ranging from Lincoln Logs to LEGO robotics. Cedar Park second and third grade students participate in an Engineer-in-Residence program taught by The WORKS Science and Technology Museum.

Mathematics

Students develop a depth of mathematical thinking through a curriculum that emphasizes problem solving and using math in real life situations. The well-equipped Math/Engineering Lab offers a functional space beyond the classroom to explore mathematics. Additional enrichment and support for students is provided by our Math/Engineering, Math Recovery, Title I, and Gifted/Talented Specialists. Fourth and fifth grade students may also participate in the University of Minnesota's Institute of Technology CEP Saturday classes as well as the Girls Excel in Math (GEM) enrichment program.



"The school now operates like a gear system. What we learn is all integrated and connected like gears turning together and helping each other work."

— Ezekiel, grade 3