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DATE: October 4, 2023  
CONTACT: Courtney O'Hara  
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FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

## **Architect Steven Schneemann assisting Farmington STEAM Academy fifth graders with an architectural project thanks to Bosch Grant**

*Farmington, MI* – Last spring, Steven Schneemann, local architect and business owner of S3 Architecture, gave a presentation to support a fifth grade multidisciplinary project at Farmington STEAM Academy (FSA). Now, he is back and ready to consult with the new fifth graders, some of whom will be finishing an authentic construction design project that was begun by last year's students.

The project got started when students were challenged with the design question: *How can we design a solution to solve the problem of inadequate space for the birds and students?* Schneemann, partnered with Jeffrey Rehbine, fifth grade teacher at FSA, and his fifth grade students to finish working drawings of student designs and models in order for students to complete an expansion of the chicken coop run in the school courtyard. Rehbine and Schneemann talked with students about what architects do and challenged students to consider it as a career direction.

Students designed and built scaled architectural models over the winter in preparation for building an addition to the FSA chicken coop. Schneemann volunteered to offer advice on the design.

"Steven has partnered with us as our senior design consultant to complete professional drawings from which students can use to build the structure," said Jeffrey Rehbine. "This way students get a real-world first-hand account of the process in a way that is authentic and inside of their own life experience."

FSA teachers Jeffrey Rehbine and Steven Trachsel designed the Project-Based Learning (PBL) challenge that combines math, design, building skills, writing, ecology, and virtual drawing in the form of a design challenge for fifth graders. They were awarded a \$2,000 grant from BOSCH Corporation for the project materials.



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Students worked with teachers to measure and assess the needs of the chickens and site requirements to begin their designs. They worked on a computer design app called Tinker CAD to create 3D models to begin. Next, students transferred their models into 2D templates on Google Draw to create scaled models of their additional designs.

Students presented some models to Mr. Schneemann last spring, including the winning model, which S3 Architecture will base the drawings on. The new fifth grade students that started in August 2023 will be learning about the project from some of their predecessors who will come back as sixth grade consultants to explain their work. Later, the new fifth graders will finish building the addition from S3 Architecture's plans with some help from the sixth grade designers, too.

Schneemann will consult with the fifth graders about their original design before they submit the final drawings. Students are being organized into task teams that take care of the courtyard, chickens, and rabbits each year, along with touring them to all of the classrooms. Among these teams is a craftsman team and an artisan team that will work on the final construction.

Jeffrey Rehbine would love to see the benefits of this project-based partnered learning happen more often, "Today's students need exposure to multiple types of real-world skills and opportunities in order to make intelligent choices about their own interests, passions, and careers. I'm grateful that we have the kind of school and community that can provide that for them."

To learn more about Farmington Public Schools, visit [www.farmington.k12.mi.us](http://www.farmington.k12.mi.us).