



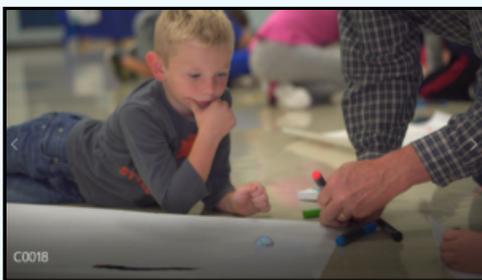
the good news series



How do you get kids excited to learn? Nebraska's Expanded Learning Opportunity (ELO) Design Challenge is eager to find out and the project is starting with robots, art supplies, and imagination. Beatrice, Grand Island, Boone Central, Centura, and Auburn are collaborating to design and test new

models of ELO curriculum that support Nebraska Career Readiness Standards through a Nebraska Innovation Grant.

In Grand Island the model came in the form of a Makerspace traveling to schools throughout the district. Sixty students signed up to participate, play, and learn at Seedling Mile Elementary. "I think everyone has a great time. If they get bored it's their own fault," said Cody, a student at the school. "You get to make something different every day," agreed another student, Kali. "There are a lot of fun activities to do."



But it's not just fun and games according to third-grade teacher and project organizer Meghan Roeser. "They have surpassed my expectations. They are getting along. They are helping each other. They are sharing. They are excited about it and are talking other kids into coming. We have a waiting list for kids to come."

The Makerspace is designed to present challenges and supplies to students but not give them directions. The students have to figure out how to reach the goal on their own.



"It's amazing for kids to have a task and have the materials but they have to figure out how to use it. That's where we are moving in education. Kids have to develop those problem solving skills," said principal Charity Labrie. "I've been blown away with what the kids do. They have no fear."



And the kids are bringing their curiosity home. Carol Stoppke has noticed a change in her daughter since she started experimenting at the Makerspace. "It

makes you feel really good they are using those little brains in their heads to broaden their horizons to places they've never thought of before. It's exciting to see that spark."

The Grand Island Makerspace is just one of the projects funded by the \$893,565 Nebraska Innovation Grant. For more information, check out the Innovation Grant Website .

