

## Ruby Bridges STEAM Studio Opens

Teachers, students, parent/guardians, and community members turned out Wednesday afternoon to celebrate the grand opening of Ruby Bridges Elementary School's STEAM Studio, a key component of the school's new innovative Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math program.

"The studio will be used for some of our messier, creative projects that engage the right side of the brain," said Mandie Cline, a former kindergarten teacher at the school who now coordinates the STEAM program.

For instance, this week students in grades TK-3 have been creating and experimenting with paintbrushes made from common objects, while 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes are building a game called "1 Ring to Rule Them All" that involves multiple loops of string that they then use to move a tennis ball up and down.

Next door to the studio, a STEAM Lab has been set up where teachers have a clear space in which to do FOSS science experiments and art projects. Currently Ruby Bridges parent and professional filmmaker Joe Golling also uses the space to run a noon club in which students learn about graphic design, illustration, and writing using both analog and digital media.



During the opening, students took photographs and created stop motion videos using an iPad, colored in a group mural, created Lego sculptures on the wall, and applied tattoos to guests – including Mayor Trish Herrera Spencer.

While the program is just getting started, amazing things are already happening at the school. Last week, for instance, cellist Nancy Baun of Young Audiences visited the school to talk about the mathematics of music and the science of sound. Students then got to engineer their own instruments. (Ms. Baun is the sister of Ruby Bridges teacher Beth Kroener, by the way!)



"It was delightful visiting the STEAM Studio to see Ms. Cline and Mr. Golling working with students who were so fascinated and involved in doing, making, and thinking," commented Superintendent Sean McPhetridge. "Full STEAM ahead, I say! Go STEAM team!"