ISSUE 05 / JANUARY 2026

THE STEAM SCENE

MV STEAM ACADEMY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

Testing
February 5th
7/8th Grade CBT Simulation Test
February Meetings
February 4th
Faculty Meeting 3-4pm
February 25th
Department Meeting 3-4pm
Fieldtrips
February 12th
Ridge Hill Cinema 7th, 8th, & 9th Grade
School events
February 4th
National Girls & Women in Sports Day
February 2nd-6th
National School Counselor Week
February 4th
Window closes for Marking Period 2 Grades
February 9th
Parent Involvement Day
February 10th
9th Grade Laptop Distribution
February 11th
Distribute Mid-Winter Recess Vacation Packets
February 12th
Parent/Teacher Conferences 6-8pm
February 13th
STEAM Day
February 16th
National School Resource Officer Day
February 27th
Junior Parent Meeting 6-8pm
Upcoming Holidays
February 16th
No School: Presidents' Day
February 17th
Lunar New Year and Ramadan Begins
February 16th-20th
No School: Mid-Winter Recess

Spotlight

DONORSCHOOSE AND VISION BOARDS: MS. VOGEL EMPOWERS THE CLASS OF 2026

Mount Vernon STEAM Academy seniors will soon receive their own copies of *For Every One* by Jason Reynolds, thanks to the dedication of special education English teacher Jenn Vogel. Ms. Vogel launched a DonorsChoose campaign to make this project possible, raising over $820 from 18 generous donors, including family, friends, and community supporters. Her goal was to give students a book that inspires reflection and self-discovery as they prepare for life after high school.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE ON OUR DISTRICT WEBSITE!

This isn't the first time Ms. Vogel has brought this idea to life; last year's seniors loved the book so much that she expanded the initiative for the Class of 2026. Rather than borrowing the book, students will keep their copies as personal keepsakes, along with the vision boards they create in class. Later this spring, English classes will read the book together and design "mirror vision boards," encouraging students to think deeply about their goals and dreams. Ms. Vogel's commitment to her students goes beyond academics; she's creating experiences that foster confidence, creativity, and a sense of possibility for the future!



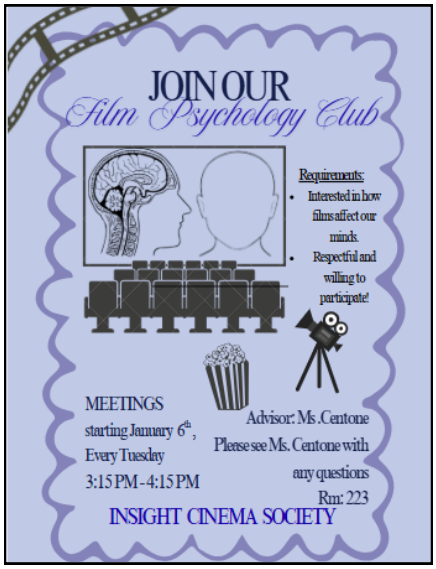
New Around the School

EXPLORING STEAM'S AFTER-SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

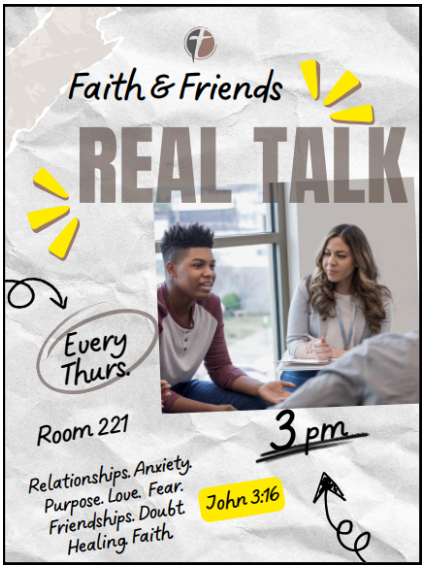
Our after-school clubs provide students with engaging spaces to explore their interests, build community, and develop new skills. This month, we're excited to highlight each club and give you a closer look at what makes these programs such an important part of STEAM Academy.



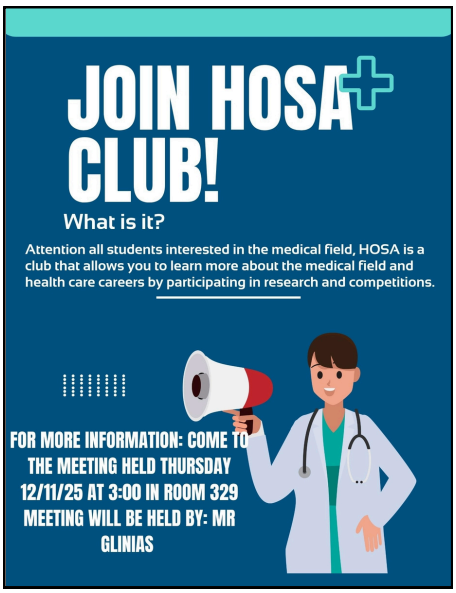
Advisor: Ms. Wallace
Club Leader: Senior, DanaMarie Galindo
Mock Trial is a competition in which students act as attorneys and witnesses to practice real legal procedures and argumentation skills. They compete at Westchester Country Courthouse.



Advisor: Ms. Centone
Club Leader:
Junior, Crislenny Nunez
The Film Psychology club focuses on analyzing psychological concepts in film and media.



Advisor: Ms. Comrie
"This is not just a club; this is a family that listens to each other. We seek togetherness and connectivity because we all have different problems, and we find the common ground that our faith sees us through this journey we call life..."
- Selom Cudjoe, Junior



Advisor: Mr. Glinias
Club Leader:
Senior, Anisah Khan
Student-led organization that empowers future healthcare leaders through education, collaboration, and real-world experience.



Advisor: Mr. Poliey
Club Leader: Leonard Oduro
Gaming Club is a space for students in grades 7–12 to relax, have fun, and enjoy shared gaming experiences in a positive and inclusive environment.



Co-advisor: Mr. Nifontoff & Mr. Glinias
Club Leader: Junior, Hawa Massaquoi
The Eco-Action Club's goal is to promote recycling, go green, and help our school become less wasteful. - Jesus Valerio Vargas

Field Trips

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER FIELD TRIP BRINGS FILMMAKING TO LIFE

On December 18, 2025, thirty English 1 and English 1H 9th-grade students visited the Jacob Burns Film Center for an immersive “Show, Don’t Tell” filmmaking workshop. Led by Ms. Terry and chaperones Mrs. Campion and Ms. Comrie, students explored the foundations of visual storytelling through a dynamic, hands-on experience. The three-hour workshop guided students through film analysis, storyboarding, and collaborative production using iPads to design their own short scenes. The day concluded with a celebratory screening of each team’s project in the Center’s Media Arts Lab theater.

This field experience encouraged students to step into the role of intentional media makers, strengthening visual literacy, developing empathy through storytelling, and practicing essential creative problem-solving skills. Most importantly, the workshop revealed just how inventive and expressive our students can be when they fully embrace the filmmaking process. Each group produced a uniquely crafted short film that reflected their teamwork, imagination, and willingness to take creative risks.

"It was an educational and creative experience. 10 out of 10!"
-Jharri Mompoint, *Freshman*





Donations

MAKING SENIOR MEMORIES POSSIBLE

As our seniors prepare for their senior trip and prom, we want to ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate in these milestone experiences. We are currently accepting donations to help support seniors who may need financial assistance. Contributions of $50, $100, or a full sponsorship are welcome.

A **huge thank-you to Mr. DeHay**, who kicked off this effort with the idea and a generous full-senior-trip sponsorship for three seniors, setting the tone for what community support can look like!

If you are interested in donating or would like more information, please see Ms. Stanton. Your support can make a meaningful difference in creating lasting memories for our students.

Celebrations

A HEARTFELT THANK-YOU, SERVED WITH BREAKFAST

On January 21, our administrative team hosted a staff appreciation breakfast that brought warmth and positivity to the morning. The spread included crispy potatoes, eggs, bacon, bagels, French toast, pancakes, and waffles topped with sprinkles, icing, and even Captain Crunch, along with fresh coffee and juice.

The event was made even more inviting thanks to Ms. Ingram, who beautifully decorated Mr. Boylan’s room and arranged the entire display.

Her thoughtful setup created a festive atmosphere that truly showed how much our staff is valued.

It was a memorable morning that reflected the appreciation and community spirit at the heart of our school.





Afterschool Programs

ACE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM CONTINUES WITH SESSION #6

On January 6, 2026, ACE mentees visited Con Edison Headquarters in downtown Manhattan for the sixth session of the Architecture, Construction, and Engineering Mentorship Program. Students explored various engineering disciplines through interactive discussions with industry professionals, gaining insight into real-world applications of design and construction.

This session marked the second deep dive into architecture, focusing on plumbing systems and their role in building design. Throughout the program, students will select a specific field of interest, collaborate with professional mentors, and work on a capstone project to present in May. These experiences continue to strengthen students' understanding of engineering concepts while preparing them for future careers.

The program is guided by Ms. Rodriguez and Mr. Glinias, whose dedication ensures students are supported and inspired each week.



"It's fascinating learning about the structure of a building and how important the airflow is in circulating and refreshing the rooms. Without this circulation, people can get sleepy and not be productive."
- Valeria Martinez



Middle School Updates

SWEET THINGS HAPPENING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

The 7th and 8th-grade Class Advisory, led by Ms. Ingram and Ms. Porter, has been hard at work supporting class activities and student initiatives. This year, 49 students participated in the chocolate fundraiser, and thanks to their efforts and community support, the advisory has already raised approximately **$2,500**, marking a strong start to the year.

Additional fundraisers are planned in the coming months, including Valen-Candy Grams ($5–$6 bundles), ICEE slushie pouches and Airhead snow cone pouches, and a volleyball tournament organized in collaboration with the Physical Education teachers (*details coming soon*).

In March, Mr. Wilbekin will also be leading a basketball fundraiser to continue building momentum!

Straight from the 'Gram



Senior Spotlight

FROM SKETCHES TO SCREENS: ROZELLE BREWSTER'S JOURNEY TOWARD GRAPHIC DESIGN

SCAN THE QR CODE TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE ON OUR DISTRICT WEBSITE!



Rozelle Brewster, a senior at Mount Vernon STEAM Academy, has grown into a confident and ambitious student with big plans for her future. Balancing a rigorous schedule of AP courses, Rozelle has developed her artistic talents from traditional sketching to digital design using an Apple Pencil. Inspired by supportive teachers and her close-knit family, she's applying to top design schools such as Pratt, NYU, and Parsons, with the goal of becoming a creative director. Her journey reflects resilience, creativity, and the power of education to unlock potential, showing how determination and passion can turn dreams into reality.

The Art Department

ART STUDENTS EXPLORE THE WORLD OF GUSTAV KLIMT

In Mr. Stankiewicz's art classroom, students stepped into the shimmering, symbolic world of Gustav Klimt, the renowned Austrian painter behind the celebrated masterpiece *The Kiss*. Inspired by Klimt's bold patterns and expressive shapes, students explored the artistic concepts of Repetition and Rhythm, learning not only how to identify them but also how to use them intentionally in their own acrylic paintings.

While the artwork on display was created primarily by high school students, a select group of talented 7th graders also contributed pieces that proudly stand alongside the upper-grade work. To begin their creative journey, students selected an image to recreate; some drew freehand, while most used a transfer technique with carbon paper between a printed page and a blank sheet to build the foundation for their compositions. From there, the real artistry emerged. Using a worksheet that highlighted Klimt's distinctive "language of shapes," whorling spirals, layered circles, floating eyes, and floral-like symbols, students studied how Klimt infused his art with emotion and movement.

They were then encouraged to incorporate these motifs or invent their own, as long as their final piece demonstrated a strong sense of visual rhythm. The result was a vibrant gallery of original masterpieces, each one blending Klimt's influence with the individuality of the artist who created it. Through this project, students not only learned about an iconic figure in art history but also discovered the power of pattern, design, and creativity in expressing their own artistic voice.



CHECK OUT THE INCREDIBLE STUDENT WORK ON THIS BOARD, LOCATED BY THE MAIN OFFICE!

Sports

MAT MAGIC & MAJOR MILESTONES: WRESTLING SENIORS SHINE



On January 22, the Mount Vernon wrestling team celebrated an exciting and meaningful Senior Night, recognizing the hard work and dedication of its student-athletes. Participating STEAMer wrestlers included Amari Coakley, Eric Rodriguez, Mia Martinez, Antwan Carty, Avea Miller, Gustavo Ramos, Julian Malone, Kymani Williams, Syler Blanco, and Caiden Hylton. The evening honored both athletic achievement and commitment to the program, with Coach Cornwall of the STEAM Academy proudly supporting the team and pictured alongside the wrestlers. It was a memorable night celebrating perseverance, teamwork, and STEAM athletic excellence.

"My favorite part of this event was how quiet my mind became as I turned my opponent's move into my victory. That ending to my night felt like a loud goodbye, something that doesn't happen often in my life."
- Julian Malone-Solomon, Senior

Scan the QR code to see a video by Ms. Jaffess, featuring the tribute posters created for our seniors!

Afterschool Programs

ALUMNI RETURN TO INSPIRE STEAM STUDENTS

Mount Vernon STEAM Academy recently welcomed back several alumni who are now serving as mentors in the INSPIRE After-School Program, a student-led initiative founded by graduates Maame Forson (Harvard) and Heily Gonzalez (Cornell). The program focuses on guiding current students through college and career readiness while also supporting their mental well-being. Through monthly virtual and in-person sessions, students connect with mentors from prestigious universities, including NYU, Harvard, and Cornell, who share advice, resources, and personal experiences. Recent visitors include alumna Marah Lewis, a communications major at Purchase College, and Rayanu Adam, an engineering student at Cornell. With more than 15 mentors and additional partners, including the DEI team from Proskauer Rose LLP, the program continues to expose students to a wide range of academic and professional pathways.



"Creating a vision board was a great way to visualize what I want to accomplish this year. It helped me clearly see my goals, both in school and in my life outside of it." - *DanaMarie Galindo, Senior*

Scan the QR code to read the full article on our district website!ut the full article here!

District Initiatives

NO PLACE FOR HATE: JOURNALS THAT BUILD CONNECTION

We officially kicked off our schoolwide No Place for Hate campaign in December, when students in grades 7–12 participated in homeroom activities centered on the No Place for Hate pledge. During this launch, students signed pledge feathers, committing to stand against hate and to help create a more inclusive and respectful school community.

Building on this foundation, students are now engaging in an ongoing cross-grade journal exchange as part of our No Place for Hate work. 7th-grade Social Studies classes have been paired with 12th-grade ELA classes, allowing students to connect through shared monthly journal prompts focused on empathy, identity, allyship, and belonging. Journals will be written and passed back and forth each month, giving students the opportunity to read, reflect, and thoughtfully respond to one another over time.

The signed pledge feathers from our December kickoff were brought together to create a powerful bulletin board display, symbolizing how individual voices and commitments unite to form a stronger, schoolwide stance against hate.

This program is led by Ms. Wallace, Ms. Vogel, and Assistant Principal Brown, whose guidance and dedication continue to move this work forward.

A sincere thank you to the 7th-grade and 12th-grade teachers who are participating and supporting these meaningful conversations. Your commitment plays a vital role in fostering connection and belonging across our school community!



The amazing Mr. Emerson!

NO place for HATE
An ADL Education Program

Class of 2028 Update

SWEET SUCCESS FOR THE CLASS OF 2028

The sophomore Class of 2028 had a successful fundraiser, earning a $2,000 profit through their World's Finest Chocolate bar sale. Several students stood out for their impressive efforts: Galilea and Vidhi each sold 13 boxes, earning $100 Visa gift cards, and Jacob won the ticket raffle (one ticket earned for every 20 bars sold) for another $100 Visa gift card.

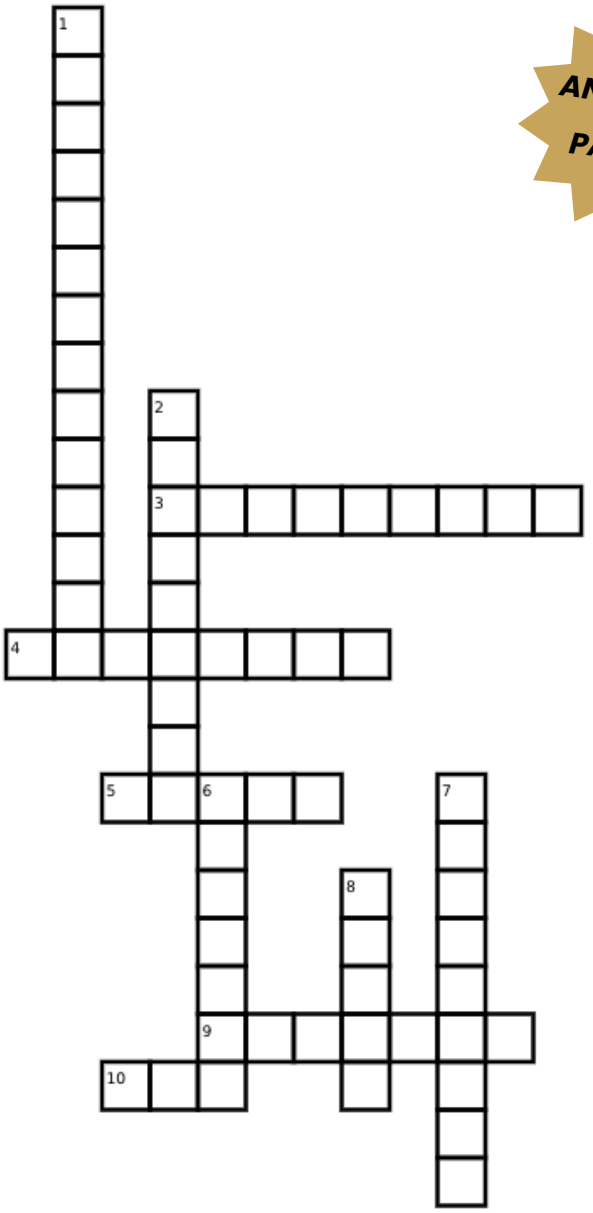


While Ms. Wallace may have been a little ambitious with an order of 150 boxes, the Class of 2028 was lucky to have some sweet support. The senior class and their advisor, Ms. Stanton, generously took 50 boxes off their hands, turning it into a $1,000 profit for the senior class!

The sophomores will be back this spring with another chocolate fundraiser. But don't worry, this time on a smaller scale and featuring a different variety. The sophomore class also raises money by selling snacks after school every Monday, so keep supporting them and grab a treat!

STEAM SCENE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

All answers are hidden somewhere in this month's newsletter. Bring a completed puzzle to Ms. Wallace for a prize!



ANSWERS ON PAGE 9!

Down:

1. Schoolwide campaign promoting inclusion and cross-grade journal exchanges
2. Competition where students act as attorneys and witnesses to practice real legal procedures
6. After-school program where alumni mentor students in college and career readiness
7. Sport celebrated during STEAM Academy Senior Night
8. Teacher who raised over $820 through DonorsChoose to gift seniors a book by Jason Reynolds

Across:

3. Sweet fundraiser that helped the Class of 2028 earn a $2,000 profit
4. Day with no school for Presidents' Day
5. Renowned Austrian artist studied in art class and creator of The Kiss
9. Senior featured in the spotlight who plans to attend design schools like Pratt and Parsons
10. Architecture, Construction, and Engineering mentorship program that visited Con Edison

HAVE AN IDEA FOR A PUZZLE, OR WANT TO CREATE ONE? PLEASE SEE MS. WALLACE!

Celebrations

GOOD FOOD, GREAT NEWS IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT



The Middle and High School Social Studies Departments recently came together during their department meeting to celebrate two special achievements. The team honored Ms. Guziczek as December Staff Member of the Month and congratulated Mr. Batkay on earning his Master's degree in Education. The celebration included a potluck, proving once again that even history teachers know how to make great moments, well, *historic*.



Celebrations

UPCOMING NATIONAL DAYS

MARCH

- March 2-6th: National School Social Work Week
- March 18th: Attendance Teachers' Day

APRIL

- April 6-10th: Assistant Principals' Week
- April 20th: National School Librarian Day
- April 22nd: Administrative Professionals' Day
- April 28th: National School Bus Driver Appreciation Day

MAY

- May 1st: National Principals' Day
- May 1st: National Lunch Hero Day
- May 4-8th: Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 6th: School Nurse Day
- May 18th: Speech Pathologist Day

Donations

DONATE TO THE SUNSHINE FUND!

Donate to our faculty-supported program that is used to acknowledge and support staff members during significant life events, both positive and challenging. See Ms. Grosso with any questions!

DONATE HERE:
Venmo @Laura-Grosso-1

Message from the Principal

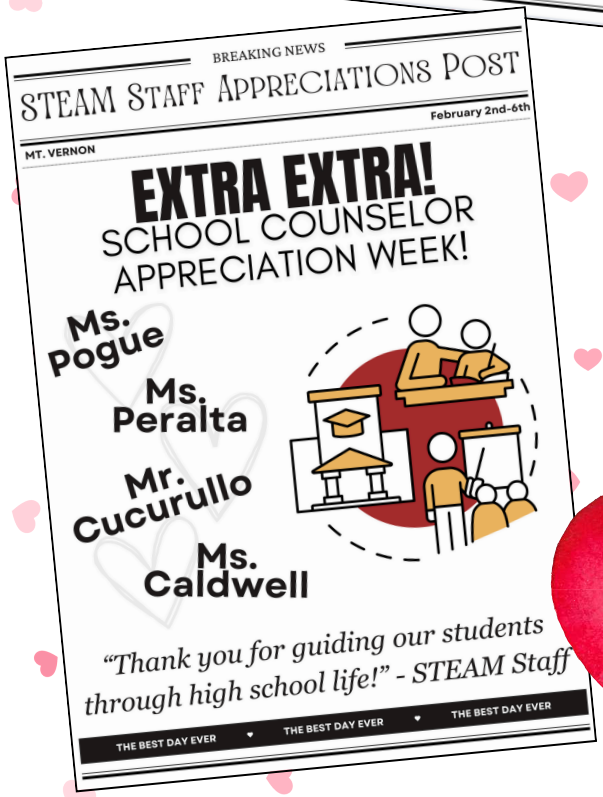
Thanks for your commitment to Academic Rigor, High Expectations, the 4Cs, RAW (Reading, Analyzing, and Writing in all subjects), PBL (Project-Based Learning), Explicit Direct Instruction, Collaborative Progress Monitoring, Excellence, and Professionalism at the MV STEAM Academy!



February

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH





ALL WEEK FEBRUARY 2ND-6TH

Thanks to our 7th grade advisory classes for making our National Day Signs that hang outside classrooms and offices!

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS!

ANSWERS: Down: 1. No Place for Hate; 2. Mock Trial; 6. Inspire; 7. Wrestling; 8. Vogel. Across: 3. Chocolate; 4. February 16; 5. Klimt; 9. Rozelle; 10. ACE.

Around the School
Celebrations

JANUARY ATTENDANCE

7th Grade - 88.49%
8th Grade - 90.27%
9th Grade - 87.58%
10th Grade - 85.69%
11th Grade - 83.97%
12th Grade - 85.44%

CLASS ADVISORS

Class of 2026
Ms. Stanton

Class of 2027
Ms. Comrie & Ms. Roberts

Class of 2028
Ms. Wallace

Class of 2029
Mr. Claro & Mr. Glinias

Class of 2030 & 2031
Ms. Ingram & Ms. Porter

About MV STEAM Academy

MISSION AND VISION

The vision of the Mount Vernon STEAM Academy is to prepare students for success in the 21st century by providing equitable, rigorous and innovative learning opportunities across all content areas through a STEAM lens.

We will promote active learning and challenge our students to take full ownership of their education centered around the 4Cs (critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity) and 5Es (engage, explore, explain, elaborate and evaluate). We encourage our students to identify and recognize their skills, talents and passions.

Important Information

CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEXT NEWSLETTER!

Help us showcase the amazing things happening at MV STEAM Academy! Share a classroom celebration, student achievement, or event you'd like featured in our monthly newsletter.

STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH NOMINATION FORM

Every role in our school makes a difference. Help us recognize a colleague who goes above and beyond! Nominations are open to all staff members — teachers, security, support staff, office, custodial, cafeteria, TAs, and more!

About MV STEAM Academy

STEAM CREED

STEAM rises! I'm all the way up!
Nothing can stop me! I'll rise all the way up.
Nothing can stop me! I'll go all the way up.
Nothing can stop me! I'll press all the way up.
Nothing can stop me! I'll stay all the way up.
Nothing can stop me! I will never give up!
Nothing can stop me! I'll dream all the way up.

We are the **STEAM Academy**, thriving in an advanced **global economy**. Together, we will believe and achieve. We will study hard and succeed.

We will lead by example through our actions, decisions, and interactions. We will **collaborate** and investigate. We will conduct research and **innovate**.

We will ask questions and find **solutions.** We will develop and utilize our talents in every opportunity to better ourselves, our school, and our community.

We will give our best and nothing less. We will resist complacency, use all our **energy**, and move full steam ahead towards our destiny.

We are **MV STEAM**, and we're all the way up!



JANUARY STAFF OF THE MONTH!





ORDER NOW!