



Garland Independent School District (TX)



STEAM-powered Passion Motivates Diverse District

Settled on the outer limits of Dallas, Texas, Garland Independent School District is the education hub for three cities and a diverse student population that speaks more than 100 different languages.

“Though we serve three cities, the community here at Garland ISD has a family feel because most of the people that go to school here stay, live, and work here,” said Dr. Jovan Wells, Chief Academic Officer at Garland ISD. “There is tremendous loyalty to the district. People take care of it and work hard here because they love it.”

Because of the diverse languages spoken throughout district schools, Garland ISD’s English Language Learner program has become a central pillar in supporting its students. Garland ISD’s partnership with Discovery Education ensures its students have access to digital curricular resources like the Techbook series, which can dynamically switch text between English and Spanish or between Lexile levels, and powerful professional learning courses that help districts grow teacher leaders, expanding the foundation for new education initiatives.

“Discovery Education embodies what Garland ISD values. They’ve become a part of our family, supporting the district in ways we didn’t even know we needed. And their partnerships are second-to-none.”

“They’ve never seen science quite like this before,” said Dr. Wells of students working with Science Techbook. “When we expose students to Discovery’s products, it gets them excited. It

shows them there's a way to make science fun, but they're also learning a whole lot of new information.”

Gathering STEAM for Students' Futures

Since partnering with Discovery Education six years ago, the district has transformed learning with a STEAM program that is still growing. Educators at Garland ISD's Bussey Middle School recently finished STEMformation, a three-year professional learning program designed to help schools build and sustain a culture of STEM teaching and learning.

“That school's principal still talks about how STEMformation has made a difference on that campus — it was remarkable,” she said. “It was a struggling school, but everyone was going over to visit and see what they had done.”

The district is also partnering with Texas Instruments and the National Math and Science Initiative to expand its computational thinking and coding offerings to all students, from Pre-K-12 in the coming years. The aim is to ensure students have a breadth of options for their careers upon graduation.

“Just like required English or writing, coding courses will be a focus of ours to ensure all students are ready for jobs,

opportunities and college experiences beyond the classroom,” said Dr. Wells.

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Students that choose to study at the district’s career and technical school can pursue a certification in robotics, engineering and other STEAM sectors that would allow them to start working in their chosen fields as soon as they graduate from high school, or intern with local businesses to accrue relevant industry experience for their future careers.

The district’s STEAM program in partnership with Discovery Education has opened the door to learning for many students, including those traditionally left on the sidelines, and that is energizing educators.

“This is an investment in getting students to focus on subject areas that we typically don’t see a lot of engagement with, especially minority girls that are underrepresented in the STEAM fields,” said Dr. Wells.