

# Chase County Elementary School



Farming Since 2013



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Chase County Elementary School  
Outdoor Learning Center

# What We Do at CCES!



- ❧ **Project Based Learning** linked to ranching and agriculture
  - A. College & Career Ready, B. Real-Life 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills
- ❧ **Animals** – cattle, sheep, pigs, chicken, worms
- ❧ **Gardening** – raised garden beds, greenhouse
- ❧ **Recycling** – paper, aluminum cans,
- ❧ **Repurpose** – rainwater, lunch scraps, Bleacher Boards
- ❧ **Community** – Little Free Library, Involvement, Donations, Volunteers
- ❧ **Student Ambassadors** – Tours, Public Speaking
- ❧ **Family Groups**
- ❧ **Cost** – Donations, Grants, Price Breaks
- ❧ **PR** – Newspapers, Radio, Facebook, Magazines,



# Kindergarten Worm Project



# Kindergarten Worm Project

Worms help us recycle at CCES.





# 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Seed Project





# Butterfly Garden

## Maintained by a Family Group



Family Group member beautifying our campus.





# Visit to The Tallgrass Prairie

Second graders learn about preserving the prairie through controlled burns.





# Public Speaking

Meeting College & Career Ready standards  
for Speaking & Listening.

The public is in the building often.



# Kansas Day Project

## With a local leather expert.





# Visits To Our Local Feed Store

Second grade students study animal nutrition.



# Reaching Out to Our Community

Family Groups visit low income housing  
and sing Christmas carols.





# 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Community Service

Our way of giving back and helping others.





High School FFA members visit CCES and teach our students.





FFA visited our school for FFA Day.



# FFA Day





# Hands-On Learning

Kindergarteners tearing apart old donated items using real tools and also learning safety in the process.



# Chicken Ramp

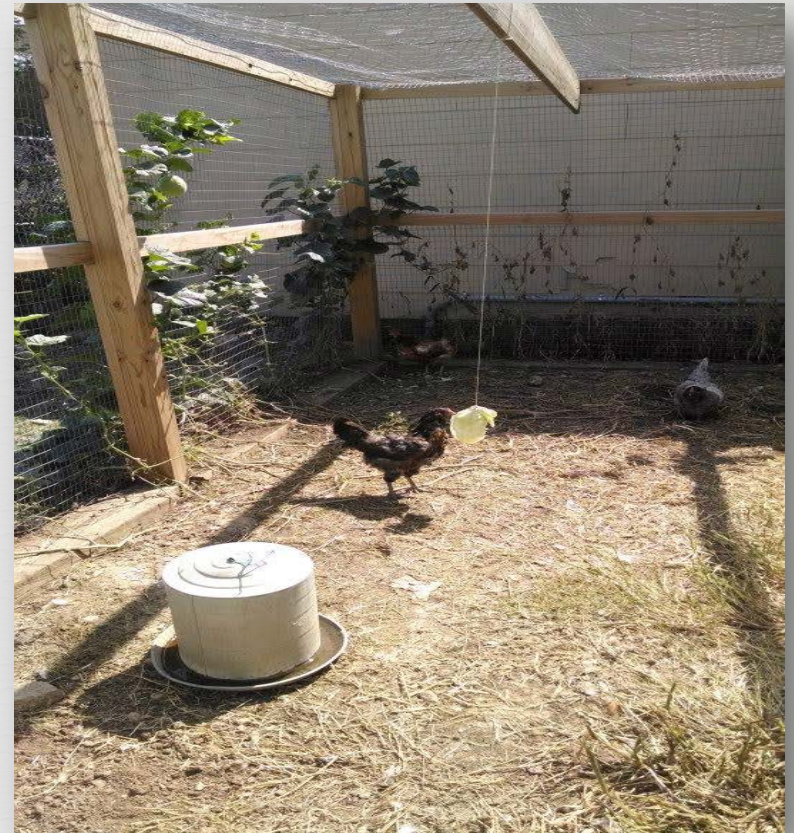
Kindergartners help with a chicken coop for a patron.





# Lettuce Hanging Project

By the Kindergarten Class



# Drum Making

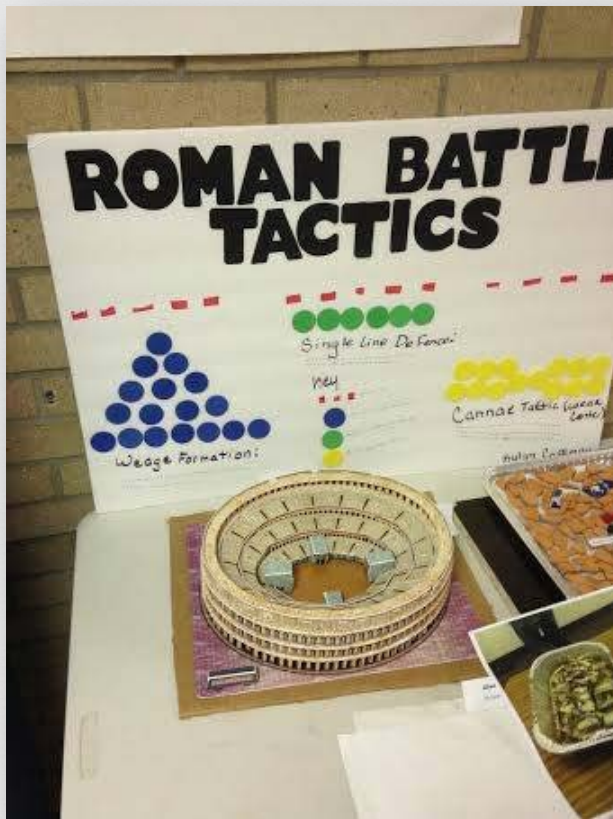
Third graders learn about drums from a local visitor.





# Roman Projects

## Sixth graders make history visual.





# Multi-Level Projects

Fifth graders work with first graders on a planting project.





# Emporia Zoo Animal Visits

A David Taylor Zoo docent comes bi-monthly.



# Making Life to Text Connections

Fourth graders reading *My Side of the Mountain*  
learned how to tan hides.





## Connecting Across the Country

Fifth grade students reading *Gentle Ben* SKYPE with 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in Alaska to learn about salmon.



# Weekend Chores

Done by families, staff and other volunteers.





# Weekend chores.



# PIGS

## Miss Piggy, Porky and Wilbur!





Pigs eating lunch scraps  
that students threw away.



# Sheep

The ewe, Beep, with her lamb, Paisley.





# Hatching Chicks

Kindergartners hatched these chicks and raised them to be added to the school flock.





# Math Skills Applied in Nature

Second Grade students measuring  
Big Bluestem Grass as part of a project.





# Real-life Problem Solving

Sixth graders making a temporary pen for Beep & Paisley.



Sixth graders measured and cut panels for pens.





## Applying Social Skills

Students use knowledge gained about social responsibilities as they practice with community members.





# Real-Life Learning

Why do sheep get a bath?  
Why do humans get baths?





# Little Free Libraries

Two were donated and built by community members.  
This program promotes literacy and builds good community relationships.



- Located on CCES grounds and downtown Strong City
- Maintained by Mrs. Luder's Family Group

# Community Contributions

It is about community buy-in, involvement and donations.





# Fostering Good Work Ethic

Sixth grade students loading hay from a donor's shed.



# Local Business Owner Involvement

Student interviewing with a business owner  
to be a Student Ambassador.





# Student Ambassador Training

Students from all grade levels can apply to join the team.



# Student Ambassadors

## Giving a tour to our Board Of Education.





# Student Ambassadors

Sharing about one of our rain water collection barrels on a tour.

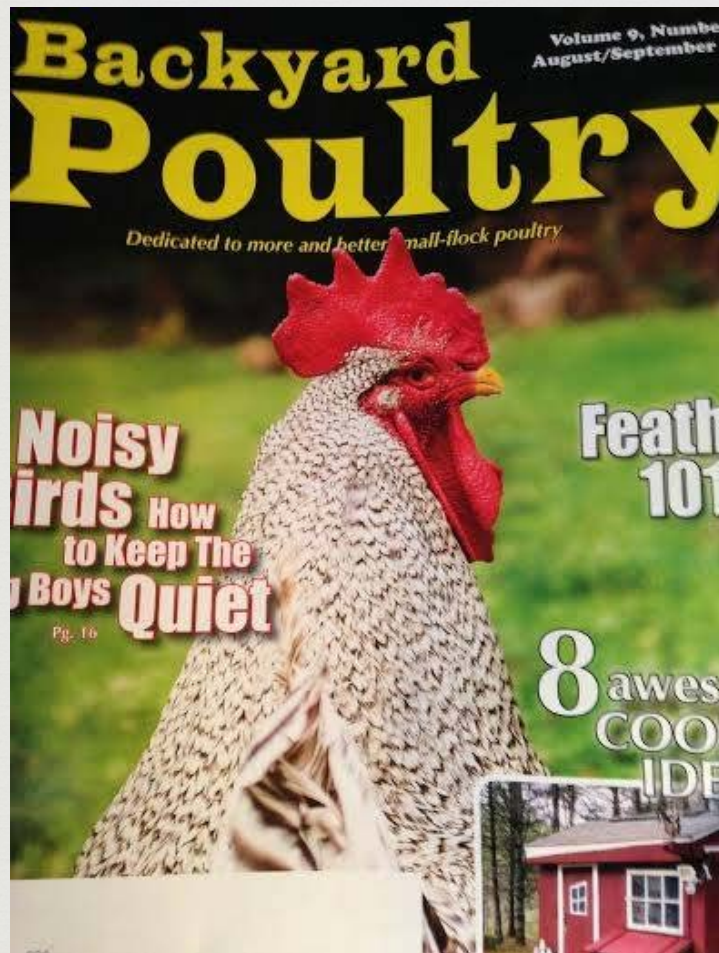


# Senator Jerry Moran visiting our Outdoor Learning Center.





# Magazine Article!



# 2014 Kansas Green School of the Year





## Chase County Elementary School and Outdoor Learning Center FACTS AND INFORMATION



- ✓ The Outdoor Learning Center began in the fall of 2013.
- ✓ Very few tax payer dollars are used to support the program. Chiefly funded through grants and donations.
- ✓ The purpose of the center is to help facilitate project-based learning and teach real-life, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- ✓ College & Career Ready skills are being taught in each classroom.
- ✓ CCES is a PreK – 6 school.
- ✓ Our enrollment is about 188 students and about 33 staff members of which 16 are teachers.
- ✓ Enrollment increased during the 13/14 year but fell by about 5 students this year.
- ✓ CCES has been featured in the Sunday edition of the *Topeka Capital Journal*, *The Emporia Gazette*, our local paper, the *Chase County Leader News*, *Backyard Poultry*. We have also been interviewed on the air for KVOE out of Emporia. We give many tours and have given tours to Senator Jerry Moran, several state school board of education members, many educators and outside visitors include guests all the way from Albuquerque, NM to Henrietta, NY.

# From a Teacher's Point of View



How Project-Based Learning Happened In  
My Classroom



## Setting the Stage

- At CCES, 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers are specialized by subject, but we teach our homeroom COMPUTER/SPELLING
- The students rotate like a junior high.
- Our system allows for three year looping.

Project-Based Learning is NOT a unit that ends in a project.

It is student guided learning where students determine what avenues of interest they will pursue.



Implementing project-based learning  
in my classroom has been project-  
based learning for me.

I have learned the last two years  
alongside of my students  
creating a learning experience  
that is memorable for all of us.

## EXAMPLES

Because we were reading a novel that involved the salmon industry, we were trying to learn about the **life cycles of salmon** when we learned that:

Some people in Alaska still catch enough salmon to feed their family throughout the year and the Juneau junior high students we talked to felt that a freezer full of beef was something special.

We take beef for granted in the Flint Hills.



## EXAMPLES

**I hadn't planned to talk about bias in writing, but when we were trying to find out about wolf pups we learned that:**

There is a huge controversy in and around Yellowstone over the reintroduction of wolves to the wild and we found that there are hugely biased sources produced by each side. The park ranger we talked to said they tried to stay unbiased and teach the truth about wolves.

## EXAMPLES

We were reading about a girl who had a positive impact on her community during **the Great Depression** when:

Fourth graders decided to reach out and make a positive impact on our own community. They collected gifts for a student suffering from cancer. They also planned an art project for residents at our local nursing home and traveled by bus to spend time working on it with them.





## Letting Go

Project-Based Learning has forced me to let go of the meticulous planning and micromanaging. I don't have to solve all of my students' problems. I am constantly conscious of the CCR Standards, but students guide their learning.



## Riding in the Wagon

Instead of pulling students along trying to get them to go with you down the road, project-based learning allows you to let student interest and excitement pull you along behind while you are simply guiding them in the right direction.



## The Difference

When students lead with their ideas and ambitions, the outcomes surpass all plans the teacher can create and the result can impact others outside the confines of the classroom.

# Changing How Lessons Are Planned



Standard Teaching	Project-Based Learning
<b>COMPUTER CLASS</b> - Students go through the typing skills book to learn fundamentals.	<b>COMPUTER CLASS</b> - Students research how to manufacture foaming hand soap using not only the computer skills they were supposed to learn originally, but also experiencing management, marketing, finance, & communication skills.
<b>READING</b> - Students read a weekly story from a basal using workbooks to practice comprehension skills.	<b>READING</b> - Students read a novel that mentioned helium balloons which sparked an interest, so several boys are researching the current helium shortage and connecting with a local business owner who sells party supplies. (Not sure how the ending looks here.)



# Getting Real About Management



- ❧ PBL is much more work than “teacher manual” kind of lessons.
- ❧ It is unpredictable and messy.
- ❧ It is not always easy to stick with a timeframe for a unit because learning takes unexpected turns constantly.
- ❧ Standards are always on the mind, but meeting them may take an unforeseen direction.