



Brick by Brick
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 Sixth Grade
 High Tech Middle North County

Sixth graders at High Tech Middle North County partnered up with eight local, small businesses in North County. Small groups of students interviewed these partners, made documentaries about/for them. In Engineering they created mini-lego sets that were modeled after the businesses storefront and in Science made topographical maps that illustrated a change over time. Throughout the project, students dove deep into topics about population growth, city expansion, gentrification, the inevitability of change, and how to work together as a team to stay within a deadline. While designing their models, students focused on the architectural design, engineered build instructions, and 3D modeled and printed unique LEGO parts.

Teacher Reflection

I've always wanted to create a project that's focused on the community. After I connected with and established eight different community partners, I saw instant buy-in with the students. They felt invested when they were tasked to work with their specific partner. There was no one else that could pull the weight of the products they were asked to make, so they bore the task and completed the work skillfully. I learned, through this project, how important community partners are, and how motivating they can be for students.

For teachers, I recommend finding multiple community partners that students can work with for the project. It can be a logistical nightmare creating all of the schedules, but in the end, students feel more invested with the project and find meaning much easier when they are out and about in their community.

—Guy MacLaury

Student Reflection

When we interviewed Lola's Mexican restaurant, I learned about change over time and that change can be good or bad for the business. While working on our Lego design, it was really important to have a good relationship with my team to be successful with our build. I had never designed a lego set before so it was new for me.

—Evan



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