



THE MON VALLEY INDEPENDENT



Heartbreaking loss
A game slips away from Charleroi in the final second. B1

WEDNESDAY,
MAY 25, 2017

\$1.00

WHAT HAPPENS HERE, MATTERS HERE.

Students exploring Inventionland

The Charleroi Area School District is conducting a pilot program and will add it to the middle school curriculum in the fall.

By TAYLOR BROWN
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The Charleroi Area School Board approved a program Tuesday night that will allow students to explore their creativity and possibly become next-generation inventors.

Inventionland curriculum focuses on four C's: creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and communication.

The district received a two-time \$10,000 grant, as well as \$1,000 for materials, from Chevron and Inter-

mediate Unit I.

Superintendent Dr. Ed Zelich said the program costs approximately \$20,000 per year.

The program is currently being piloted with 20 students and will be offered to middle school students as a semester course next fall.

Pittsburgh-based Inventionland creates course material and resources that allow teachers to train students to become 21st century "makers."

The course involves a nine-step process that requires students to protect, brainstorm, research and sketch ideas, as well as develop engineering skills to create concept models, package designs, graphic designs and product samples.

Zelich said students will take the

"They are the pioneers of this. They volunteered their time in the middle of the school year."

DR. ED ZELICH
SUPERINTENDENT

course on a grade-level rotation basis once during their middle school careers.

According to inventionlandinstitute.com, the program will build "self-a-STEAM" for participating students, by using hands-on and personalized project learning.

The STEAM educational concept

comprises science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

The goal is for students to improve in self-motivation, self-confidence, persistence, collaboration and teamwork, engagement in school, critical thinking and problem-solving, capacity for independent project-based learning, verbal communication and computer-design skills.

They also will learn to use 3D printers and laser cutters.

Three teachers are being trained to guide students through three phases of work.

Michael Flaherty will lead students through the artistic and design phase, Kim McGinity will direct the marketing phase and Howard Johnson will

EXPLORING • A2



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The Reading Eagle reported a former agency bureau director, Angela Episale, said Tennis told her in 2015 county plans to use the money and develops a statewide strategy for addiction treatment.

EXPLORING FROM A1

help teach students how to construct and sell their products.

“They are the pioneers of this,” Zelich said. “They volunteered their time in the middle of the school year.”

Zelich said the teachers will learn to “fly this plane” as they begin to implement what they learn with students.

“This is not for a top-level student,” Zelich said. “This is for a mid-level learner, to get them thinking; it is going to be amazing to see what they come up with.”

As part of the course, students will tour the Inventionland facility.

In other business the board:

- Approved a Homeless Transportation plan that will provide transportation to students who are living outside their home districts because of unforeseen circumstances.
 - Announced that middle school family science teacher Lorraine Sciacca-Finch is a 2017 Champions of Learning award finalist in the Teaching and Learning category.
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