STEAMworks and Attendance Recovery Program Update – Summer 2026

Overview

The STEAMworks Attendance Recovery Program provided elementary students with opportunities to recover and bank attendance while engaging in meaningful academic, enrichment, and social-emotional learning experiences. The 2026 program, themed "Mission to the Moon," combined standards-based instruction with hands-on STEAM learning, arts education, wellness supports, and family engagement opportunities.

Program Structure

The program was hosted at four elementary school sites:

- Gallatin Elementary School
- Gauldin Elementary School
- Lewis Elementary School
- Price Elementary School

Site leadership included principals and assistant principals from each campus who coordinated instruction and support services for students across multiple feeder patterns.

Attendance Recovery Outcomes

The program served an average daily attendance of **1,801 students** across the four sites and included both general education and special education teachers. Attendance recovery results included:

- **Gallatin:** 694 absences recovered; 849 absences banked
- **Gauldin:** 567 absences recovered; 722 absences banked
- **Lewis:** 1,173 absences recovered; 1,213 absences banked
- **Price:** 1,031 absences recovered; 1,024 absences banked

These results demonstrate strong participation and student engagement throughout the summer program.

STEAM-Focused Learning

Students participated in a comprehensive STEAM curriculum that integrated science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics through hands-on learning experiences. Program highlights included:

- 15 STEAM projects completed over 19 instructional days
- Six science laboratory investigations
- Four engineering design challenges
- Five visual arts projects
- 65 minutes of STEAM instruction daily

Lessons were connected to space exploration themes and adapted from resources developed by NASA and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Visual arts and engineering design standards were integrated throughout the curriculum.

Academic Excellence

The program reinforced core academic skills through structured instruction in English language arts, mathematics, and dual immersion pathways.
Instructional strategies included:

- Launch-Explore-Discuss-Reflect mathematics lessons
- Read-alouds and vocabulary development
- Inquiry-based learning activities
- Content-specific language development
- Dual immersion integration of STEAM, visual and performing arts, and mathematics instruction

VAPA, Physical Education, and Social-Emotional Learning

The program incorporated visual and performing arts (VAPA), physical education, and social-emotional learning (SEL) opportunities to support the development of the whole child.

Students participated in:

- Drawing, painting, sculpture, and mixed-media projects
- Music, rhythm, movement, and instrument activities
- Role-playing and readers' theater
- Character development lessons
- SEL instruction supported by clinical school therapists

The program also emphasized inclusion by integrating students from special day classes and deaf and hard-of-hearing programs into general education learning environments.

Student Enrichment Opportunities

Students participated in a variety of enrichment experiences, including:

- Field days
- Sensory-inclusive activities
- Innovation Lab experiences
- Weekly schoolwide assemblies
- Visits and activities connected to the Columbia Memorial Space Center
- Family picnic events

Community Partnerships

The success of the program was supported by partnerships with:

- Downey Foundation for Educational Opportunities (DFEO)
- YMCA
- Community Schools
- Cerritos College interns

Partners contributed expanded enrichment opportunities, family supports, attendance outreach efforts, and additional student engagement activities throughout the summer.

Family Feedback

Families reported positive experiences with the program, highlighting student enthusiasm, engagement in project-based learning, and increased interest in academic content and space-themed learning activities. Parents noted that students were eager to share their learning and demonstrate the projects they created throughout the program.

Conclusion

The 2026 STEAMworks Attendance Recovery Program successfully combined attendance recovery with engaging academic instruction, arts integration, enrichment activities, and social-emotional supports. Through innovative learning experiences and strong community partnerships, the program provided students with opportunities to strengthen their academic skills, explore new interests, and build meaningful connections during the summer months.