

HANDBOOK

Week 1: June 9-12, 2025

Week 2: June 16-19, 2025

Coordinated By:

Grand Valley State University

Seymour and Esther Padnos College of Engineering

Sponsors:



**SEYMOUR AND ESTHER PADNOS
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING**
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Dear Campers and Parents/Guardians,

Congratulations on being selected to attend the Science Technology & Engineering Preview Summer (STEPS) Camp at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). We are happy you are interested in attending STEPS Camp and we are looking forward to a fun-filled and educational week!



GVSU and the Seymour and Esther Padnos College of Engineering (PCE) are very proud to host the STEPS Camp. We hope to make your experience at GVSU a positive one, from camp registration through the Graduation Fly activities. Therefore, this handbook was put together to orient you to the STEPS Camp and acquaint you with our procedures.

Between the hours of 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM on Monday morning, please report to the lobby of the Shape Corp. Innovation Design Center (IDC) for check-in. You will find the IDC entrance starred on the campus map on page 11, and directional signs will be posted outside of the IDC. When you arrive, you will meet counselors, other campers, teachers, and staff working with the STEPS Camp. Orientation for campers only will begin at 8:00 AM.

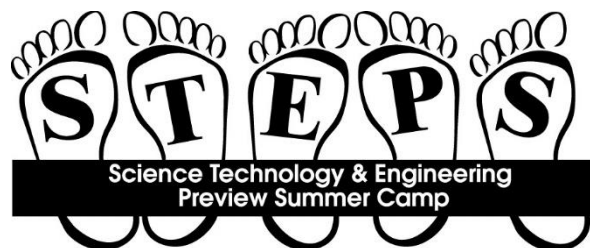
We would like to encourage parents/guardians to attend the Graduation Fly Night, which will be held from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Thursday at the Warped Wings Fly Field on Alger St., Allendale, MI. A map is included in this handbook for your convenience (page 15).

Volunteers of STEPS Camps are GVSU faculty, students, and staff; our local area engineering and manufacturing industries; and local radio-controlled airplane groups. These people have stepped forward to help make your camp experience an educational and memorable one. We believe you will sense their support and enthusiasm for your success in many ways as you enjoy this STEPS Camp adventure!

Sincerely,

Sara L. Maas

Sara Maas, Camp Director
Seymour and Esther Padnos College of Engineering



INTRODUCING THE CAMP STAFF

Sara Maas, Camp Director: Sara is the K-12 & Community Outreach Coordinator for the Padnos College of Engineering and Computing, developing programs to engage students into the STEM pipeline. She has an Associate's degree in Technical Drafting and Tool Design and a Bachelor's degree in Plastics Engineering Technology from Ferris State University. She also has a Master of Science in Engineering from GVSU, focusing on Manufacturing Operations. She worked locally in manufacturing before joining Grand Valley.

Ryan Aldridge, Lead Technician: Ryan is the Engineering Laboratories Supervisor at Grand Valley State University's School of Engineering, and the vice chair of the IEEE EMC Chapter of West Michigan. He has been involved with the STEPS program for the past 7 years, and has been the Lead STEPS Technician since the spring of 2017. He has 4 years of industry and academia experience in controls and embedded systems engineering. Before coming to GVSU, he was a controls engineer at JR Automation where he designed robotic controls systems for the automotive and aerospace industry.

Alison Sall, PCEC Student Services Outreach Office Coordinator: Alison is an alumna of Grand Valley State University. She received her bachelor's degree in music performance from Grand Valley and continued her education at Michigan State University, where she graduated with master's degrees in music performance and music history. Alison is excited to apply her background in music education and arts administration to her work as Office Coordinator for the PCE Outreach Center.

Piper Seely, Outreach Graduate Assistant: Piper is studying Speech Language Pathology at Grand Valley State University. She has taught children and developed curriculum in a variety of settings and is excited to bring her passion for education to the PCE Outreach Center!

Anna Stover, Assistant to the Director: Anna graduated from GVSU as a secondary math educator and was recognized as 2021'S *Outstanding Graduate in Mathematics*. During the traditional academic year, Anna is a math teacher at Caledonia High School. For the past four years Anna has held various leadership positions with informal STEM summer programming supporting both the Regional Math and Science Center and PCE.

Quinn S., Student Technician: Quinn is a graduate from West Michigan Aviation Academy (WMAA) and has been recognized twice as an *Engineering Department Award* winner– once as a sophomore and once as a senior. He has been involved in FIRST Robotics since middle school and has traveled with his team to Worlds multiple times. His other interests include cross country running, RC Aircraft, and FPV Drones. Quinn will be heading to Michigan Tech in the fall to pursue Engineering.

Counselors

STEPS employs multiple counselors to support the campers. Some of the counselors are pre-service education students working full-time with the various week-long day camps being offered at GVSU. These counselors are primarily responsible for the pedagogical practices, curriculum delivery, daily operations, and staff support.

There are also content-specialist counselors with STEPS. These are engineering or STEM-track students that have experience in aviation or extensive camp counselor experience.

The counselor to student ratio will be one counselor for every 6-7 campers.

Coordinating Organizations at Grand Valley State University

Padnos College of Engineering
Dr. Bayo Ogundipe,
Dean, Padnos College of Engineering
<https://www.gvsu.edu/pce/>

GVSU Regional Math & Science Center
Dr. Deborah Herrington,
Director, RMSC and CCEL
(College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Center for Experiential Learning)
<https://www.gvsu.edu/rmsc/>

Partnering Community Organizations

- Warped Wings Radio Control Club: Warner Schultz ~ warnerschultz@comcast.net
- Wolverine Skyhawks Model Aircraft Club: <https://www.wolverineskyhawks.com/>
Eric Pipenger ~ eric@wolverineskyhawks.com
- Tulip City Air Force: <https://tulipcityairforce.com/2012/01/18/areobat-show-team/>
- Kent Radio Aero Modelers ~ Allen Simpson
- West Michigan Aviation Academy ~ George Pavey, Dean of Aviation & Engineering
<https://www.westmichiganaviation.org/>
- Amway Aviation ~ Jacob Maher, Aviation Maintenance Manager
- Busing Transportation ~ Allendale Public Schools Transportation, Michelle Kolean
- Shuttle Drivers ~ Grandville Public Schools Transportation, Missy Oakes

Camp Registration Information & Daily Operations

Monday Check-in

Time: 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM

Location: Campers will report to the Shape Corp. Innovation Design Center (IDC) (see map on page 11). We will make sure we have all necessary information for each camper and parents can take a peek at the camp facilities for the week.

Parking: Monday for REGISTRATION: Please park in the DeVos lot and walk your camper to the IDC building. Parking Services will NOT be enforcing parking the morning of STEPS Registration, so no paper parking permits are required. We expect the check-in for Registration to take no longer than 5 minutes.

***Team Assignments:** All campers have been assigned a team color and counselor. Campers will receive their team assignment at orientation. We do not accommodate team assignment requests. Please welcome this as an opportunity to make new friends.

Tuesday & Wednesday Check-in

Time: 7:45 AM < 8:00 AM

Thursday Check-in

Time: 9:30 AM < 9:45 AM ← Later Start time!!!

Location: Campers will be dropped off in the DeVos parking lot and will be checked in by camp staff. We will all congregate at the NE corner of the parking lot by the Burger King. **You must sign in your child with their counselor or a STEPS staff member.** Do not drop off your camper and leave without signing them in. Any driver must be assigned to a camper and proper identification must be presented to a staff member. After all of the campers have been received, the group will walk over to the IDC together.

Parking: Parents will be dropping off campers in the DeVos Lot and then promptly leaving. No parking permits are required.

	Check-in		Check-out	
	Time	Location	Time	Location
Monday	7:30 am – 8:00 am	Park @ DeVos Lot → Walk to IDC	3:00 pm	Pick-up DeVos Lot
Tuesday	7:45 am < 8:00 am	Drop-off DeVos Lot	3:00 pm	Pick-up DeVos Lot
Wednesday	7:45 am < 8:00 am	Drop-off DeVos Lot	3:00 pm	Pick-up DeVos Lot
Thursday	9:30 am < 9:45 am	Drop-off DeVos Lot	~8:00 pm	Warped Wings Fly Field, Alger St., Allendale, MI.

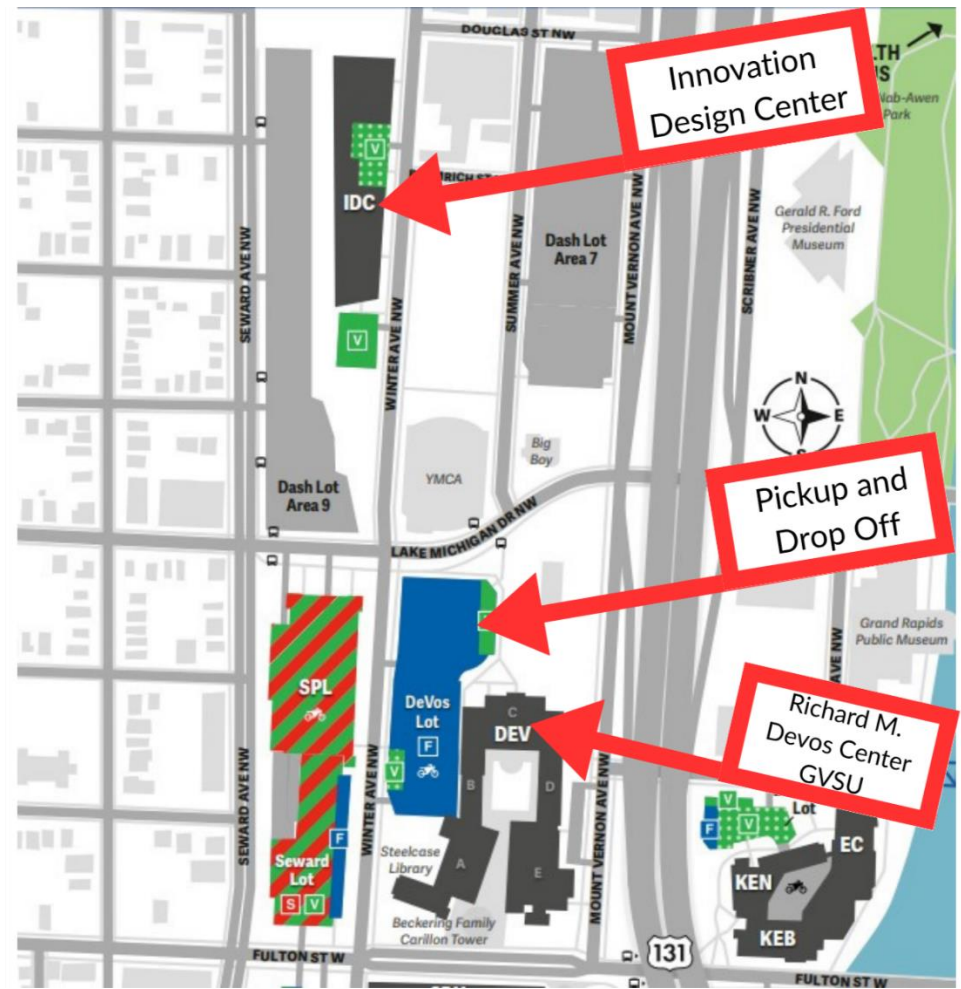
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Check-out**Time: 3:15 PM (Please be prompt)**

Location: Campers will be walking over to the DeVos parking lot by 3:15 PM. We will all congregate at the NE corner of the parking lot by the Burger King. **You must sign out your child with their counselor or a STEPS staff member.** Any driver must be assigned to a camper and proper identification must be presented to a staff member.

Thursday Check-out and STEPS Graduation Fly

All parents are invited to attend the fly ceremony which will be held at the Warped Wings Fly Field on Alger St. in Allendale, MI. from 5:00 – 8:00 PM on Thursday. Weather permitting, we will start with a pizza party and small graduation ceremony at 5:15 PM and the campers will fly their radio-controlled glider airplanes beginning at 6:00 PM. Parents can leave with their child at the conclusion of their flying experience or are welcome to stay for the entire time; but no later than 8:00 PM. Parking will be available at the fly field. Please bring lawn chairs or a blanket for seating. You will be asked to sign out your child with one of the camp's staff members at the fly field. Campers will be able to bring their airplane home. A map to Warped Wings Fly Field is included in this handbook (see page 15). We will not be transporting your child back to the GVSU Campus. *If you are unable to attend the Graduation Fly, you must make the necessary arrangements to pick up your son/daughter at the Warped Wings Fly Field before 8:00 PM.

	Check-in		Check-out	
	Time	Location	Time	Location
Monday	7:30 am – 8:00 am	Park @ DeVos Lot → Walk to IDC	3:00 pm	Pick-up DeVos Lot
Tuesday	7:45 am < 8:00 am	Drop-off DeVos Lot	3:00 pm	Pick-up DeVos Lot
Wednesday	7:45 am < 8:00 am	Drop-off DeVos Lot	3:00 pm	Pick-up DeVos Lot
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SHAPE CORP. INNOVATION DESIGN CENTER (IDC)
227 Winter Ave. NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Directions to Pearl Street: (becomes Lake Michigan Dr.)

From the West: I-196 East to US-131 South (77B). Keep right to exit at Pearl St. (85B). Turn right on Pearl St.

From the East: I-196 West to the Ottawa St. exit (77C). Follow Ottawa St. south to Pearl St. Turn right on Pearl St. following it just beyond the US-131 overpass.

From the North: US-131 South to Pearl St. exit (85B). Turn right on Pearl St.

From the South: US-131 North to Pearl St. exit (85B). Turn left on Pearl St.

GVSU is a permit-only campus

Pew Campus Guest Parking:

Guests and visitors may utilize the pay-to-park areas marked in green on the campus maps. When parking in pay-to-park, we highly recommend using ParkMobile.

If you would prefer a day permit at no cost, please stop in to Parking Services in the Eberhard Center with a valid Photo ID and license plate number to obtain a visitor permit.

STEPS CAMP POLICIES/RULES

The following policies and rules were established to keep all campers and staff safe, and to make the camp enjoyable for all.

Food and Snacks

Campers are provided with lunch, beverages, and snacks each day Monday-Thursday. We plan our snacks around campers/staff members dietary restrictions and allergies. There are usually 3-4 very serious food allergies present during camp weeks, so we are very strict about bringing food from home. There is always a non-meat option at every lunch and gluten-free items are provided for the campers or staff that follow a gluten-free diet. If your camper isn't comfortable with the food offerings, please reach out to Sara or Sam. On Thursday a pizza party will also be provided in the evening at the Fly Field for campers and families.

Medications

If your child needs to take medication during camp hours, please label all medication (prescription and over-the-counter) with the camper's name, dosage, and times to take the medication. Parent or guardian who would like any medications administered during camp hours must give that medication to the Director or Assistant Director, and should review instructions when the camper checks in. Medication will be administered appropriately by the camp counselors and/or STEPS staff member. A camper may carry their inhaler on their person. EpiPens will be carried by camp staff.

Phone Calls

Campers will not be allowed to make phone calls during camp unless there is an emergency. If a parent needs to contact a camper, please use one of the numbers listed here.

Emergency Contact Information

Sara Maas, STEPS Camp Director
Office: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, (616) 331-6025
After office hours: (616) 307-1452

Phone Policy

We understand that campers want their phones. However, they are a huge distraction during class, and they create privacy issues for other campers. We will enforce a phone policy so that all the campers may enjoy the same experience. Phones will remain in campers' bags for the duration of the day, including breaks, lunches, and field trips. They must be turned off or silenced. If there is a time when it is appropriate for campers to use their phones, counselor(s) or staff will let them know.

Zero Tolerance Policy

STEPS has a zero-tolerance policy on the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and physical damage to property, stealing, self-injury, and unruly behavior. Any camper engaging in these activities will be sent home immediately. We will notify the parents/legal guardian and it will be their responsibility to arrange immediate transportation home. Parents will be charged for any damages incurred.

General Rules Please review with your child

- Campers are expected to respect and follow the directions of the counselors and instructors.
- Campers should ALWAYS be with their counselor(s) unless they have permission to be somewhere else.
- Always ask permission from counselor(s) or staff to use restroom or to get a drink from the water fountain.
- Be punctual as a courtesy to others.

- Never wander off on your own.
- Inconsiderate or rude behavior will not be tolerated. If you have a problem with any of the other campers, try to work it out. If that doesn't work, go to your counselor.
- Avoid all forms of horseplay including piggyback rides, wrestling, hitting, kicking, pinching, and picking each other up.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself – respect fellow campers.
- If you do not feel well, tell your counselor(s).
- Do not walk around the building or any area **without** a staff person and/or a “buddy camper”
- If there is a problem, notify a staff member immediately.
- Always pick up after yourself and put materials away, as directed.
- Only staff are permitted in equipment areas and office.
- Profanity will not be tolerated.
- Respect other campers, staff, equipment, facilities, and yourself.
- Always stay in program areas with your group.

Behavior/Discipline Plan

Behavior Policy

The staff at STEPS will strive not only to provide fun and learning experiences, but also to stress respect for self and others. The following procedure will be followed when children misbehave or break camp rules. We reserve the right to bypass one or more steps in the process if a situation warrants. Please review the rules with your child and make sure they are understood.

We believe that you as a parent/guardian will appreciate knowing of any problem that your child may experience. STEPS reserves the right to suspend or expel any camper from the program who poses serious continual discipline problems, whether or not all of the steps in our discipline procedure have been completed.

Minor Offenses:

Disrespect of staff or participants (cutting in line, shushing someone, excluding other campers), inappropriate behavior (vulgar language, inappropriate gestures and/or dancing, rowdiness/disruptive behavior) or breaking general program rules.

Consequences:

- * 1st Offense – Verbal warning & a note in file
- * 2nd Offense – Loss of morning or afternoon activities and notification of parents.
- * 3rd Offense – Termination from program or session. This will be up to the Camp Director's discretion.

Serious Offenses:

Endangering another person's well-being, reckless actions, taunting or challenging staff or participants, swearing or verbal abuse of staff or participants, stealing or destruction of property, and general disregard for teachers, staff, volunteers, and program. If we need to remove a camper from program immediately, the parent will be notified.

Consequences:

- * 1st Offense – Call to parent/guardian regarding the problem. Camper will be removed from activities and placed with chaperone. Camper will not be able to participate for the rest of the day.
- * 2nd Offense – Call to parent/guardian regarding the problem. Termination from Program. This will be up to the Camp Director's discretion.

What to Bring

- ✈ Two camp T-shirts in your group color will be provided and must be worn during camp. (You may want to launder your shirts throughout the week.)
- ✈ Comfortable shoes (**Closed toe shoes are required**).
- ✈ Please dress appropriately for the weather. Most activities will be inside; however, we will be outdoors when walking between activities. Layers recommended.
- ✈ Personal medications (must be checked in with staff at orientation).

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STEPS Shirt• Pants or Shorts• Closed toe shoes• Ability to pull hair back	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STEPS Shirt• Shorts• Closed toe shoes• Ability to pull hair back	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STEPS Shirt• Shorts• Closed toe shoes• Ability to pull hair back	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STEPS Shirt• Pants or Shorts• Closed toe shoes• Ability to pull hair back
Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jacket/sweatshirt• Ballcap/hat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jacket/sweatshirt• Ballcap/hat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shorts for PM• Jacket/sweatshirt• Ballcap/hat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ballcap/hat• Long pants for PM• Jacket/sweatshirt• Bug spray
Absolutely not!!	Flip flops, Crocs, strappy sandals, Chacos, high heels			

What Will be Supplied to You

- ✈ Bag for all your goodies
- ✈ 2 STEPS Camp T-shirts (Must be worn daily. Please launder as necessary.)
- ✈ Lunch, snacks, and beverages each day
- ✈ Water bottle
- ✈ Notebook
- ✈ Pens and pencils
- ✈ Materials for constructing your glider airplane

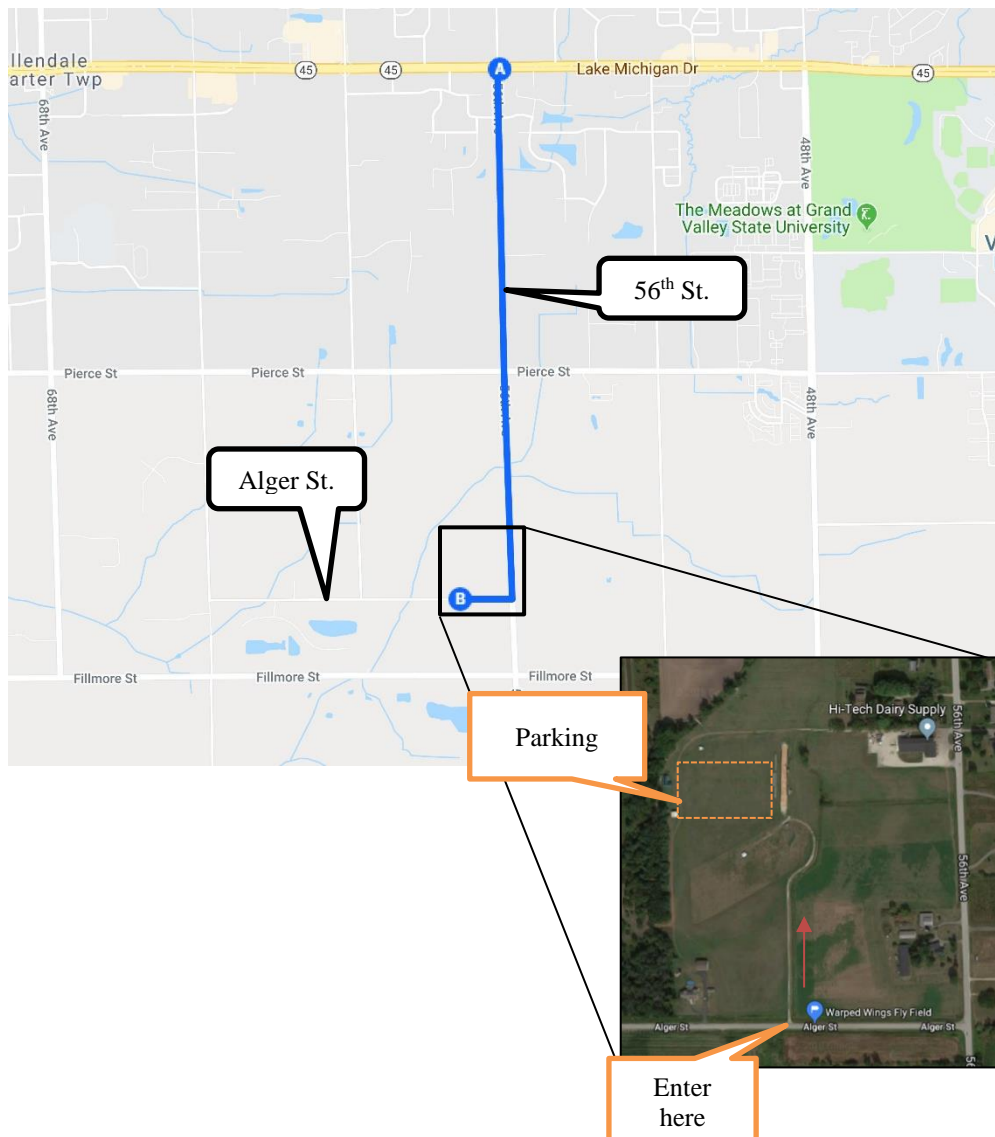
You are invited to attend the STEPS Camp Graduation Fly Night

*Thursday evening of camp week from
5:00 to 8:00 PM*

*Warped Wings Fly Field
Alger St., Allendale, MI 49401*



Participants will be receiving an acknowledgement of their participation. Your child will be flying their radio-controlled glider airplane and the activities will include a pizza party! Tables and chairs will be provided under a tent for the pizza party; however, it is suggested that you bring lawn chairs or a blanket for seating during the “fly”.



Conversation Starters

Here are some things to ask your camper about their day.

Monday

- What the campers did: Orientation activities, a Pre-test, Aerodynamics Class, and Engineering Classes
- Ask them:
 1. Tell me about one new person you met today. 🤝
 2. What are your counselors like?
 3. How did you do on the Pre-test? 😊
 4. Tell me something new you learned about airplanes or flying?

Tuesday

- What the campers did: Airplane Construction Day 1
- Ask them:
 1. How did you make a nose cone?
 2. How big is your airplane going to be when it's all done?
 3. What are the four forces of flight?
 4. How are you going to decorate your plane?

Wednesday

- What the campers did: Airplane Construction Day 2, Engineering Classes, Physics Olympics
- Ask them:
 1. How did your plane turn out?
 2. What does your 3D design look like?
 3. Did you land your plane safely on the flight simulator?
 4. What event did you participate in for the Physics Olympics?

Thursday

- What the campers did: Your child went for a tour of a private hangar, went to the Aviation Academy, went to a park to relax and enjoy new friends.
- Ask them:
 1. How many different kinds of aircraft did you see at the hangar?
 2. What did you think of the Aviation Academy?
 3. Do you think you did better on the post-test than you did on the pre-test?
 4. What did you do at the Park?

Special Considerations for STEPS 2025

There will be a lot of construction happening around the Pew Campus this summer as they are starting to build the soccer stadium on the site of the old Big Boy Restaurant.

We are anticipating road closures and detours, but we know that the sidewalks are going to remain open. We are hoping for no surprises. Our staff will utilize e-mail to send out any timely updates to parents/guardians/caregivers, if needed.

