**Attribute 2.6 Integrity of the Academic Content (Including Cognitively Demanding Work)**

*Describe how the STEM learning experiences provided by your school has integrated the curriculum to align to state standards and STEM initiatives and provides cognitively challenging work.*

CMS students participate in rigorous, standards-based, coursework with options to pursue individual interests. All teachers are implementing design thinking in their lessons. Lessons are aligned to state standards.

Students in 8th grade ELA design social justice projects in their study of the Holocaust. Inquiry based learning guides instruction through researching and interviews. Students create a model or 3d representation of their chosen Holocaust topic. Learning is culminated through a living timeline shared with the community. Since students are encouraged to become experts, they are able to answer questions of visitors. Field trips are taken to the Children’s Holocaust museum in Whitwell, TN and the Jewish Federation of Chattanooga.

Our Beta Marketing students competed and won nationally with a prompt that requested them to design a survival guide for middle school students in order to meet a community need in the midst of unprecedented times. They were able to design a student-created interactive website and videos complete with student and parent sections, videos interviews with administration, and updated health policies and procedures. The Beta Service Showcase Students also won national recognition after designing a service project that utilized community partnership with our local school for disabled adults, Trousdale School.

 Students in sixth grade are currently participating in fully integrative, project-based learning about theme parks. Students engaged in researching various theme parks all over the world by each choosing a different park, using Google Slides to collaboratively create a presentation showcasing over 70 parks, and creating expressions and equations to display admission and travel expenses. Students then began designing their own original theme park in small groups. Each group was assigned a different ancient civilization to use as the theme of their amusement park. Students must also build one model roller coaster to showcase during their final presentation.

Our systematic and cohesive approach ensures that lessons and projects are not only aligned to state standards, but they also actively involve students in STEM instruction throughout each day. These design thinking skills are a critical foundation that can be transferred to real-world problem-solving.