



# Maplewoodshop:

## Woodworking for Summer School Case Study



### School Vitals

**School:** Denville Township is a K-8 school district with extended school year and accelerated learning programs.

**Students:** The district has 1,680 students and more than 250 students participated in the summer programs in 2021, which included woodworking.

**Location:** Denville, New Jersey (about 25 miles from Newark)

**Grades using the Maplewoodshop program:** 2-8

**Teachers trained:** Two for the summer programs; then additional teachers were trained throughout the school year.

**Use:** Denville had two summer programs, extended school year (special education) and accelerated learning (general education) programs. Students worked on three projects throughout the summer.



### Why Maplewoodshop

Like many districts, Denville Township School District added an accelerated learning program for the summer of 2021. Between the extended year and accelerated learning programs, the district hoped a large group of students would take advantage of these programs and get excited about learning again. With the help of federal ESSR funding, the district was able to provide many resources, including curriculum, learning materials and professional development to inspire students to learn content through hands-on experiences.

Denville partnered with Maplewoodshop to bring hands-on woodworking experience to both the extended school year program and the accelerated learning program. "It's a great opportunity for students to grow in a new skill that can carry over to other academic areas," said Sandra L. Cullis, Ed. D., assistant superintendent of curriculum & instruction for Denville. "It also really enriches students and provides an opportunity for them to gain confidence."



## Educating with Maplewoodshop

**Projects created:** Birdhouses, keepsake boxes, cars

**Concepts reinforced:** Reading, math, safe and proper use of tools

**Life Skills Learned/Reinforced:** Teamwork, creativity, and ownership

Once funding was secured, the district quickly implemented the Maplewoodshop program and trained teachers before the start of summer. “I received incredible feedback from teachers on the training and curriculum – everything is well organized,” said Cullis. “The curriculum is clearly written and easy to use. It is the most teacher-friendly curriculum our teachers have experienced.”

Overall, the district purchased four portable woodshop carts and trained six teachers, successfully equipping multiple teachers to oversee the woodworking projects. One of the highlights of the summer program, as indicated by Cullis, was the scrap wood box where students could create their own designs using the scrap materials.

“It was the highlight of the summer – best attendance we’ve ever had,” said Cullis. “Parents were even calling saying they couldn’t go on vacation because their child won’t miss woodworking, and our teachers said this was the most student growth over the summer they had seen.”



## What’s Next?

Following the successful summer programs, the district offered woodworking in its middle school STEM club. Moving forward, the district hopes to make woodworking through Maplewoodshop a STEM elective in the future. “It improved our students’ work ethic. They saw the importance of cleaning up well in order to keep tools in good working condition for next time,” said Cullis. “When students see me in the hall, they ask about woodworking. Summer school programs no longer feel like something they have to do because they need extra help. Now they are excited and can’t wait to come”