



STEM BEST® Program Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers

Key Attributes of a STEM BEST® Program proposal

The heart of the STEM BEST® Program model is the relationship of business or industry partner(s) who with educators define curriculum and work space. Topics and projects are driven by real world learning opportunities through community partner(s) in collaboration with educators. Learning spaces are separate and distinct from the standard school environment—ideally at the community partners' location.

The proposal should:

- **develop of a rigorous and relevant STEM curriculum**
- **identify diverse partnership(s) demonstrating commitment to the program**
- **provide the plan for professional development, utilizing partners and educational resources**
- **align with STEM goals**
- **contain a financial model with a cost-share commitment**
- **address sustainability of the model**
- **discuss methods to collect and evaluate evidence of effectiveness and areas of need**

Three Key Attributes of the STEM BEST® Program Model

1. Education Driven by Community Partners (e.g. business or industry) knowledge and practice

- Real-world industry and/or student-led projects that connect students to industry knowledge base
- Quality work-based learning experiences driven by local opportunities
- Regional schools, districts or district clusters collaborate with business and industry to maximize opportunities for students in a cost-effective model

2. Rigorous, Relevant and Dynamic STEM Curriculum

- Interdisciplinary instructional strategies foster creativity, innovation and an “entrepreneurial mindset” through collaborative work-based learning opportunities
- Driven by 21st Century skills needed in current and future workforce
- Accounts for all learners, especially underrepresented populations
- Mastery of state academic standards demonstrated through a competency-based approach

3. Authentic Partnerships

- Community businesses and organizations (e.g., nonprofits, informal education)
- Clusters of schools and/or school districts encouraged

- Partner commitment narratives are detailed and consistent with the application description

4. Expertise at the post-secondary education and training level involved

In the completion of the STEM BEST® Program application, consider carefully the need to include the following types of detailed information:

Student Targets

- a) Profile participating *students'* ages, gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities
- b) Transferable skills gained
- c) Attendance
- d) Employer-partner feedback regarding student(s)
- e) Academic achievement

Operational Targets

- a) Enrollment numbers
- b) Number of mentors and business partners
- c) Curriculum products
- d) Budget management

School system impact targets

- a) Instructional changes made
- b) Curriculum changes made
- c) Transferable skills gained by educators
- d) Assessments created or adapted

Program Satisfaction Targets

- a) Students feedback
- b) Parent feedback
- c) Business partner/mentor feedback
- d) Teacher feedback
- e) Administrator and counselor feedback
- f) Other stakeholder and partner feedback