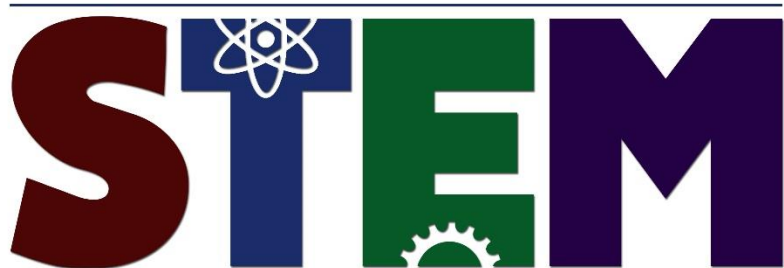




DICKINSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



SCIENCE • TECHNOLOGY • ENGINEERING • MATHEMATICS

Procedures and Guidelines



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Dickinson ISD STEM Academy

The Mission

The purpose of the STEM Academy is to increase student achievement by engaging students in innovative science, technology, engineering and math instruction.

The Vision

The STEM Academy will provide a continuous pathway of educational opportunities that create STEM-literate graduates ready to accept the challenges of advanced education beyond high school, meeting the needs of future workforce.

STEM Academy Program Design

The DISD STEM Academy is designed as a rigorous academic cohort model for students in grades 5 – 12 who enjoy challenges and investigating the world around them. Students explore STEM concepts through hands-on learning experiences, research, and exploration in every content. Teacher collaboration within team planning produces the cross-curricular lessons that allow students to focus on content through the lens of STEM. All courses in the STEM Academy are taught as advanced or Pre-AP level courses, while math and science courses also have an accelerated curriculum.

In addition to core advanced academic study, students also explore STEM concepts through Brainiac Block, the STEM Academy exploratory elective. Through this course, students experience Project Lead the Way modules and project-based learning within the Texas Performance Standards Project. Students also participate in field experiences, guest lectures, and more.

STEM Scholar Designation

The STEM Academy in grades 5-8 prepares students to move to Dickinson High School to pursue STEM Endorsements and the STEM Scholar Designation. The DISD STEM Scholar Designation is awarded to graduates who have demonstrated outstanding academic accomplishments within a STEM endorsement at Dickinson High School. This designation signifies exemplary work in seeking a STEM education and pursuing advanced college readiness opportunities readying students for rigorous collegiate experiences in STEM. In order to receive the DISD STEM Scholar Distinction upon graduation, students must meet each of the following criteria:

- Graduate with a STEM Endorsement alone or concurrently with another endorsement.
- Class rank \geq 25%
- Minimum of two (2) Pre-AP/AP/or Dual Credit courses each year in each grade level, 9-12

DISD STEM Scholars must also successfully complete three (3) of any of the following Achievements;

- Earn an AP Capstone Certificate or an AP Capstone Diploma
- DISD Internship Program
- 100 hours of Community Service Hours
- Pass three (3) or more AP Exams with a score of 3 or higher by the end of junior year; or
- Pass four (4) or more college courses with a C or higher by the end of senior year.

STEM Academy Requirements for Entry

A STEM Academy applicant must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for consideration:

- Currently enrolled in DISD at time of application.
- Meet or exceed grade level standard on each of the most recent STAAR assessments.
- Currently enrolled in the highest academic core courses offered at that grade level (i.e. advanced, honors, Pre-AP, etc.) for math, science, English language arts/Reading, and social studies.
- Grades >70 in Math, Science, Reading or Language Arts, and Social Studies
- Attendance rate of 97% or better for the current school year (=5>unexcused absences)
- Discipline record that reflects no out-of-school suspensions, no DAEP placement, and no more than 3 days of ISS placement.
- Must meet criteria on a STEM Science Exam in grades 7-8.
- Favorable teacher recommendations from core curriculum in current grade.

STEM Academy Application Procedures

Applications

- All students must meet minimum eligibility criteria for applications to be considered.
- STEM Academy applications are accepted for all DISD students in the spring semester for placement the following school year.
- Applications are also accepted prior to the start of school in the fall for students new to DISD only.
- Students may also re-apply to the STEM Academy/Waiting List in the spring of each year.

Assessment and Scoring

- Applicants who meet minimum eligibility criteria will sit for a writing assessment administered on campus.
- Writing samples are scored with a pre-established rubric and are scored by at least two (2) raters.
- If the two (2) raters are not in score agreement, a third rater will review the writing samples and provide a confirmation score.
- Data points from the writing assessment as well as other student data markers are collected and Quality Points are assigned and totaled (*See Appendix A: STEM Academy Application Matrix*)
- All students' scores are then ranked from highest total to lowest total, creating the Applicant Pool and/or Waiting List.

Student Selection—Initial Grade 5 Cohort

- Students are selected from the Applicant Pool for the initial grade 5 cohort during the spring semester preceding their 5th grade year.
- The highest ranked students in grade 5 who have met minimum eligibility criteria will be accepted into the STEM Academy.
- Once selected, parents and students must sign and submit the STEM Academy Contract to accept the STEM Academy placement for their students
- Failure to submit the Parent Consent for Participation form by the assigned due date will result in a forfeiture of the STEM Academy Placement.
- Student selection in May is contingent on meeting the passing standard all current-year STAAR exams.

Student Selection—The Waiting List

- Students in grade 5 who were not selected into the initial grade 5 cohort who have met minimum eligibility criteria will be placed on the STEM Academy Waiting List for grade 5.

- Students in grades 6-8 may apply each year to be added to the waiting list for their grade level.
- Students new to DISD may also apply during back-to-school registration to be added to the waiting list for their grade level.
- All students who apply for the waiting list for their grade level who meet minimum eligibility requirements will be scored in accordance with “Assessment and Scoring” guidelines above.
- Once added to the waiting list, students in grades 5-8 will be moved off the Waiting List as openings occur in the summer and in the early fall.
- Students in all grades will be moved from the Waiting List in order of their ranking as openings occur.
- No student will be moved into the STEM Academy from the Waiting List beyond the 3rd week of school.
- Student selection is contingent on meeting the passing standard on all current-year STAAR exams.

Student Participation

Academic success and integrity is the priority for all students in Dickinson ISD. Students who are accepted into the STEM Academy are met with rigorous courses that challenge thinking and learning. To ensure students are successful in this environment, the STEM Campus Coordinator along with STEM teachers and administration carefully monitor students’ grades, work habits, behavior, and assessments to provide early supports or interventions to ensure students maintain STEM Academy eligibility through:

- Consistent attendance of 97% or better (no more than 5 unexcused absences per calendar year).
- Maintaining a grade of 70 or higher in all classes.
- Meet or exceeding grade level criteria on each of the most recent STAAR assessments
- No Out of School Suspension or DAEP Assignments
- No more than 3 days placement in ISS
- No Honor Code violations (*See Appendix G: STEM Academy Honor Code*).

The STEM Success Team will make intervention decisions and provide a Targeted Intervention Plan when any student is in danger of not meeting minimum criteria. Students who do not maintain minimum eligibility requirements may be placed on probation and/or exited from the STEM Academy.

Probation, Furlough and Exit for STEM Academy Students

Educational needs and academic integrity and success are the basis for a student’s need for probation, furlough and/or exit from the STEM Academy. A request for a student to be placed on probation or furlough, or to be exited may be initiated by a school administrator, teachers, the school counselor, parents or the student him/herself. **Prior to exiting the STEM Academy, students should be placed on probation or furlough and be given a pre-determined amount of time to improve their performance. However, the STEM Success Team may recommend program exit for students whose behavior or academic performance is deemed severe enough to warrant immediate exit.**

Probation Procedures

Intervention Plan & Academic Warning

- Students who are placed in the STEM Academy must be monitored each progress reporting time to ensure their academic success and their learning needs are being met.
- When a STEM student is not being successful, the STEM grade-level teachers must identify problem areas for the student, conduct teacher conferences with parent/guardian and student, and create a targeted intervention plan.

STEM Success Team

- If an intervention plan is not successful, the STEM grade-level teacher or team refers the student to a STEM Success Committee consisting of at least four (4) professionals including the STEM Campus Coordinator, STEM teacher, a campus administrator, and a school counselor. The Director of Advanced Academics may also be included on this team, if applicable.
- Team recommends a probationary period (up to one semester) and includes required improvement and a plan for further support and intervention. *(See Appendix C: Probation Improvement Plan)*
- The student continues participation in the STEM Academy during the probationary period.
- At the end of the probationary period, the STEM Success Team will review the student's performance record and will recommend full STEM Academy reinstatement, continued probation, furlough, or exit *(See Appendix F: STEM Success Team Review Meeting Documentation)*.
- The STEM Success Team reserves the right to recommend program exit without a probation period for any student whose behavior or academic performance is deemed severe enough to warrant immediate exit.

Exit, Furlough and Appeal

- Students may not be exited during the last nine weeks of the school year.
- When a student is exited, application to return to the STEM Academy may be initiated the following academic year through the regularly scheduled application period. In order to be placed into the STEM Academy again, the student must meet current selection criteria.
- If a parent/guardian disagrees with exiting his/her student from the STEM Academy, the parent/guardian may appeal the committee decision (see The Appeals Process, p. 6).

Furlough Procedures

Furloughs are a temporary "leave of absence" (from 6 weeks to the remainder of the year) from the STEM Academy designed to meet individual student needs based on extenuating circumstances. Furloughs may be requested for any STEM Student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance or whose educational needs are not being met within the structure of the STEM Academy (i.e. prolonged illness or injury, change in family situation, etc.). A furlough may be initiated by the District, the parent, or the student. If granted by the STEM Success Team, a furlough shall be granted for specified reasons and for a specified period of time (from 9 weeks to the remainder of the year). At the end of a furlough, the student may reenter The STEM Academy, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.

The furlough process is as follows:

1. A district employee, parent/guardian or student (with parent/guardian signature) completes the Furlough Request Form. *(See Appendix D: Request for Student Furlough from STEM Program)*
2. The STEM Success Team made of up a teacher(s), principal or designee, STEM Campus Coordinator and the Director of Advanced Academic Programs, review the request and supporting information. A letter is sent to the requesting parent/guardian and/or student with the decision.
3. Students receiving homebound services will automatically be placed on furlough.

Exit from The STEM Academy

The district will exit from the STEM Academy any student who has been placed on probation or furlough and has been unsuccessful in regaining successful STEM Academy status or any student who has been recommended for STEM Academy exit by the STEM Success Committee. Students may also exit upon parent

or student request. The STEM Success Committee will review student information and, in collaboration with parents, make final recommendation for exit. *(See Appendix D: Request for Student Exit from STEM Academy)*

The Appeal Process

1. If a parent or guardian disagrees with the STEM Success Committee's decision to recommend probation, furlough or exit, the campus administrator must be notified in writing within fifteen days after the notification letter is sent. A parent/guardian conference will be held with the Level One Appeal Committee, consisting of the STEM Success Committee. At this conference, any relevant data will be reviewed.
2. Within ten days after the parent/guardian and Campus Level One Appeal Committee conference, a letter with the decision will be sent to the parent/guardian.
3. Any subsequent appeals should be made in accordance with FNG (LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.

Dickinson Independent School District
Appendix A: STEM Academy Application Matrix

Student Name:	Current Campus:	Total Score:	
Student ID:	STEM Rank:	Total Possible Points:	250

Academic Coursework (100 points)
Students earn points based on the first semester average in current core subjects (≥85)
(Highest academic courses offered in Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies)

Subject	Semester Average	Points	Semester Average	Academic Points	Subject	Semester Average	Points	Semester Average	Academic Points
Math	95-100	25			Science	95-100	25		
	90-94	20				90-94	20		
	85-89	15				85-89	15		
	80-84	10				80-84	10		
	70-79	5				70-79	5		
Reading (4 th) Language Arts (5-7)	95-100	25			Social Studies	95-100	25		
	90-94	20				90-94	20		
	85-89	15				85-89	15		
	80-84	10				80-84	10		
	70-79	5				70-79	5		

State Assessments – STAAR (100 points)
Students earn points for each of the most recent state assessments

Math	95%+	50	Score:	Points:	Reading	95%+	50	Score:	Points:
	Masters	40				Masters	40		
	Meets	30				Meets	30		

Norm Referenced Scores – In the absence of STAAR Scores (100 points)
Students earn points for most recent achievement scores (national normed percentile)

Math	90+	50	Score:	Points:	Reading	90+	50	Score:	Points:
	80-89	40				80-89	40		
	70-79	30				70-79	30		

Conduct – Office Referrals (Point Deductions)
Students earn maximum points for 0 office referrals (S or better from current report card) No OSS or DAEP Placement; ISS ≤3)

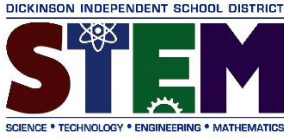
0 Referrals	No deductions	Number of Referrals:	Points Deducted:	ISS (≤3) and no OSS/DAEP	
1-2 Referrals	-10 points			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3+ Referrals	-20 points				

Attendance (Point Deductions)
Students earn points based on attendance rate (current year **unexcused** absences)

100% Attendance	No deductions	Attendance Rate:	Points Deducted:
99-97% Attendance	-10 points		
<97% Attendance	-20 points		

Writing Response (50 Points)	Notes:
0-50 points	
Total Points:	

For Office Use Only



Dickinson Independent School District

Appendix B: STEM Academy Participation Contract

Dickinson ISD's goal is for students to be successful at the highest possible level. All coursework within the STEM Academy stimulate and challenge students to perform at an advanced academic level. Courses are not only rigorous, but curriculum is accelerated in both math and science, allowing students to be on track to pursue more advanced coursework in later years. We are pleased you are accepting the challenge of this program.

Parental support is the key for success of STEM students; therefore, please read and discuss the following points:

- STEM courses require more individual study time per week than a regular class. Students will need to read and prepare outside of class to participate effectively in classroom discussions and activities.
- Tutoring will be available for all students and required for all intervention and support plans.
- All STEM Academy students are expected to complete a rigorous independent project (TPSP) that will require extensive work outside of class including research, writing, and project completion.
- Students must maintain excellence in academic and behavior performance to retain their position in the STEM Academy.

Expectations:

1. All STEM Students will abide by the STEM Academy Honor Code, the DISD Student Code of Conduct and the Campus Handbook.
2. STEM Students are expected to complete all in-class and out-of-class assignments with care and in a timely manner.
3. Late work in a STEM course may not receive full credit in accordance with the Instructional Grading & Reporting Procedures for DISD. Extenuating circumstances may allow for extensions.
4. Re-teaching and re-evaluation may be provided should 50% of the students not demonstrate mastery of the skills taught. See DISD grading policy for make-up work guidelines.
5. Students who are failing any STEM course at the end of a 9 week grading period will be provided a target intervention plan and/or be placed on probationary status.
6. Students who fail to meet minimum STEM Academy eligibility criteria in attendance, discipline/conduct or STAAR exam scores will be placed on probation and/or exited from the STEM Academy.
7. Students who are involved in serious disciplinary actions or behavior infractions will also be placed on probation or exited from the STEM Academy.
8. Any student who does not successfully meet the goals of a probation plan will be exited from the STEM Academy.
9. In addition to the above guidelines, each STEM course may have additional specific requirements. All course requirements will be communicated in writing at the beginning of the course.

Parent Agreement

I understand that The STEM Academy and its courses are rigorous and require study time outside of class. I agree to support my student in this work and will notify the teacher(s) immediately of any concerns I have relating to my student's progress. I also understand the expectations for my student's behavior and attendance as a member of the STEM Academy and agree to support full compliance to these expectations. I have read the *STEM Academy Procedures and Guidelines* and the *STEM Academy Honor Code* in full and understand what is expected for my student to be successful in the program.

Parent Signature _____

Date: _____

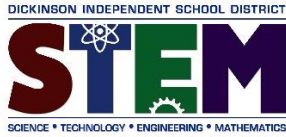
Student Agreement

I understand that The STEM Academy and its courses are rigorous and require study time outside of class. I agree to talk to my teacher(s) immediately when I have a concern about my progress, and I commit to doing the extra work required to ensure I am successful in my classes and in the program. I further understand the expectations of my behavior and attendance while in the STEM Academy and agree to meet them at all times. I have also read the *STEM Academy Procedures and Guidelines* and *The STEM Academy Honor Code* in full and understand what is expected to be successful in the program.

Student Signature _____

Date: _____

Please return to the counselor on your student's campus.



DICKINSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Appendix C: Probation Improvement Plan

Student's Name: _____ Date of Request: _____

School/Grade: _____ Student ID#: _____

Reason for Probation Request:

- ☐ the student's overall performance does not meet the academic expectations of the program (i.e. grade below 70 or failing score on STAAR assessment)
- ☐ the student's overall behavioral performance does not meet the expectations of the program (i.e. DAEP, ISS or OSS placements; excessive absences)
- ☐ the student, parent, campus principal (or designee) does not view the placement as appropriate to meet the needs of the student.
- ☐ OTHER: (Describe) _____

Activities to address the reason for the probation:

Evidence that will be used to determine completion of the above listed activities:

Date for completion of probation activities listed above: _____

I, _____ (printed name of parent/guardian), understand that in order for my student to remain eligible for the STEM Academy Dickinson ISD, my son/daughter must complete the above activities by the designated date. Should my child be unable to complete the activities, I understand that the STEM Success Committee will meet to consider exiting my child from the program.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

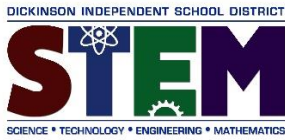
STEM Success Team Signatures (minimum of 4):

Committee Member #1 _____ Date _____

Committee Member #2 _____ Date _____

Committee Member #3 _____ Date _____

Committee Member #4 _____ Date _____



DICKINSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Appendix E: Request for Student Exit from STEM Academy

A request for exit may be submitted at any time. A student shall be removed from the program at any time the STEM Success Committee determines it is in the student's best interest. Written parent notification including the date and time of the STEM Success Committee meeting to review the request will be sent. If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the STEM Success Committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request.

A student will be exited from the STEM Academy based on criteria set by the district. The criteria include instances where...

- ☐ the student's overall performance does not meet the academic expectations of the program (i.e. grade below 70 or failing score on STAAR assessment);
- ☐ the student's overall behavioral performance does not meet the expectations of the program (i.e. DAEP, ISS or OSS placements; excessive absences);
- ☐ the student, parent, campus principal (or designee) does not view the placement as appropriate to meet the needs of the student.
- ☐ Other (Describe): _____

When a parent, guardian, student, or teacher requests that a student exit from the STEM Academy, a conference with the parent and members of the STEM Success Team will be held. At this conference, the most appropriate educational placement for the student will be determined. Once a student is exited from the program, he/she must adhere to the identification procedures to be readmitted.

It is requested that the following student be exited from the STEM Academy:

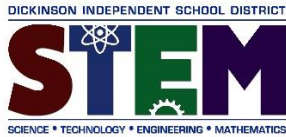
Student Name: _____ **Campus:** _____

Reason for requesting the exit:

Requestor's Name

Date

Requestor's Signature



DICKINSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Appendix F: STEM Success Team Review Meeting Documentation

Student's Name: _____ **Meeting Date:** _____

School/Grade: _____ **Student ID#:** _____

Reason for Review:

☐ Intervention Plan Review

☐ Probation Plan Review

☐ Furlough Review

☐ Other: _____

Areas of Growth:

Areas of Concern:

--	--

STEM Success Team Recommendation:	Effective Date(s):
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue Intervention Plan (plan attached)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue Probation Plan (plan attached)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue Furlough	
<input type="checkbox"/> STEM Academy Exit	

Notes:

I, _____ (printed name of parent/guardian), understand the recommendations of the STEM Success Committee and agree to abide by its decision. I further understand I have the right to appeal this decision in accordance with local policy (FNG).

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

STEM Success Team Signatures (*minimum of 4*):

Committee Member #1

Date

Committee Member #2

Date

Committee Member #3

Date

Committee Member #4

Date

Please return to the counselor on your student's campus.

STEM Academy Honor Code

Appendix G: STEM Academy Honor Code

Respect: *Be kind and supportive of yourself and others.*

Because we believe in respect, students will:

- Listen, behave and speak respectfully to fellow students and all staff members.
- Collaborate effectively and equitably with all classmates, solving problems peacefully to maintain a heightened learning environment.
- Always strive to be polite, kind, and supportive of others respecting the learning needs of other students in your environment.
- Show pride and respect for your campus, district, and community.
- Value and learn from diverse opinions and lifestyles among your classmates and staff

Perseverance: *Push through until the end despite difficulties.*

Because we believe in perseverance, students will:

- Exemplify commitment, pride, and a positive attitude in completing tasks, demonstrating your best effort.
- When faced with obstacles consistently problem-solve and try new solutions or a unique approach.
- Effectively manage time and materials to ensure academic and personal goals will be met.
- Take the initiative to seek out help and support when needed to ensure academic success.
- Keep your mind open to every subject/assignment and commit to learning each day.

Integrity: *Doing the right thing, even when no one is looking.*

Because we believe in integrity, students will:

- Admit to and take responsibility when they have done something wrong.
- Submit **authentic work** and credit sources used in formal writing.
- Use technology appropriately and as instructed for classroom learning.
- Diligently uphold all rules and requirements for the classroom, school and district.
- Use all school materials and facilities for academic learning, adhering to all guidelines provided.

Leadership: *Be a model example for others.*

Because we believe in leadership, students will...

- Lead by positive example through their work and actions, exceeding campus and district expectations
- Strive to work at high levels, performing beyond minimum requirements.
- Empower fellow classmates to express their thoughts and take academic risks.
- Advocate for what they know is right by standing up for themselves and others.
- Consider how your words or actions will affect others before communicating or taking action.
- Behave in an encouraging and collaborative manner when working with others.

Responsibility: *Own your choices, taking responsibility for your words and actions.*

Because we believe in responsibility, students will:

- Independently monitor and manage classwork, homework and late/make-up work.
- Actively participate in their own learning.
- Strive to be on time, rested, prepared, and attentive for class.
- Be mindful of how their actions affect others.
- Do their best to fix mistakes, asking for help when required.

