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MEDIA RELEASE

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Governor Reynolds and the Iowa STEM Council announce 22 new STEM BEST Program Partners Schools and businesses collaborate to create outstanding STEM curriculum

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa – Governor Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council announced 22 STEM BEST ([Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers](#)) Program models for 2021. The program brings together schools and businesses to create outstanding STEM learning experiences that prepare students for exciting, in-demand careers. With the addition of 22 awards, 80 programs have been created since STEM BEST launched in 2014.

The STEM Best Program supports school-business partnerships that allow teachers and industry professionals to work side-by-side on curriculum and projects that give students actual workplace experience. In the projects, students also gain an understanding of the opportunities and required skills for careers in STEM fields. STEM BEST has also laid the groundwork for other successful statewide initiatives such as Future Ready Iowa's Work-Based Learning Clearinghouse.

"STEM fields offer the opportunity for a great future. STEM BEST projects allow our Iowa students to experience that firsthand while still in school," said Jeff Weld, executive director of the STEM Council. "As these public-private partnerships grow, student success and Iowa's skilled workforce will continue to benefit."

The STEM Council Executive Committee voted unanimously to award 22 new or expanded partnerships up to \$25,000 each. Participating employer partners contribute to a dollar-for-dollar match with some going above and beyond the cost-share requirement. The awards can be used for the curriculum development and coordination, educator training and development in workplace-classroom integration and preparing the work-based learning environment.

The 2021 STEM BEST Program awardees are:

- Ames Community School District
- Don Bosco Catholic School System
- CAM Community School District
- Cedar Rapids Community School District – Thomas Jefferson High School
- Cedar Rapids Community School District – Metro High School
- Central Community School District
- Clinton Community School District
- Creston Community School District – Middle school
- Creston Community School District – Elementary School
- Earlham Community School District
- Eastern Allamakee Community School District
- Howard-Winneshiek Community School District
- Keokuk Community & Fort Madison School Districts
- Linn-Mar Community School District
- MFL MarMac Community School District
- MOC-Floyd Valley Community School District
- North Tama County Community School District
- Pella Community School District

- Riverside Community School District
- Sioux Center Community School District
- Wapsie Valley Community School District
- Woodbine Community School District

To be considered for a STEM BEST Program award, applicants were required to submit a comprehensive proposal that incorporates rigorous and relevant STEM curriculum, valuable partnerships with community businesses or organizations, real-world learning opportunities and expertise at the post-secondary education and training level. These awardees will serve as a model to share unique perspective, strengths, demographics and program focus with other schools throughout Iowa.

Visit www.iowaSTEM.org/STEMBEST for more information on the STEM BEST Program and the 80 partners.

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About the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council: Established in July 2011 via Governor's Executive Order, the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council is a public-private partnership of educators, companies and Iowa students and families addressing policies and programs designed to improve Iowa's educational system focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM Council works to engage and prepare students for a career-ready workforce path, regain our state's historic leadership position in education and provide a vital competitive economic advantage now, and for the future, to ensure that every Iowa student has access to world-class STEM education opportunities. The 62-member STEM Council is co-chaired by Governor Kim Reynolds and Foundation Analytical Laboratory Owner and Director of Technical Services Diane Young. For more information, visit <https://iowastem.org>.