

Nine School Districts Awarded Mini-Grant to Develop Work-Based Learning Plans

Cedar Falls, Iowa (Oct. 25, 2021) – Today, the Governor's STEM Advisory Council announced nine recipients of the K-12 Work-Based Learning Planning Mini-Grant. The Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council, Iowa Department of Education and Iowa Business Council collaborated on the Request for Proposals to school-business partnerships involved in the STEM BEST (Business Engaging Students and Teachers) Program. Recipients will receive \$5,500 to design relevant, engaging K-12 work-based learning plans or improve upon existing plans, that could serve as models for other schools across the state.

Work-based learning has proven to be an effective tool for educators to connect what is taught in the classroom to what is needed to thrive as employees and citizens. It helps to develop technical skills and employability skills, such as problem-solving, collaboration, critical thinking and punctuality.

"By connecting students to Iowa businesses through authentic learning experiences, we're able to better equip our youth to enter the workforce and enrich our local communities," said Gov. Reynolds. "We have a great need for skilled workers and this is a critical component to meeting the demand for the future."

The grants were awarded based on districts' plans to develop innovative solutions to connect classrooms to future careers; cohesive efforts to reach all grade levels and diverse students; involvement with businesses and other community partners; and professional development provided to educators and partners.

The 2021 Work-Based Learning Planning Mini-Grant awardees are:

- Ankeny Community School District from the South Central STEM Region
- Bondurant Farrar Community School District from the South Central STEM Region
- Boone Community School District from the North Central STEM Region
- Clear Lake Middle School from the North Central STEM Region
- Northeast Community School District from the Southeast STEM Region
- Pella Community School District from the South Central STEM Region
- Spencer High School from the Northwest STEM Region
- Waterloo Community School District from the Northeast STEM Region
- Woodbine Community School District from the Southwest STEM Region

Outstanding work-based learning plans will be posted in June 2022 on the [Iowa Clearinghouse for Work-Based Learning website](#) and distributed through the STEM Council for other schools to utilize as they develop or enhance their own plans.

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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>.