



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3326.032 STEM school equivalent designation.

Effective: October 3, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 33

(A) The STEM committee may grant a designation of STEM school equivalent to any of the following schools:

- (1) A school operated by a joint vocational school district;
- (2) A school offering career-technical education programs that is operated by a school district that is a comprehensive career-technical education provider;
- (3) A school offering career-technical education programs that is operated by a school district that is a participant in a compact career-technical education provider;
- (4) A community school established under Chapter 3314. of the Revised Code;
- (5) A chartered nonpublic school.

In order to be eligible for this designation, a school shall submit a proposal that satisfies the requirements of this section.

The committee shall determine the criteria for proposals, establish procedures for the submission of proposals, accept and evaluate proposals, and choose which proposals warrant a school to be designated as a STEM school equivalent.

(B) A proposal for designation as a STEM school equivalent shall include at least the following:

- (1) A statement of which of grades kindergarten through twelve will be offered by the school;
- (2) Assurances that the school will operate in compliance with this section and the provisions of the proposal as accepted by the committee and that the school will maintain the STEM education



practices set forth in the proposal;

(3) Evidence that the school will exhibit school-wide cultural strategies reflecting innovation, an entrepreneurial spirit, inquiry, and collaboration with individual accountability;

(4) Evidence that the school will offer a rigorous, diverse, integrated, and problem- or project-based curriculum to all students enrolled in the school, with the goal to prepare all students for post-secondary learning experiences, the workforce, and citizenship, and that does all of the following:

(a) Emphasizes and supports the role of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in promoting innovation and economic progress;

(b) Emphasizes the use of design thinking as a school-wide approach;

(c) Provides opportunities for students to engage in personalized learning;

(d) Includes the arts and humanities. If the proposal is for a STEAM school equivalent, it also shall include evidence that the curriculum will integrate arts and design into the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to foster creative thinking, problem-solving, and new approaches to scientific invention.

(5) Evidence that the school leadership supports the curriculum principles of division (B)(4) of this section;

(6) A description of how the school's curriculum was developed using the principles of division (B)(4) of this section and approved by a team in accordance with section 3326.09 of the Revised Code;

(7) Evidence that the school will participate in regular professional development and share knowledge of best practices;

(8) Evidence that the school has established partnerships with institutions of higher education and businesses. If the proposal is for a STEAM school equivalent, it also shall include evidence of



established partnerships with one or more arts organizations.

(9) Assurances that the school has received commitments of sustained and verifiable fiscal and in-kind support from regional education and business entities. If the proposal is for a STEAM school equivalent, it also shall include assurances that the school has received commitments of sustained and verifiable fiscal and in-kind support from arts organizations.

(C)(1) If a school is designated as a STEM school equivalent under this section, it shall maintain that designation for five years unless the STEM committee revokes its designation during that five-year period under division (D) of this section. At the end of that five-year period, the school shall reapply to the STEM committee in order to maintain that designation. The committee shall authorize the continuation of the school's designation as a STEM school equivalent if the committee finds that the school is in compliance with this chapter and the provisions of its proposal and any subsequent amendments to that proposal.

If a school chooses not to reapply for designation as a STEM school equivalent under division (C)(1) of this section, the committee shall revoke the school's designation at the end of its five-year designation period.

(2) If a school reapplies for its designation as a STEM school equivalent under division (C)(1) of this section and the committee has reason to believe that it is not in compliance with this chapter or the provisions of its proposal and any subsequent amendments to that proposal, the committee shall require the school, in collaboration with the department of education and workforce and the Ohio STEM learning network or its successor, to develop a corrective action plan. The school shall implement the corrective action plan and demonstrate exemplary STEM pedagogy and practices within one year of the plan's development. If the school fails to implement the corrective action plan to the satisfaction of the committee at the end of that year, the committee shall revoke the school's designation.

(3) The department shall maintain records of the application status and designation renewal deadlines for each school that has been designated as a STEM school equivalent under this section.

(D) If the STEM committee has reason to believe that a school that is designated as a STEM school



equivalent under this section is not in compliance with this chapter or the provisions of its proposal and any subsequent amendments to that proposal, it may review the school's designation prior to the end of its five-year designation period. If the committee reviews a school's designation under this division, it must require the school to develop a corrective action plan in the same manner as specified in division (C)(2) of this section and implement that plan and demonstrate exemplary STEM pedagogy and practices within one year of the plan's development. If the school fails to implement the corrective action plan to the satisfaction of the committee at the end of that year, the committee shall revoke the school's designation.

(E) A school that is designated as a STEM school equivalent under this section shall not be subject to the requirements of Chapter 3326. of the Revised Code, except that the school shall be subject to the requirements of this section and to the curriculum requirements of section 3326.09 of the Revised Code.

Nothing in this section, however, shall relieve a community school of the applicable requirements of Chapter 3314. of the Revised Code. Nor shall anything in this section relieve a school operated by a joint vocational school district, a school operated by a comprehensive career-technical education provider, a school operated by a compact career-technical education provider, or a chartered nonpublic school of any provisions of law outside of this chapter that are applicable to such schools.

(2) A school that is designated as a STEM school equivalent under this section shall not be eligible for operating funding under sections 3326.31 to 3326.37, 3326.39 to 3326.40, and 3326.51 of the Revised Code.

(3) A school that is designated as a STEM school equivalent under this section may apply for any of the grants and additional funds described in section 3326.38 of the Revised Code for which the school is eligible.

(F) If a school that is designated as a STEM school equivalent under this section intends to close or intends to no longer be designated as a STEM school equivalent, it shall notify the STEM committee of that fact.

(G) If a school that is designated as a STEM school equivalent wishes to be designated as a STEAM



school equivalent, it may change its existing proposal to include the items required under divisions (B)(4)(d), (B)(8), and (B)(9) of this section and submit the revised proposal to the STEM committee for approval.