



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3326.04 STEM or STEAM program of excellence designation.

Effective: March 10, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 432

(A) The STEM committee shall grant distinctions as STEM programs of excellence to STEM programs operated by joint vocational school districts, comprehensive career-technical education providers, compact career-technical education providers, and educational service centers in accordance with this section.

(B) A joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center may submit a proposal to the STEM committee seeking distinction as a STEM program of excellence. The proposal shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the STEM committee that the program meets at least the following standards:

(1) The program will serve all students for whom the program is designed, which may be limited to certain categories of students such as students identified as gifted under Chapter 3324. of the Revised Code.

(2) The program will provide students with the opportunity to innovate, develop an entrepreneurial spirit, engage in inquiry, and collaborate with individual accountability.

(3) The program will offer a rigorous, diverse, integrated, and problem- or project-based curriculum to students, with the goal to prepare 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;

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



(d) Includes the arts and humanities. If the proposal is for distinction as a STEAM program of excellence, 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.

(4) The district, provider, or service center leadership supports the curriculum principles of division (B)(3) of this section.

(5) The program's leaders participate in regular STEM-focused professional development and share knowledge of best practices.

(6) The program has established partnerships with institutions of higher education and businesses. If the proposal is for distinction as a STEAM program of excellence, it also shall include evidence of established partnerships with one or more arts organizations.

(7) The program has received commitments of sustained and verifiable fiscal and in-kind support from regional education and business entities. If the proposal is for distinction as a STEAM program of excellence, the program also has received commitments of sustained and verifiable fiscal and in-kind support from arts organizations;

(8) The program's curriculum was developed using the principles described in division (B)(3) of this section and approved by a team in accordance with section 3326.09 of the Revised Code.

(C)(1) If a joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center receives a distinction as a STEM program of excellence under this section, it shall maintain that distinction for five years unless the STEM committee revokes the distinction during that five-year period under division (E) of this section. At the end of that five-year period, the district, provider, or service center shall reapply to the STEM committee in order to maintain that distinction. The committee shall authorize the continuation of the district's, provider's, or service center's distinction as a STEM program of excellence if the committee finds that the district, provider, or service center is in compliance with this chapter and the provisions of its proposal and any subsequent amendments to that proposal.



If a joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center chooses not to reapply for a distinction for a STEM program of excellence under division (C)(1) of this section, the committee shall revoke the district's, provider's, or service center's distinction at the end of its five-year period of distinction.

(2) If a joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center reapplies for distinction as a STEM program of excellence 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 district, provider, or service center, 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 district, provider, or service center shall implement the corrective action plan and demonstrate exemplary STEM pedagogy and practices within one year of the plan's development. If the district, provider, or service center fails to implement the corrective action plan to the satisfaction of the committee at the end of that year, the committee shall revoke the district's, provider's, or service center's distinction.

(3) The department shall maintain records of the application status and designation renewal deadlines for each joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center that has received a distinction as a STEM program of excellence under this section.

(D) If the STEM committee has reason to believe that a joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center that has received a distinction as a STEM program of excellence 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 district's, provider's, or service center's distinction prior to the end of the five-year period during which that distinction is effective. If the committee reviews a district's, provider's, or service center's distinction under this division, it must require the district, provider, or service center 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 district, provider, or service center fails to implement the corrective action plan to the satisfaction of the committee at the end of that year, the committee shall revoke the district's, provider's, or service center's distinction.

(E) If a joint vocational school district, comprehensive career-technical education provider, compact career-technical education provider, or educational service center that has received distinction for a STEM program of excellence instead wishes to receive a distinction for a STEAM program of excellence, it may change its existing proposal to include the items required under divisions (B)(3)(d), (B)(6), and (B)(7) of this section and submit the revised proposal to the STEM committee for approval.