

STEM MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL POLICY NO. ____

Curriculum Program and Selection

I. PURPOSE.

In its Charter, STEM School's Mission provides as follows:

STEM School will provide an integrated educational system of high standards to engage all students in an academically rigorous core curricula, promoting a strong foundation in the sciences, technologies, engineering and math, relevant to real-world contexts, and building on student character and community assets to prepare students for successful post-secondary endeavors.

Under its Charter with Douglas County School District, section 7.7, STEM School agreed as follows regarding content of its curriculum:

7.7 Curriculum, instructional program, and pupil performance standards. The School shall have the authority and responsibility for designing and implementing its educational program, subject to the conditions of this Contract. The educational program, pupil performance standards and curriculum designed and implemented by the School shall meet or exceed any content standards adopted by the District, shall be designed to enable each pupil to achieve such standards, and shall be consistent with the School's vision and mission.

Attachment 11 to the Charter sets forth the "STEM School Pupil Performance Standards". These Standards provide general guidance as to the content or selection of curricula at STEM. Under these Standards, STEM School has ensured that students will demonstrate proficiency and improvement of skills and content knowledge in relevant areas of study, and that students will demonstrate proficiency in the Colorado Academic Standards at each grade level.

STEM School is also required to provide instruction in those areas as required by Colorado statute.¹

The Charter at Attachment 7 further provides that the Board has the specific authority to determine the educational programs and textbooks to be used, and states that "the STEM High and Middle School educational program and curriculum is detailed in th[e] Charter Application." The Charter Application at page 37 provides that the STEM Board will appoint and work closely with a Curriculum Committee comprised of staff members, educators, experts in the field of study, parents and community members. The Charter Application further provides that potential textbooks will be identified by the Curriculum Committee. Appendix AF to the Charter Application describes a "possible curriculum

¹ Under C.R.S. 22-4-407 STEM must adopt first priority content standards in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history and geography which met or exceed the state model content standards adopted pursuant to section 22-7-406(1) and after adoption of such a plan, develop a plan to revise curriculum and instruction to align to the adopted standards. Under C.R.S. 22-1-104, the history and civil government of the state of Colorado, including the history of minorities, must be taught.

review process” and states several important principles, including that the curriculum committee will meet with teachers and provide an overview of the curriculum review process; that the curriculum committee will meet regularly to discuss various aspects of curriculum review and selection; and that the STEM board will approve curriculum recommendations from the curriculum committee.

Subject to these limitations, as a Colorado Charter School STEM School is free to select curriculum that furthers its Mission. Therefore, in order to accomplish its Mission, STEM has adopted this policy relating to selection and adoption of textbook and instructional curriculum materials. This policy is intended to establish a general framework for the selection of curriculum and to protect the good faith decisions and discretion of individual teachers in their selection and presentation of curriculum.

II. POLICY.

A. General policy.

The review of curriculum shall be led by the STEM Curriculum Committee, which shall be chaired by a Board member. The Curriculum Committee shall be comprised of no less than five additional members, at least two of whom shall be parents of STEM students. The Executive Director shall serve as an ex officio committee member and shall have approval authority as set forth herein.

Subject to STEM policies and oversight of the Executive Director, individual teachers may select curriculum for their classes. The selection of such materials should generally be based upon the process set forth in part B of this policy.

B. Review of particular textbooks or instructional materials.

Proposals for the adoption of particular curriculum may be made to the Curriculum Committee and may originate from the Executive Director or her designee, STEM staff and teachers, students or parents of STEM students.

The Curriculum Committee shall follow a consistent review process that may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Reviewing materials currently being used in an area of study and determining which of those materials should be retained and which should be replaced.
2. Surveying new materials available for selection. Samples and information should be collected about appropriate products that are currently available.
3. Developing or revising review and evaluation forms to adopt standard criteria (appropriate, equitable, viable, research-based, standards-based, relevant) to the content area.
4. Ensuring the selection to those materials that are otherwise consistent with STEM’s Mission.

5. Ensuring that materials are reviewed by relevant stakeholders which may be impacted. Reviewers may include, but not be limited to, parents, community members, students, teachers, building administrators, directors of schools, and central office staff.

6. Calculating and/or negotiating costs with curriculum providers.

For any specific curriculum selected, the proposer shall complete an assessment or proposal for the selection that explains why the curriculum is needed, details how it aligns with the above criteria, and documents how reviewers were involved. Any areas of potential controversy should be identified and an explanation of why the materials are appropriate, given those issues, should be included.

After the above steps are complete, the Executive Director may approve the proposal..

Stakeholder complaints regarding selection of materials should be voiced through the chain of authority of STEM School. In most cases, issues or concerns should be raised to individual teachers, then with department heads, then with the Curriculum Committee, then with the Executive Director, and lastly with the Board of Directors, who have final approval authority under the STEM Charter.

At least once annually, the Curriculum Committee shall provide a curriculum selection and adoption report to the Board for purposes of satisfying the requirements set forth in C.R.S. section 22-7-407.

Approved by STEM School Board on _____.

STEM Middle and High School

By: _____

Print Name: _____

Board Secretary