Student Government Handbook
2022-2023

Application and Accepting New Members

Applications should be sent out towards the end of the third quarter to all 8th-11th grade students. Students will be given 2-3 weeks to complete and submit a physical copy of their application to the advisor. Late applications will not be accepted unless the student had a conversation with the advisor in advance and they came to an agreement on an extension. Applications will be reviewed by the advisor and senior officers. If there are no senior officers, then it will be reviewed by the advisor and senior members. The content of applications will not be discussed with other students or members.

The goal is to maintain membership of 16-20 students, with 4-5 members in each grade. Before applications are reviewed, the group of people reviewing applications needs to know which students are returning next year and how many spots are already taken in each grade. If a grade already has five returning members, then new applicants in that grade may not be accepted, or less students overall will be accepted. If a student would like to know why they were not accepted, they can follow up with the advisor, who can explain the decision and how to improve the application for the future.

Current Returning Members

Returning members are not required to resubmit the application, as long as they stay in good standing within student government. Some students may be required to submit a new application based on specific agreements about lacking participation or behavior issues. These students will be considered equally against all new applicants.

Attendance Requirements

Student government meetings are every Wednesday there is school from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. Hours opportunities are typically after school Thursdays/Fridays or over the weekend. Students are responsible for staying on top of their assigned tasks, regardless of absences. If there are extenuating circumstances, it can be brought up with the advisor and officers. If seniors within student government choose to include student government as one of their extracurricular activities on college applications, they are required to stay in student government for the remainder of their senior year and complete all their responsibilities. Dropping out is not an option. Advisors have the right to reach out to colleges and inform them the student was not actually a participant within student government their senior year if they do not meet the requirements.

GPA/Eligibility Requirements

To apply to be a member of the student government you need to have a 3.3 weighted GPA or a 3.0 unweighted GPA (both cumulative) and no notable record of behavior or character complaints. This is expected to remain consistent throughout your

time as a student government member. If GPA becomes a concern later on, then the student is expected to discuss it with the advisor ahead of time. The student's academic standing and behavior may be shared with the advisor only.

Conduct Requirements

Character

Students have to follow STEM's Formula for Character in and out of school. If students have an issue with any part of STEM or STEM student government they should bring it up with the officers or the advisor to try to solve issues. Students are also expected to advocate for their school and demonstrate spirit. Any behavior involving tearing down the image of student government, other STEM activities (ie: STEM sports, honors societies, TSA, FBLA, etc.), or STEM as a whole will not be tolerated. Student government is in place to improve the quality of STEM for students.

Social Media and Behavior

Students cannot post anything that does not follow STEM's Formula for Character and the STEM Student Handbook. Students cannot put down STEM or STEM student government on social media. This includes running or participating in STEM Confession type pages that include any content about gossip, complaining about STEM or STEM teachers, or similar content. Members are allowed to express their opinions in a constructive way and are expected to deal with any issues in a mature manner with the person it relates to rather than broadcasting the problem to other people.

Plagiarism

Any reported instance of plagiarism or cheating will require the student to discuss the situation with the advisor(s), president, vice president, and the teacher involved. A statement from the teacher who initially addressed the plagiarism may be asked to be sent to the advisor. Consequences will be determined by the advisor, officers and potentially the teacher or school administration.

Self-Advocacy

Students are expected to advocate for themselves if any issues arise. Students should start by addressing concerns with the advisor or student officers. Parents should not be speaking on behalf of their students and will not be involved in matters, unless it goes to the school administration. Student Government encourages students to speak up for themselves and address issues on their own. It also means that students are responsible for managing their time and other commitments to make student government a priority, while still maintaining their academic standing within the school.

Hour Requirements

Students are required to participate in 25 hours of student government activities outside of class each semester. All current hours opportunities will be posted at the beginning of each semester, with additional opportunities occurring throughout the semester. If a student does not meet the requirement by the end of the year, they will be removed from the club. If a student has a concern about meeting the hours requirement, they need to talk to the advisor or officers in advance. Hours opportunities will be advertised through student government meetings and emails. This may be in the form of volunteering, attending events, or donating materials. An hour of participation equals one recorded hour. Materials may only be counted for 0.5 hours and there is a cap established for each opportunity on how many hours a student can get from donations. The purpose of donations is to further student government events, not to avoid volunteering. There are several mandatory volunteer events throughout the year. Set up, clean up, and ticket sales are typically mandatory, including any other events the officers deem mandatory. If there is a scheduling conflict, talk to the officers, but plan ahead to be there for those events.

Student Government and Concurrent Enrollment

CE students have to be able to attend after-school meetings every Wednesday from 3:00pm to 4:00pm at STEM. They are held to the same requirements as any other student government member.

CE students may not be allowed to run for certain offices and may have restrictions on committee leadership positions. Student government is not a one hour a week commitment; students may have to talk with other students, teachers, or administrators during school hours, which CE students can't always do.

Being a CE student is no excuse for an inability to attend events or fulfill one's responsibilities.

Leadership Requirements

President

Role:

● To run senior committee and lead the organization of senior events

● To meet with admin to coordinate events

● To update leadership teams on student government activities

● To create and present meeting presentations

● To provide resources for members and update necessary materials

● To evaluate situations when there may have been a conduct violation

- To speak at events like State of STEM, board meetings, and pep rallies
- To assist the other officers with their responsibilities

Requirements:

- Incoming senior
- Hours requirements fulfilled
- Active student government member for a minimum of two years
- Full time on campus
- Demonstrated some leadership experience within student government

Vice President

Role:

- To meet with admin to coordinate events
- To update leadership teams on student government activities
- To create and present meeting presentations
- To provide resources for members and update necessary materials
- To evaluate situations when there may have been a conduct violation
- To speak at events like State of STEM, board meetings, and pep rallies ● To assist the other officers with their responsibilities

Requirements:

- Incoming junior or senior
- Hours requirements fulfilled
- Active student government member for a minimum of two years
- Full time on campus
- Demonstrated some leadership experience within student government

Secretary

Role:

- To keep records of meeting attendance
- To update member hours
- To send out emails about meetings and club updates
- To update the Sign Up Genius with hours opportunities
- To assist the other officers with their responsibilities

Requirements:

- Incoming sophomore, junior, or senior
- Hours requirements fulfilled
- Active student government member for a minimum of one year

- ● Part-time or full time on campus
- ● Demonstrated some leadership experience within student government

Treasurer
> Role:
- ● To keep track of student government finances
- ● To help new students understand how ticket sales and order forms work ●
To manage the cash box
- ● To manage and keep track of inventory
- ● To run student government PR
- ● To assist the other officers with their responsibilities
> Requirements:
- ● Incoming sophomore, junior, or senior
- ● Hours requirements fulfilled
- ● Active student government member for a minimum of one year
- ● Part-time or full time on campus
- ● Demonstrated some leadership experience within student government already

Campaign Rules

The current officer team has the right to alter the rules for any given year. The following rules are standard.

● You cannot bribe or force students to vote for you.

● You cannot make promises on things you are unsure you can deliver on or that are outside of the purview of student government without administrative approval that it could possibly be implemented.

● You cannot run any sort of negative or attack ads against a fellow candidate or the school. In regards to the school, you are able to point out issues that you would like to propose approved solutions for.

● Have all physical posters and social media content approved.

● If an administrator, advisor, or officer requests that you remove or edit any of your campaign content you need to do so.

● If you know of any students who may try to alter or falsify election results that you report them to the advisor.

You are required to follow these rules and any that the officers create that apply to the election or you may be removed and not allowed to run.

Elections

Voting is open to current 8th-11th grade students at STEM. Senior student government officers and advisor are the only people who are allowed to have editing privileges and access to election results once the form is sent out. If student government members are aware of any attempts at voting fraud they must report it to the officers/advisor immediately. In the case of a tie, the senior student government members are allowed to vote. If this still results in a tie, the senior student members must come to a consensus and block vote, or someone may choose to abstain from voting. Only one person is allowed for each position, so no ties will be announced. The new officer team goes into effect once the current senior class has officially graduated.

Officers must be prepared to meet all student government requirements, attend nearly all meetings and events, and conduct work outside of student government, even if they do not get hours. In the event that the treasurer or secretary is no longer able to perform their duties, the other officers may take on some of that officer's responsibilities. If the vice president is no longer able to perform their duties, an election within student government may be held for a replacement. If the president is no longer able to perform their duties, then the vice president will take on that position and a new person will be elected to vice president as part of an internal election. Students who want to run will write a short speech, present to the group, and following the election results will so the new officer can step in immediately.

Committee/Committee Leader Requirements

Committee leaders are selected because they have been active members within student government and have an interest in furthering a student government event by taking on an important leadership role. Committee leaders are the link between committee members and the officers. It is the responsibility of those members to be organized and maintain communication so committee members know their responsibilities and complete them on time and that officers and advisors know where the committee is in the planning process and if they need help or admin approval. Everyone in student government is a committee member throughout the year. Members can request to be in certain committees, but seniors get priority, so newer members may not get their first choice. All members are expected to be active in planning events throughout the year and complete all their assigned tasks on time. If for some reason this is not possible, a member needs help, or a member is absent they need to communicate with their committee leader and if necessary the officers. If it is a matter of absences, they must contact the secretary.

Multi-Club Involvement

Student government is an important organization that is responsible for planning most high school events. The success of these events depends on the dedication of student government members. Student government should be a priority for all members. If attendance is a possible issue, the student needs to reach out to the officers in advance

Consequences/Removal

If a student violates any part of the student government handbook it is cause for removal. Depending on the severity of the situation, as determined by the student government officers, advisor, and in some cases school administration, proper action will be taken. Modeled after the University of Virginia's Honor Committee, the student will have the chance to explain themself before the officer team and advisor. The committee will discuss and come to a decision within a week. It is up to the committee to decide what the resulting consequences are. This may not be used in every circumstance, but members can request it if they would like to defend themself. Consequences can vary from a warning to removal from the organization and bringing up the issue with school administration so they can take their own action if the offense also violates school policies.

Future Amendments

Note: This handbook will be implemented starting with the 2022-23 school year. If student government gets approved as a class next year students, have to be part-time on campus or have a schedule that allows them to be at STEM. If the student is part-time or full-time off campus they will have to submit their finalized schedule by August 21st to prove that they can make the time commitment to the organization.