

Application Now Open for Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council's 2018 STEM BEST® Program

A hallmark of Iowa STEM education is the connection of classroom learning to meaning beyond the school walls. Iowa STEM BEST® (Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers) is a great example of this concept. The STEM BEST® Program unites educators and employers to expand the learning continuum from school to careers. These school+business partnerships create work-based learning experiences where students apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics education to gain real-world workplace exposure.

The STEM Council has designated a portion of the state legislative funding to support the establishment of Iowa STEM BEST® models. Applications are now being accepted for the 2018-2019 academic year. Successful applicants will become an Iowa STEM BEST® model of the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council. Since 2014, 37 STEM BEST® models have been established across Iowa.

North Cedar Elementary School in Cedar Falls, Iowa, received a STEM BEST® award in 2016 based on its plan to partner with a local business and make their own coffee. Since receiving the award, they have worked in partnership with Sidecar Coffee to learn about the science of roasting and brewing coffee and the process involved in manufacturing and marketing their own product. A total of 74 bags of coffee were sold in the first order to families within the school. Students were able to utilize the equipment and space at Sidecar Coffee to roast, grind, package the coffee and complete the orders before the end of the 2017-2018 academic year. They plan to grow the program to make coffee available to the entire district, with the goal of establishing a fully-functioning coffee bar.

Information about additional STEM BEST® models, valuable resources and the online application portal for the 2018 STEM BEST® Program and can be found at <https://iowastem.gov/STEMBEST>.