



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Carol Napp

Am. H.B. 362

130th General Assembly
(As Passed by the House)

Reps. Scherer and Derickson, Anielski, Blessing, Butler, Roegner, Young, Bishoff, Baker, Beck, Buchy, Burkley, Conditt, Green, Grossman, Hackett, Hall, Maag, Romanchuk, Stebelton, Terhar, Wachtmann, Batchelder

BILL SUMMARY

- Creates a new designation of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) school equivalent that may be granted to a community school or chartered nonpublic school that satisfies certain requirements.
- Specifies that a STEM school equivalent is not eligible for any of the operating funding that is provided to STEM schools.
- Specifies that the existing STEM Committee is a committee of the Department of Education.
- Permits the governing authority of a chartered nonpublic school to submit a proposal to receive a grant for a STEM program of excellence that serves students in any of grades kindergarten through eight in that school.
- Permits a community school, a chartered nonpublic school, or both to be part of a partnership of public and private entities that submits a proposal for the establishment of a new STEM school.
- With respect to the existing requirement that a proposal for the establishment of a new STEM school include evidence that the school will utilize an established capacity to capture and share knowledge for best practices and innovative professional development, requires this knowledge to be shared with the Ohio STEM Learning Network, or its successor.
- Requires the STEM Committee to (1) seek technical assistance from the Ohio STEM Learning Network or its successor when accepting, evaluating, and choosing to

approve proposals for the establishment of new STEM schools and (2) consider the recommendations of the Ohio STEM Learning Network or its successor when approving proposals.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

STEM school equivalent

The bill creates a new designation of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) school equivalent.¹ This designation may be granted to a community school or chartered nonpublic school that submits a proposal for designation to the STEM Committee. A STEM school equivalent is not subject to any of the requirements that apply to STEM schools except for those regarding a STEM school's curriculum and working partnerships with outside public and private entities.² Additionally, a STEM school equivalent is not eligible for any of the state operating funding that is provided to STEM schools.³

(Under current law, a regular STEM school is a stand-alone public school that offers a rigorous curriculum for any of grades 6 through 12 that integrates STEM disciplines with arts and humanities. A STEM school receives state funds on a per-pupil basis through one of two distinct funding methods.)

Proposal for designation as a STEM school equivalent

The bill requires a community school or chartered nonpublic school seeking designation as a STEM school equivalent to submit a proposal to the STEM Committee that is established in current law (see "**STEM Committee**" below). The proposal must include all of the following:

(1) Assurances that the community school or chartered nonpublic school submitting the proposal has a working partnership with both public and private entities, including higher education entities and business organizations;

(2) Assurances that the school submitting the proposal will operate in compliance with the bill's provisions and the provisions of the proposal as accepted by the STEM Committee;

¹ R.C. 3326.032.

² R.C. 3326.032(C)(1) and 3326.09.

³ R.C. 3326.032(C)(3).



(3) Evidence that the school submitting the proposal will offer a rigorous, diverse, integrated, and project-based curriculum to students in any of grades 6 through 12, with the goal to prepare those students for college, the workforce, and citizenship, and that does all of the following:

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

(b) Incorporates scientific inquiry and technological design;

(c) Includes the arts and humanities;

(d) Emphasizes personalized learning and teamwork skills.

(4) Evidence that the school submitting the proposal will attract school leaders who support the curriculum principles outlined above;

(5) A description of how each school's curriculum will be developed and approved in accordance with the STEM school curriculum requirements, which apply to a STEM school equivalent under the bill's provisions;

(6) Evidence that the school submitting the proposal will utilize an established capacity to capture and share knowledge for best practices and innovative professional development;

(7) Assurance that the school submitting the proposal has received commitments of sustained and verified fiscal and in-kind support from regional education and business entities.⁴

These requirements are very similar to the requirements for a proposal for a STEM school, except that STEM school proposals must also provide that the school will be under the oversight of a governing body and specify how the school's assets will be distributed upon its closing. These additional requirements are unnecessary for STEM school equivalents because the bill specifies that a community school or chartered nonpublic school that is designated as a STEM school equivalent is still subject to the requirements that already apply to that type of school, including requirements pertaining to school governance and distribution of the school's assets upon its closing.⁵

⁴ R.C. 3326.032(B).

⁵ R.C. 3326.032(C)(1).



Curriculum requirements

The bill specifies that the curriculum of a STEM school equivalent is subject to the requirements that apply to the curriculum of a STEM school under current law. The curriculum must be developed by a team that consists of at least the school's chief administrative officer, a teacher, a representative of the higher education institution that is a collaborating partner with the STEM school equivalent, and a member of the public with expertise in the application of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, and it is subject to approval by the school's governing authority.⁶

Applications for grants and additional funds

The bill expressly permits a STEM school equivalent to apply for any of the grants and additional funds that a STEM school may apply for under current law, as long as the STEM school equivalent is eligible for those grants or additional funds.⁷ This apparently means a STEM school equivalent may use its designation to (1) apply to any state or federal agency for grants under federal or state law or any "appropriations act of the General Assembly" and (2) apply to any private entity or foundation for additional funds.⁸

Additional requirements

Contract between a community school and its sponsor

If the governing authority of a community school is planning to seek designation for the school as a STEM school equivalent, the bill requires that fact be stipulated in its contract with the school's sponsor.⁹

Notification upon closure or ceasing to be a STEM school equivalent

If the governing authority of a community school or chartered nonpublic school that has been designated as a STEM school equivalent intends to close the school or intends to no longer be designated as a STEM school equivalent, the bill requires the school to notify the STEM Committee of that fact.¹⁰

⁶ R.C. 3326.032(C)(1) and 3326.09.

⁷ R.C. 3326.032(C)(3).

⁸ R.C. 3326.38, not in the bill.

⁹ R.C. 3314.03(A)(26).

¹⁰ R.C. 3301.162 and 3326.032(D).



(Current law, not affected by the bill, requires the governing authority and sponsor of a community school that is permanently closing and ceasing operation to use procedures adopted by the Department of Education, including procedures for data reporting to the Department, handling of student records, distribution of assets, and other matters.¹¹ With respect to chartered nonpublic schools that intend to close, current law requires a school's governing authority to notify the Department, the school's accrediting agency, and the school district that receives state Auxiliary Services Funds for the school's students of the intent to close.¹²)

STEM Committee

The bill specifies that the STEM Committee, which is established under current law, is a committee of the Department of Education.¹³ The STEM Committee currently consists of seven members: the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Chancellor of the Board of Regents, the Director of Development, and four members of the public who have expertise in business or STEM fields (two appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one appointed by the President of the Senate).

STEM programs of excellence

The bill permits the governing authority of a chartered nonpublic school to submit a proposal to the STEM Committee to receive a grant for a STEM program of excellence that serves students in any of grades kindergarten through eight in that school.¹⁴ Currently, city, exempted village, and local school districts and community schools may submit proposals for this purpose. Current law requires the STEM Committee to award grants to support the operation of STEM programs of excellence, but money has not been appropriated for this purpose for several years.

Proposals to create new STEM schools

Partnering entities for STEM proposals

The bill permits, but does not require, a community school, a chartered nonpublic school, or both to be part of a partnership of public and private entities that

¹¹ R.C. 3314.015(E), not in the bill.

¹² R.C. 3301.162.

¹³ R.C. 3326.02.

¹⁴ R.C. 3326.04.

submits a proposal for the establishment of a new STEM school.¹⁵ Current law requires this partnership to consist of at least (1) a city, exempted village, local, or joint vocational school district or an educational service center, (2) higher education entities, and (3) business organizations.

Content of proposals

Under current law, a proposal for the establishment of a new STEM school must include evidence that each STEM school that is part of the proposal will utilize an established capacity to capture and share knowledge for best practices and innovative professional development. The bill specifies that this knowledge for best practices and innovative professional development is to be shared with the Ohio STEM Learning Network, or its successor.¹⁶ The Ohio STEM Learning Network is a private entity that connects STEM schools, teachers, and administrators across the state and assists schools and communities that want to create new STEM schools and programs.¹⁷

Evaluation and approval of proposals

The bill requires the STEM Committee to seek technical assistance from the Ohio STEM Learning Network, or its successor, throughout the process of accepting and evaluating proposals for the establishment of a new STEM school and choosing which proposals to approve. The STEM Committee also must consider the recommendations of the Ohio STEM Learning Network, or its successor, in approving proposals for STEM schools.¹⁸

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	11-26-13
Reported, H. Education	02-27-14
Passed House (86-5)	04-02-14

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¹⁵ R.C. 3326.03.

¹⁶ R.C. 3326.03(C)(9).

¹⁷ Ohio STEM Learning Network website (www.osln.org), click on "About."

¹⁸ R.C. 3326.03.

