



Indiana Department of Education Science Happenings

Eimear Towler

It has been an exciting and busy time at the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). During the 2022-23 school year, as a result of House Enrolled Act 1251 (2022), IDOE was charged with streamlining the Indiana Academic Standards across content, including the designation of up to 33% of the standards as essential. Thank you to those who participated in the review process and public comment period. Proposed streamlined standards will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval at their June 7, 2023 meeting.

The 2022-23 school year was the implementation year for the 2022 Indiana Academic Standards for Science. However, these standards were streamlined by educator committees in 2023 to reflect essential standards. The streamlined standards will be assessed on ILEARN beginning with the Winter (February) 2024 administration of ILEARN Biology ECA. Grades 4 and 6 will be assessed in Spring 2024. The most recent standards implementation and assessment guidance can be found here. There are currently a number of resources related to 3-dimensional science instruction on the Indiana Learning Lab. Blueprints and item specification for these assessments will be released on the IDOE website around June 9, 2023. Other resources related to science assessment will be published in the Indiana Learning Lab at the end of June.

Pursuant to Indiana Code (IC) 20-20-5.5-2(h), IDOE is conducting a statewide survey to determine what curricular materials have been adopted for teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in each state-accredited school. A designee from each public school corporation, public charter school, and state-accredited non-public school is required to complete the survey by 5 p.m. ET on Friday, June 16. A curriculum evaluation process and the results of this survey will be used to develop a vetted list of curricula for STEM disciplines.

IDOE released STEM Priorities in January 2022. The Indiana STEM Cadre has been a key implementation

strategy resulting from this effort. We have just completed the first year of the initiative and additional schools are joining in year two. Cadre schools are implementing an instructional coaching model to bring high-quality integrated STEM learning experiences to students using research-based best practices.

The year-long STEM certification application cycle recently came to a close. There are currently 105 schools that have earned STEM certification, including nineteen schools added to the list at the beginning of May. A new "Developing" designation has been included this year to highlight schools which have demonstrated significant progress in creating an engaging STEM culture and empowering students to create and innovate through integrated STEM learning experiences. For this school year, a separate process for secondary schools was also introduced, recognizing the differences in school structures and programming between elementary and middle/high schools.

We have just completed another round of solicitations for STEM Integration Grants, as well as the new Computer Science Catalyst Grants. STEM integration Grants are designed to improve elementary and secondary student achievement and participation in STEM learning experiences. The Computer Science Catalyst Grant aims to spark innovation in computer science education by accelerating pedagogical knowledge of educators, increasing the number of PK-12 students who have access to high-quality computer science learning experiences, and promoting the use of computer science in authentic problem solving. Stay tuned for more grant opportunities in the future. The best way to stay up-to-date with grant opportunities and other exciting science education opportunities, is to subscribe to [Dr. Jenner's weekly update](#).

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