

Informational Meeting: Question and Answers

**Another source of information that may answer some of your questions can be found on the STEM Academy's brochure.

Q: Some great internship opportunities were mentioned for extracurricular activities—is there an office or coordinator that helps student find placement?

A: We do not have a coordinator that arranges for internships but we post internship opportunities on our Edmodo site.

Q: What are the admission requirements for the different pathways?

A: Students who wish to apply to the STEM Academy in either the Biomedical Sciences or the Engineering Pathway must be recommended for at least GSE Honors Algebra and Honors level Science. Students who wish to apply to the STEM Advanced Mathematics/Science Academy must be recommended for Accelerated Geometry/Advanced Algebra and Honors level Science. Summer school will not meet this requirement.

- Students interested in engineering or the biomedical sciences: Current 8th courses should include at minimum Advanced Math 8 and AC Science.
- Students interested in the advanced math and science pathway: Current 8th grade courses should include Algebra I/Geometry A and high school Physical Science.

Q: How many people get into the AMS course each year?

A: Admissions number vary but we try to keep the class sizes for all of pathways at 24 or lower.

Q: Is the PSAT or ACT required?

A: The PSAT or SAT is not required for any of the pathways, we just ask that if a student has taken either of these tests that those scores be included. It provides more data for the evaluation process. We will use the test typically administered by the middle schools which include the IOWA test and the Georgia Milestones.

Q: Should 8th grade students get their face-to-face 7th grade teachers or their virtual 8th grade teachers to submit the recommendations?

A: We prefer the 8th grade teachers.

Q: Can a student take AP level courses if the pathway does not require them?

A: The courses the students take as a cohort are the only requirements of the STEM Academy. The students are welcome (and encouraged) to take other STEM classes such as AP Chemistry, AP Computer Science, AP Statistics, etc. We work with students on an individual basis if their math courses make them eligible for a higher level AP Physics or AP Chemistry.

Q: Are the STEM classes offered to other students?

A: The PLTW biomedical courses are only available to STEM students, the PLTW engineering courses can be chosen as electives if not in the STEM academy. Only AMS students are eligible to take the AP level

courses in science prior to having completed the first-year courses. Additionally, only 10th grade STEM students are eligible to take an AP Computer Science course. Students not in STEM must be in the 11th grade and priority is given to the seniors.

Q: Do students ever switch pathways in sophomore or junior year?

A: No, students may not switch pathways. We encourage students to apply to the pathway that represents their strongest interests, recognizing it as a four year commitment.

Q: Can students be successful in the STEM academy as a year around athlete.

A: Absolutely. It requires students to be proactive and have good time management but we have a number of students successful in year-round sports.

Q: What projects do the advanced math and science pathway students do versus the biomedicine pathway students? Can you please provide examples?

A: All students are required to complete a Capstone project their senior year. The advanced math and science students complete a research project during their AP Biology class. This project is designed by the student and approved by the teacher. The engineering and biomedical sciences students complete a Capstone project which is built into their senior course

In other grades, we have had STEM students design a “green” school and present their ideas to architects. Our students were also involved in making recommendations for the new baseball park. Students designed the area on the front left side of the building around the Fibonacci sequence. In general, the teachers coordinate when the curriculum allows for it and have students develop projects that are content specific.

Q: Is there a place with information on clubs?

A: The school hosts a club fair each fall for incoming students. That is when most of the club information is disseminated. For more information on any club, I would contact the club sponsor which is listed on the Walton Website under the Students Tab.

Q: I am interested in chemical engineering as well as biomed, but I am not sure which course is suitable for chemical engineering. Which course would you recommend?

A: Pick the pathway you are most qualified for. If you have the 8th grade courses for the advanced math and science that should be a serious consideration. If you have room in your schedule, you can take engineering classes as an elective. In the engineering and biomedical sciences, each year, one of the elective spots will be your engineering class or biomedical sciences class.