



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

**Commitment to Excellence in Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)**

GRANT APPLICATION

COMPETITION #16 / 2025-2026 Cycle

**As funded by Act 529 of 2001 through the Arkansas
Committed to Education Foundation and
administered by The Arkansas STEM Coalition
(ACEF License Plate Funds)**

APPLICATION DUE DATES

- **APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE: Friday, August 1, 2025**
- **APPLICATIONS DUE: Friday, September 19, 2025, by 5:00 PM**
 - **FUNDING NOTIFICATION DATE: Friday, October 3, 2025**
 - **FINAL REPORTS DUE: Tuesday, June 30, 2026, by 5:00 PM**

Electronic Submission only (except for parts indicated) to:

Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com

Commitment to Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Grant

The Arkansas STEM Coalition is requesting applications for the Commitment to Excellence in STEM Grant to promote STEM education in Arkansas's grade 3-6 classrooms. The purpose of the Commitment to Excellence in STEM Grant is to help bridge the technology divide that exists in Arkansas public schools, particularly in schools serving third through sixth grades, by recognizing schools through technology-based incentives.

Funding for these grants is made available through the sale of special "Committed to Education" license plates that are offered by the Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration and are purchased by Arkansas vehicle owners each year. A portion of the funds received for each license plate are deposited with the Arkansas Committed to Education Fund (ACEF). ACEF has partnered with The Arkansas STEM Coalition to create and administer the Commitment to Excellence in STEM Grant program in order to disburse the license plate funds collected to deserving schools. In keeping with the original purpose of the funding in Act 529 of 2001, the Arkansas STEM Coalition has developed a grant process to distribute the funds. Each year, The Arkansas STEM Coalition releases a Request For Applications (RFA) which sets out that year's available funding, eligible entities, grant parameters, deadlines, and application requirements.

The amount of funding available for each cycle will be equal to the amount received by The Arkansas STEM Coalition from ACEF the prior July 1-June 30 that is earmarked for grant funding, plus any funds that were not awarded from the previous cycle. For the 2025-2026 cycle, this includes grant funds received from July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025 of \$115,000.00 plus unawarded amount of \$3,653.00 from the 2024-2025 cycle, for a total available of \$118,653.00.

Applications will be reviewed and scored using a consistent rubric, which is attached to the application, with applicants scoring based on various eligibility and demographic criteria as well as their completed applications. Awards will be announced based on the stated schedule, with the amounts and names of grantees made public. NOTE: Any application scoring below 70.0 points will not be funded.

The equipment and materials purchased with grant funds will be used by Arkansas students during hands-on learning activities in order to develop better knowledge of and a deeper understanding of concepts in physical, life and earth sciences, mathematics, technology, engineering, and other STEM subjects. Professional Development (PD) will be secured by the applying entities in order to increase the teachers' content and instructional skills in the STEM areas needed to fully utilize the equipment and materials purchased with grant funds. PD will be provided at the school site, in the student classrooms, and/or offsite.

Applications will be accepted from the following eligible entities:

- ALL public school districts and public schools in Arkansas that serve third, fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grades are eligible to apply, either through a STEM Center, as individual schools, or in collaboration with a public school district.
- Only ONE application per school will be accepted, either through a STEM Center or from the public school or public school district.

- Each public school included in an application must teach at least one of the following grades: third, fourth, fifth, or sixth. Public schools that teach at least one of these grades are eligible, regardless of which other grades are taught or not taught at that school or district.
- The below University STEM Centers are eligible to apply, on behalf of individual public schools or on behalf of public school districts:
 - A-State Delta STEM Education Center (Arkansas State University)
 - A-State Rural STEM Education Center (Arkansas State University)
 - ATU STEM Education Collaborative (Arkansas Tech University)
 - Lewis “Tony” Finley STEM Center (Harding University)
 - The STEM Center at Henderson State University (Henderson State University)
 - Southern Arkansas University STEM Center for K-12 Education (Southern Arkansas University)
 - STEM Education Center (University of Arkansas at Fort Smith)
 - UA Little Rock STEM Education Center (University of Arkansas at Little Rock)
 - UAM STEM Center (University of Arkansas at Monticello)
 - Mathematics and Science Pre-College Center (University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff)
 - UCA Institute for STEM Professional Development and Education Research (University of Central Arkansas)
- NO entity will be eligible to apply if they have retained unspent funds from prior year awards that have not yet been returned to The Arkansas STEM Coalition. Once funds have been fully spent and accounted for or have been returned, entities may become immediately eligible as long as other eligibility requirements are met.
- NO entity will be eligible to apply if they have any outstanding report(s) due to The Arkansas STEM Coalition from prior funding cycles. Once all outstanding report(s) have been submitted to The Arkansas STEM Coalition, entities may become immediately eligible as long as other eligibility requirements are met.

NOTE: If you represent a STEM Center housed at an institution of higher education in Arkansas and would like to become an eligible entity, please email us at Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com or call us at 501-425-9995.

Award Limits:

- The total amount of funding available for the 2025-2026 funding cycle is \$118,653.00. The amount of actual funds awarded may be slightly less or slightly more, in the sole discretion of The Arkansas STEM Coalition, based on a variety of factors. Any funds from this cycle that are not disbursed may be rolled over to the 2026-2027 funding cycle.
- Schools must be individually eligible and each should apply on a separate application (NEW!).
- There is no minimum request amount for individual schools or for combined applications.
- There is no maximum request amount for combined applications, but the maximum requested amount per school is \$10,000.00. This is not an average of schools applying from your district! Each school’s individual budget request may not exceed \$10,000.00, including professional development (whether itemized costs or taken as a Professional Development Consulting Fee).
- Each school’s budget request may include up to 15% of the total award (up to \$1,500 if requesting the full \$10,000) to provide Professional Development, which should be reflected in the budget. Please note:

- This does not mean you can request \$10,000 in equipment plus \$1,500 for professional development; the entire budget request must not exceed \$10,000.
- The only way to get the full \$1,500 for PD is to ask for the full \$10,000 award with \$1,500 for PD and \$8,500 in equipment.
- You can calculate the maximum amount you can request for PD by filling in the highlighted cells on the second tab of the budget spreadsheet (Calculate PD).
- You do not have to request funds to provide PD.
- If you are requesting 10% or less of your award amount for PD, this can be considered a PD Consulting Fee. You do not have to itemize expenses on your budget, and you will not need to provide receipts showing purchase/expenditures for each item. The total allowable amount for a PD Consulting Fee is 10% of the total award (up to \$1,000).
- If more than 10% of the total award is being requested for PD, the budget must include an itemized list of expenses, and final reports will be required to itemize these expenses and provide receipts showing purchase/expenditures for each item.
- The lowest scoring limit for funded applications is 70.0 points. Any application scoring below 70.0 points will not be funded.

Provisions:

- Schools that have not been awarded this grant in the past, whether individually or through STEM Centers, will be given priority during the scoring process as indicated in the included scoring rubric.
- Funds awarded for materials and/or equipment must be used to purchase tangible materials and/or equipment that directly affects student learning in STEM areas. Examples of items allowed include lab equipment (i.e. microscopes, proscopes, beakers etc.), science kits which include equipment and resources, technology equipment or software (i.e. netbooks, probeware, GPS, etc.), mathematics manipulatives, makerspace supplies and equipment, robotics equipment and kits. These are examples; specific materials and equipment must be listed in a proposed budget included in the application.
- Consumable materials are allowed, but priority will be given to projects that provide lasting, durable materials and/or equipment that will be used over multiple years.
- Items that will not be used during the grant period will not be allowed.
- Items that do not pertain to the project(s) discussed in Project Narrative will not be allowed.
- Purchases that are NOT allowed include, but are not limited to:
 - Time-Limited memberships
 - Field trips
 - Competition entry fees
 - Any intangible item(s)
 - Paying salaries or consulting fees that are not PD-related (you MAY pay somebody to conduct PD)
 - Indirect Costs
- Funds awarded for professional development may be used to:
 - purchase and/or reproduce professional development and/or teacher training materials, such as books, handouts, manuals, etc.
 - pay registration fees for instructors to attend professional development classes, conferences, and/or workshops.

- pay for instructors to travel to professional development classes, conferences, and/or workshops.
- pay mileage expenses incurred to attend professional development. Mileage should be paid at the State of Arkansas rate at the time the travel is made. A template for mileage reimbursement will be provided, but any invoice for mileage may be used that includes: date(s) of travel, starting and ending odometer readings for each trip (using a trip meter is acceptable), starting and ending address(es), and reason for travel. Invoices based on mileage estimates WILL NOT be acceptable. Do NOT attach Google Map/MapQuest directions to invoice in lieu of actual mileage.
- pay other approved costs, which must be explained and described in the application and approved as part of the award. If you have questions about allowable costs, email Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com, or call 501-425-9995.
- Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, with scores compiled through a uniform scoring rubric, a copy of which is attached to this application. Scoring will be based on the submitted application from each school, with weight and/or additional points given to schools that show evidence that:
 - They have not received this grant in the past. For schools that have received this grant in the past, a weighted score will be based on how long ago the grant was received, with schools that have never received the grant, or have not received it recently, receiving the most points and schools that have received the grant most recently receiving no points.
 - Schools are uniquely in need, and that funding is unlikely without this grant funding. Scoring will be weighted based on each district's Free & Reduced Lunch percent as well as each school's School Letter Grade and School Improvement Status.
 - Equipment purchased will serve multiple grades and larger percentages of students.
 - The equipment and materials purchased are lasting and durable, and will be used over multiple years.
- NOTE that, while valuable skills, critical thinking, working in groups, creativity, creating things, hands-on learning, project-based learning, collaboration, etc. **ARE NOT STEM SKILLS**. They may be utilized or learning by implementing STEM projects, but talking about them – in and of themselves – is not going to get you a top score on your Project Narrative.
- Any application scoring below 70.0 points will not be funded.
- Individual schools will be scored and awarded separately, regardless of the Applying Entity. Therefore, an application may include three schools, but one, two, or three may be awarded grant funds depending on each school's individual application score.
- Funds awarded will be distributed to the applying entity – a STEM Center, an individual school, or a school district – unless an agreement is made between the applying entity and The Arkansas STEM Coalition to have items purchased directly by The Arkansas STEM Coalition.
- Provisions for The Arkansas STEM Coalition to purchase materials and/or equipment, and to have it delivered to schools, will be agreed upon at the time awards are accepted by the applying entities, and may be subject to a written grant agreement between the entity and The Arkansas STEM Coalition. This agreement may include limited vendors and other factors and/or parameters that are more limiting than listed in this RFA.

Things that will get your application booted (as in, we will NOT read it and we will NOT score it):

- Asking for more than \$10,000 per school, including professional development (\$10,000 is the limit for each individual school – NOT an average per school from your district!)
- Asking for more than 15% of award for professional development
- “Signatures” that are typed or e-signed rather than handwritten. **NO ELECTRONIC/E-signatures will be accepted no matter the reason! Scans of signatures are okay.**
- Not turning in – or not having correct signature(s) on – a Grant Assurance Form
- Not turning in – or not having correct signature on – a Letter of Support from your Superintendent, if required (required for District and STEM Center applications only)
- Turning in ANY part of the application late. Late is after 5:00 PM on September 19, 2025, no matter what. Absolutely no exceptions for any reason whatsoever.
- Sending Zip files. Sending files that can’t be opened in Microsoft Word. Sending a link to Google Drive or other shared access, if those files can’t be accessed immediately. This happens every year, so just don’t even try to make it work. Our best advice is to put your application in a Word file from the beginning. Then save as a PDF or print to PDF and submit that file via email.
- If we note certain information on your application during pre-scoring, we may not fully evaluate and score the application if it is clear that it will not be competitive. The lowest scoring limit for funded applications is 70.0 points. Any application scoring below 70.0 points will not be funded.

IMPORTANT NOTES AND RANDOM TIPS:

- ANY type of teacher/class may apply for this grant. However, you must relate your project to STEM education and list STEM standards in your application.
- Read all of the instructions carefully. Then read them again and make sure you follow them.
- Sign up and attend an info session!!! We can’t recommend this highly enough. Visit <https://arkansasstemcoalition.com/programs/excellence-in-stem-grant/apply-for-excellence-in-stem-education-grant/> to find and sign up for an info session.
- DO NOT LEAVE ANYTHING BLANK. If information is missing, you will lose points.
- While valuable skills, critical thinking, working in groups, creativity, creating things, hands-on learning, project-based learning, collaboration, etc. **ARE NOT STEM SKILLS**. They may be utilized or learning by implementing STEM projects, but talking about them – in and of themselves – is not going to get you a top score on your Project Narrative. Same goes for GT standards, classes, and projects.
- We do not need to be convinced about how important funding is for STEM education – we know! In the Project Narrative, we want to know **why** you don’t already have this funding, not just that you don’t have the funding.
- The people reviewing your application are likely NOT educators! They are volunteers working in all types of STEM careers. Don’t use language or acronyms they will not understand. If you do, you may lose points because they don’t know what you mean.
- Be sure that your budget and items being purchased makes sense. For instance, if you say that you are serving 25 kids, your budget should not include purchasing 50 sets of headphones unless you explain why each student needs to use two sets of headphones at a time.
- Use the checklist to ensure that you have included all parts of the application.
- DO NOT EMAIL TO ASK WHEN GRANT AWARDS WILL BE ANNOUNCED. THEY WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT ANY POINT DURING THE DAY THAT IS INDICATED ON THE SCHEDULE. It may be early morning or late in the evening. If for some reason you do not get an email on the announcement day, you can email or call the NEXT DAY.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to make sure that you have included all parts of the application for EACH AND EVERY School that is participating.

Single Combined File:

- Cover Sheet
- District Information Sheet for EACH Participating District
- School Information Sheet
- Project Timeline & Standards
- Project Narrative
- Grant Assurance Form SIGNED BY APPROPRIATE PARTIES
- Superintendent Support Letters SIGNED BY SUPERINTENDENT (for District applications ONLY)

NOTE: Grant Assurance Form and Superintendent Support Letter MAY be attached as separate documents if needed, or sent under separate cover if needed. **No typed or e-signatures.**

Attachment:

- Expense Budget Spreadsheet in Excel format (MUST USE EXCEL TEMPLATE)

DO NOT send individual pages of the completed application, except for:

- Expense Budget Spreadsheet (MUST USE EXCEL TEMPLATE)
- Grant Assurance Form (may be sent separately; no e-signatures)
- Superintendent Support Letter (if required, may be sent separately; no e-signatures)

The completed application package should include a single combined file (PDF preferred) containing ALL REQUIRED ITEMS from list above, with the Excel Budget Spreadsheet attached as a separate file. If you send Zip files or files that can't be opened in Microsoft Word, your application may not be considered! Google Drive links are acceptable to the single file and budget spreadsheet; however, we must have immediate access to Google Drive files.

The complete application package must be EMAILED to Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com no later than Friday, September 19, 2025, at 5:00 PM. Late applications will not be considered. No exceptions. Applications even one minute late will not be considered. If all parts are not received by the deadline, the application will not be considered.

IMPORTANT DATES

Open Date	Due Date	Review Period	Award Notification Date	Grant Period	Equip Purchase Deadline	PD & Expense Deadline	Final Report Due
8/1/2025	9/19/2025 by 5:00 PM	9/19-10/2/2025	10/3/2025	10/3/2025-5/31/2026	4/1/2026	5/31/2026	6/30/2026 by 5:00 PM

**Commitment to Excellence in Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Grant
COVER SHEET**

(complete ONE for each application)

APPLYING ENTITY INFORMATION

(Checks will be written to Entity Name and mailed to Mailing Address)

Applying Entity Name	
Applying Entity is:	<input type="checkbox"/> an Individual School <input type="checkbox"/> a School District <input type="checkbox"/> a STEM Center
Applying Entity Mailing Address (IF AWARDED, THIS IS WHERE CHECK WILL BE MAILED)	

Applying Entity Contact Names & Information

(This is who we will contact with questions or if we need additional information regarding your application)

Main Contact Name	
Main Contact Direct Work Phone	
Main Contact General Work Phone	
Main Contact Cell Phone	
Main Contact Email	

Backup Contact Name	
Backup Contact Direct Work Phone	
Backup Contact General Work Phone	
Backup Contact Cell Phone	
Backup Contact Email	

COVER SHEET (CONT'D)

(ONLY complete for District or STEM Center applications)

Districts & Schools Included in this Application

(List ALL included in this application. Add more lines if needed.)

District Name(s)	School Name(s)

STEM Center Information

(ONLY complete for STEM Center applications)

University Name	University Name: STEM Center Name:
University DUNS number	
STEM Center Director Name (MUST MATCH GRANT ASSURANCE FORM)	
STEM Center MAILING Address	
STEM Center Director Work and Cell Numbers	Direct Work Number: Cell Number:
STEM Center Director Email	
Research / Sponsored Programs MAILING ADDRESS	
Main Contact Name (MUST MATCH GRANT ASSURANCE FORM)	
Main Contact Direct Phone	
Main Contact Cell Phone	
Main Contact Email	
Backup Contact Name	
Backup Contact Direct Phone	
Backup Contact Cell Phone	
Backup Contact Email	

DISTRICT INFORMATION SHEET

(complete a separate page for each Participating District)

School District Name		
School District LEA #		
Superintendent's Name (MUST MATCH GRANT ASSURANCE FORM)		
Superintendent's Email		
Superintendent's Phone Number		
School District PHYSICAL Address (included for auditing/review purposes)		
School District MAILING Address		
School District General Phone Number		
School Coop Area (Answer even if you don't participate in your Coop! This is to see if you are eligible for additional geographic-based funding.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Arch Ford <input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas River <input type="checkbox"/> Crowley's Ridge <input type="checkbox"/> Dawson <input type="checkbox"/> DeQueen-Mena <input type="checkbox"/> Great Rivers <input type="checkbox"/> Guy Fenter <input type="checkbox"/> North Central	<input type="checkbox"/> Northeast <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest <input type="checkbox"/> Ozarks Unlimited <input type="checkbox"/> South Central <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest <input type="checkbox"/> Wilbur Mills <input type="checkbox"/> Pulaski County Schools

SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

(complete a separate page for each Participating School)

Participating School Name	
School DISTRICT Name	
Has this School been known by another name since 2010? If so, what other name has it had?	
Has this School merged with another school since 2010? If so, what school did it merge with?	
Is this a new school?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Participating School LEA#	
Participating School PHYSICAL Address (for audit/review purposes)	
Participating School MAILING Address	
School phone number	
Principal's Name (MUST MATCH GRANT ASSURANCE FORM)	
Principal's Email	
Principal's Phone Number	
In what type of environment will equipment be used?	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular classes <input type="checkbox"/> After-School <input type="checkbox"/> GT Breakouts <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
What grades does this school serve?	
Grades participating in grant activities (for this school ONLY)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4 th <input type="checkbox"/> 5 th <input type="checkbox"/> 6 th <input type="checkbox"/> Other Grades (list): _____
Has this school received this grant in the past? If so, what year(s)?	

Estimated Number of Students and Teachers Affected (report by Grade)			
Grade Level	# Students Enrolled	# Students Affected	# Teachers Affected
3 rd Grade			
4 th Grade			
5 th Grade			
6 th Grade			
Other Grades			
TOTAL:			

PROJECT NARRATIVE

(complete a separate Project Narrative for each Participating School, even if funding the same type of project)

Include a Project Narrative for each Participating School. The Project Narrative should be a **MAXIMUM of one page**, typed or handwritten. You do not need to restate the questions.

Participating School Name:

The Project Narrative must include the following information, either in Q&A or narrative form:

1. Give an explanation of what you want to buy, what you want to do, and why you want to do it.

2. Explain why your school/students need this equipment, why it is important to your classroom and/or project, how it will support your school's STEM instruction, and how it aligns with the curriculum, instruction, and/or standards you plan to utilize. Include any research-based learning strategies you will be using (inquiry-based, 5-E, student-centered learning, etc.).

3. Explain any professional development needed, how it will be provided, and who will provide it. If you are not providing PD, give a brief explanation of why it is not needed.

4. Explain why you need this funding and why other funding is not available. If you are requesting to purchase consumable items, you must explain how you will sustain future funding.

The Project Narrative MAY (but does not have to) include any other information you believe is relevant and compelling

PROPOSED SCHOOL EXPENSE BUDGET

(complete a separate Excel spreadsheet for each Participating School, even if purchasing the exact same items for each school)

COMPLETE AND ATTACH THE SPREADSHEET TEMPLATE PROVIDED FOR EACH PARTICIPATING SCHOOL

Include ALL equipment, materials, and itemized PD costs (or PD Consulting Fee*)
NO INDIRECT COSTS ARE ALLOWED

You will need the following information to complete the spreadsheet:

- School Name
- Your choice of Professional Development funding (SEE BELOW for PD Options)
- Name of each item being purchased, along with a detailed description
- A URL/web address for each item being purchased (it must be “live”)
- The name of the vendor you expect to purchase each item from
- The price of a single unit of each item being purchased
- The total number of units you wish to purchase
- Total estimated tax, shipping, and handling costs
- **NOTE: If you are using a quote, BE SURE IT INCLUDES TAX & SHIPPING!!!! If you don't include tax and shipping, you may not have enough money to purchase your requested items!**

Professional Development Options

- **OPTION 1:** You do not have to request money for PD. If you are not requesting money, check the first box on the spreadsheet “We are not requesting funds for PD.” You don't need to do anything else.
- **OPTION 2:** You can request a PD Consulting Fee of up to 10% of the total award (not 10% of the equipment and materials cost). This is the simplest way to request funding. If you choose this option, you will use a single line in your budget that says “PD Consulting Fee” and input a dollar amount. You will be required to show that you provided PD, but you will not be required to tell us how you are spending it or submit receipts in your final report.
- **OPTION 3:** You can request 10-15% of your total award for PD by providing detailed itemized expenses in your budget spreadsheet. Itemized expenses could include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Mileage: must indicate number of proposed trips, estimated mileage, and purpose
 - b. Professional Development Materials: list specific materials being purchased
 - c. Other Operating Costs: any other costs must be explained in detail
- **NOTE:** Figuring the percentage of PD costs of your total award can be a bit complicated, so we have provided a way to check on the second tab of the expense spreadsheet. **PLEASE USE THESE CALCULATORS AND CONTACT US IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR ARE CONFUSED!**
- **NOTE:** You can't request more than \$1,500 in funds for PD. You can't request more than 15% of your total award in funds for PD. **If you exceed either, your application won't be scored!**

REMEMBER: MAXIMUM REQUEST IS \$10,000 PER SCHOOL, INCLUDING PD!

GRANT ASSURANCE FORM

2025-2026 Commitment to Excellence in STEM Grant Award

Participating School Name: _____

I/we, the below-signed person(s) who represent(s) the Applying Entity, Participating Schools, University STEM Center, and/or associated University, agree(s) to the following conditions:

- All funds used to purchase equipment and/or materials for Participating Schools must be spent by April 1, 2026. Funds for Professional Development must be spent by May 31, 2026.
- All funds will be spent as listed in the application budgets, and will be used for STEM-related equipment and/or materials to be used in 3rd-6th grade classrooms, for expenses related to providing professional development, and for other expenses as indicated on included budgets.
- Any changes will be agreed upon in writing by both parties.
- Final Narrative Report and Final Financial Report with copies of receipts are both due no later than June 30, 2026 by 5:00 PM. Templates will be provided for these reports.
- NO indirect costs are allowed.

Individual School Principal

Date

School District Superintendent

Date

STEM Center Director

Date

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Date

The Assurance Form **MUST** be signed by the following (names must match application pages):

- If Applying Entity is an Individual School: Principal
- If Applying Entity is a School District: Principal(s), Superintendent
- If Applying Entity is a STEM Center: Principal(s), STEM Center Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (or the equivalent office).

NO E-SIGNATURES OF ANY TYPE! Scanned pages of signature(s) are okay.

This form may be submitted in separate parts, but all parts must be submitted by application deadline of September 19, 2025, at 5:00 PM!

Grant Assurance Form may be emailed separately to Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com, or a paper copy may be mailed to: The Arkansas STEM Coalition, Attn: Grants, P.O. Box 3142, Little Rock, AR 72203. FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE STEM COALITION NO LATER THAN Friday, September 19, 2025, at 5:00 PM. We are not responsible for postal delays.

SUPERINTENDENT SUPPORT LETTERS FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS/DISTRICTS

2025-2026 Commitment to Excellence in STEM Grant Application

If submitting as a School District or a STEM Center, a Letter of Support from the Superintendent of EACH applicable School District must be signed and included as part of your application. Each Letter of Support should establish support for STEM instruction, support for the STEM equipment that will be provided, support to print necessary materials for the lessons and training provided, and support for time that professional development will be provided (if any) to teachers and/or staff.

Superintendents may use the form on the next page or may write their own letter, but it **MUST BE ON DISTRICT LETTERHEAD AND MUST BE SIGNED BY HAND. E-signatures of any type are NOT acceptable and will result in your application not being scored. A scanned copy of signatures is okay.**

When amending the template letter, be sure that ALL HIGHLIGHTED portions have been adjusted and that all part of the letter make sense for how you are applying and what you are requesting. For instance, if you are not receiving PD from a STEM Center or other PD provider, you will need to adjust/delete the second paragraph of the letter and the bullet point regarding PD.

If you are not able to attach a letter or letters to the rest of your application, letters may be emailed separately to Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com, or a paper copy may be mailed to: The Arkansas STEM Coalition, Attn: Grants, P.O. Box 3142, Little Rock, AR 72203. IF SENDING SEPARATELY, SUPPORT LETTERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE STEM COALITION NO LATER THAN Friday, September 19, 2025, at 5:00 PM regardless of method. We are not responsible for postal delays.

E-signatures of any type will NOT be acceptable. A scanned copy of signatures is okay.

SUPERINTENDENT SUPPORT LETTER FORM

DISTRICT LOGO/LETTERHEAD

Date

The Arkansas STEM Coalition
PO Box 3142
Little Rock, AR 72203
via email to Grants@ArkansasSTEMCoalition.com

RE: 2025-2026 Commitment to Excellence in STEM Grant Application

To The Arkansas STEM Coalition,

This letter serves as verification that the [DISTRICT NAME] is committed to STEM education and instruction and that I support the staff at [SCHOOL NAME(S)] as they seek funds for the 2025-2026 Commitment to Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Grant.

The [STEM Center/PD Provider Name] is a valuable partner with our school, and we look forward to collaborating with them to improve our science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and instruction. We are excited to receive much-needed equipment and to learn to work with the equipment that will be provided through these grant funds.

In support of the grant application, we pledge the following:

- We will store, utilize, and maintain any equipment provided to us through these grant funds on a regular and an as-needed basis.
- We will print any materials necessary for training and instruction provided through this grant.
- We will coordinate on-site and/or virtual professional development opportunities between [STEM Center/PD Provider Name] personnel and our staff to work with the equipment provided with these grant funds, and as additional needs are identified.
- We will provide time for staff to participate in any professional development needed to perform the activities in this grant application.
- We will verify receipt of grant funds and/or equipment purchased with these grant funds in writing.
- We confirm that all equipment purchased with these grant funds will be used by students and teachers identified in the grant application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

SUPERINTENDENT SIGNATURE (may not be typed or electronic!)

Superintendent Printed Name

Appendix: SCORING RUBRIC

APPLYING ENTITY NAME		
District Name:		
School Name:		
PRE-TEST INFORMATION (must answer ALL YES or N/A to move to scoring)		
APPLICATION ITEM NAME	Item	Instructions / Considerations
Grant Assurance Form/ Superintendent Letter		Write YES, NO, or N/A next to each APPLICABLE item below. Items 1-4 are signatures found on Grant Assurance Form and item 5 is the separate Superintendent Support Letter.
1. Principal Signature?		ALL applications need Principal's signature. Signature is NOT electronic or typed. Name matches School Info Sheet.
2. Superintendent Signature?		Only School District applications must have Superintendent's signature. Signature is NOT electronic or typed. Name matches District Info Sheet. If applying entity is not a District, N/A/.
3. STEM Center Director Signature?		Only STEM Center applications must have STEM Center Director's signature. Signature is NOT electronic or typed. Name matches Cover Sheet. If applying entity is NOT a STEM Center, N/A.
4. Office of Sponsored Programs Signature?		Only STEM Center applications must have Office of Sponsored Programs' signature. Signature is NOT electronic or typed. Name matches Cover Sheet. If applying entity is NOT a STEM Center, N/A.
5. Superintendent Support Letter?		Only School District applications must have support letter from Superintendent. Signature is NOT electronic or typed. Name matches District Info Sheet. If applying entity is not a District, N/A/.
IF ALL REQUIRED ITEMS ABOVE ARE PRESENT AND COMPLETE, PROCEED TO SCORING		
POINT SCALE		
5 points / Excellent	The best answer. Question is answered completely and thoroughly, identifies need(s), and information is completely consistent with purpose of grant. All requested/required information is provided. Answer is well-written, easily understood, and discussion is convincing. Shows evidence of focus on appropriate Learning Standards, shows vertical alignment, and encourages more hands-on and inquiry-driven instruction. All information is provided within required space limits.	
4 points / Very Good	Answer is better than average. Complete information is given, but may not be completely thorough. Generally identifies needs, which are consistent with grant purpose. All information is evident, but may not be the clearest / most convincing.	
3 points / Adequate	Adequate answer to provide information and show that grant purpose is met. Question is answered with all, or at least most, requested/required information, but with just enough information to be adequately understandable.	
2 points / Fair	Fair: Effort is evident but does not adequately provide all requested/required information. May be confusing or incongruent. Convincing but does not have good consistency with grant purpose and may lack complete / thorough information.	

1 point / Poor	Poor: Application provided an answer, but answer is not understandable, does not relate to question(s) being asked, of very poor quality, has missing information, answers question(s) poorly, and/or is not consistent with purpose of grant.
0 points / Missing	Question was not answered or is completely blank. Information is not provided or is of such poor quality as to be considered not provided. Not consistent with grant's purpose.

SCORING ITEMS INPUTTED BY STEM COALITION

SCORING ITEM (Input from STEM Coalition)	Points Scored 1-5 SEE SCALE	Multiplier	Total Points Possible	TOTAL POINTS SCORED	Instructions / Questions to Ask
- School last received grant in (year)		1	5	0	Never = 5 pts 2018-2019 = 2 pts 2015 or earlier = 4 pts 2020-2021 = 1 pt 2016-2017 = 3 pts 2022-2024 = 0 pts
- District Free & Reduced Lunch Percentage (most recent ADE data, unless a brand new district)		0.6	3	0	100% = 5 pts 70-79.99% = 2 pts 90-99.99% = 4 pts 60-69.99% = 1 pt 80-89.99% = 3 pts Less than 60% = 0 pts
- School Letter Grade (most recent ADE data, unless a brand new school)		0.6	3	0	F = 5 pts B = 2 pts D = 4 pts A = 1 pt C = 3 pts NOTE: LETTER GRADE IS ALSO USED FOR TIE-BREAKER
- School Improvement Status (most recent ADE data, unless a brand new school)		0.6	3	0	Level 5/Intensive = 5 pts Level 2/Collaborative = 2 pts Level 4/Directed = 4 pts Level 1/General = 1pt Level 3/Coordinated = 3 pts Other = 0 pts
- Deductions		1	0	0	School Info Sheet Incomplete = up to -2 pts Support Letter Incomplete or Missing/Incorrect Info = up to -2 pts ENTER DEDUCTIONS AS NEGATIVE NUMBER IN "Points Scored" COLUMN (1 point deduction for each piece of missing information)

APPLICATION SCORING					
APPLICATION ITEM NAME	Points Scored 1-5 SEE SCALE	Multi-plier	Total Points Possible	TOTAL POINTS SCORED	Instructions / Questions to Ask
Cover Sheet		0.6	3	0	5 = all information provided. Subtract 1 point for each missing item, with 0 as lowest score.
District Info Sheet		0.6	3	0	5 = all information provided. Subtract 1 point for each missing item, with 0 as lowest score.
School Info Sheet					
- Participating Grades		1	5	0	(total of 5 possible points) all four grades = 4 pts three grades = 3 pts two grades = 2 pts one grade = 1 pts no grades indicated = 0 pts other grades indicated = ADD 1 pt
Total # 3rd-6th served:					Add total number of 3rd-6th graders to be served from School Sheet.
Total # students 3rd-6th:					Copy total number of 3rd-6th graders from School Sheet.
Total # ALL students:					Copy total number of students from School Sheet.
% of 3rd-6th grade students served:	#DIV/0!				Cell will automatically calculate.
- Percentage of 3rd-6th Grade Students Served (score based on percentage calculated above)		1	5	0	100% = 5 pts 90%-99.99% = 4 pts 75-89.99% = 3 pts 60-74.99% = 2 pts 45-59.99% = 1 pt Less than 45% = 0 pts

Timeline & Standards		1	5	0	<p>Did applicant include school name at top? Is there a name and/or title for each responsible party? Does each estimated date have a real date included? Do the estimated dates fit within the timeline (for instance, the earliest funds will be disbursed is September 20, 2024, and the final report is due June 30, 2025)?</p> <p>Are standards listed and relevant to request? Are enough standards listed to reflect intended use and how/what students will learn?</p>
Project Narrative NOTE: ONLY READ 1 PAGE OF NARRATIVE. If more than 1 page, score based only on page 1.		0.2	1	0	<p>Did applicant include school name at top? Yes = 5 in Column B (score = 1) No = 0 in Column B (score = 0)</p>
- 1. Give a general explanation of what you want to do and why.		3	15	0	<p>Did applicant provide an introduction and/or general explanation of what they want to do and why school wants/needs this?</p>
- 2. Explain why the equipment you will buy is needed and important, how it will support your STEM instruction, and how it aligns with the curriculum and instruction you plan to provide. Include any research-based learning strategies you will be using (inquiry-based, 5-E, student-centered learning, etc.).		3	15	0	<p>Is explanation clear and well-written? Did applicant explain why this specific equipment is needed, how it is important to STEM instruction? Did applicant explain how it aligns with the curriculum and instruction they plan to provided? Did applicant include an research-based learning strategies?</p> <p>If requesting durable equipment, should be scored more highly than consumable supplies and materials. NOTE: DURABLE VS. CONSUMABLE IS ALSO USED FOR TIE-BREAKER.</p>

- 3. Explain what professional development will be needed and how it will be provided.		1.2	6	0	Did applicant explain the PD needed for the purchased equipment? Did applicant explain how it will be provided (who will provide, how long it will take, how it will be done, etc.)?
- 4. Explain why you need this funding and why other funding is not available. If you are requesting to purchase consumable items, explain how you will sustain future funding.		3	15	0	Did applicant discuss the reason(s) they need this specific funding? Did they explain why they have not been able to secure other funding for these items? If requesting consumable items, did applicant discuss how they plan to pay for consumable items in the future?
Proposed Budget					
Proposed Expense Budget		1	5	0	Are items appropriate for project described? Do listed budget items provide adequate detail to understand items being requested? Are all items listed with a cost per item, quantity, and total for items? Is total correctly calculated? (Add up all budget lines yourself.)
PD Budget		0.8	4	0	Is PD budget included/complete? Is PD budget ≤ a max of 15% of TOTAL award? If PD is ≤ 10%, no need to itemize. If > 10%, must be itemized. If itemized, do items provide adequate detail to understand what is being requested? IF THEY INDICATE NO PD, score as 5.
Total Budget		0.8	4	0	Is budget correctly calculated? Are there mistakes and/or issues with adding, descriptions, etc.?
Total points possible:			100		
TOTAL POINTS SCORED:				0	
BUDGET DETAIL & EXPLANATION					
BUDGET ITEM	Requested Amount		Instructions		
Total Equipment Requested Amount			Copy from budget spreadsheet.		
Total PD Budget Requested Amount			Copy from budget spreadsheet.		
TOTAL REQUESTED AMOUNT			Copy from budget spreadsheet.		

TTL AMOUNT CHECK	\$ -	Should automatically calculate to see if applicant added correctly. If this is NOT zero, the total on application is not calculated correctly.
PD as % of total amount requested	#DIV/0!	If PD is ≤ 10%, no need to be itemized. If > 10%, must be itemized. If PD ≥ 15% of total, application will not be considered.
COST PER STUDENT (not scored; for informational purposes only)		
Total # 3rd-6th students served:	0	Should fill from worksheet above.
Total # 3rd-6th students:	0	Should fill from worksheet above.
Total # ALL students:	0	Should fill from worksheet above.
Total cost:	\$ -	Should automatically calculate.
Cost per student served 3rd-6th:	#DIV/0!	Should automatically calculate.
Cost per student ALL:	#DIV/0!	Should automatically calculate.
Additional Notes or Comments:		