Parents/Guardians,

Rain and cold weather? Finally here... maybe. Either way, please encourage your student to keep the weather changes in mind as we move forward this fall. Here are some items we wanted to share with you upcoming.

**STEM Spirit Week: Oct 28 – Nov 1**

Our fall Spirit Week is here! Spirit Week is designed and created by the House Committee to support the STEM tenets of collaboration, critical thinking and innovation. Each day will have a themed dress up opportunity. The House Committee has set the days as follows:

--Monday: House Spirit Day – Support your house and show school spirit. The day will also include an afternoon House Competition.
--Tuesday: Twin Day – Collaborate with one or more friends as twins.
--Wednesday: College & Career Day – Knowing what you want to do as a career and what you want to do after high school or college.
--Thursday: Character Day – Knowing a character, truly understanding the character and the story, and representing the character.
--Friday: Meme Day – Picking a meme or vine and finding a unique way to recreate or represent it.

We look forward to seeing the creativity in our students and staff this upcoming week!

**SLCs - Student Led Conferences: Nov 5-7**

At the STEM School we do not have traditional Parent Teacher Conferences where the parent comes in and a teacher talks about all the things your child is doing. Instead, our conferences are focused on the student leading a conference with parents and faculty members. The reason for doing so is because it is vitally important for the student to take ownership in their progress, be able to communicate what they have learned, and be able to communicate at what level of understanding/mastery they are performing. We will have conferences on the morning of November 5 and 6, then the evening of November 7. All parents are expected to participate.

**9th and 10th Grade Parents**
The student led conference will include your son/daughter, you, and a STEM faculty member. Please contact Amy Robinson, robinson_amy@hcde.org, to reserve your 20 minute time slot.
--Tuesday, November 5: 8am, 8:20am, 8:40am, 9am --Wednesday, November 6: 8am, 8:20am, 8:40am, 9am
--Thursday, November 7: 5pm, 5:20pm, 5:40pm, 6pm, 6:20pm, 6:40pm, 7pm, 7:20pm, 7:40pm

**11th and 12th Grade Parents**
The student led conference will include your son/daughter and you, and your son/daughter will take you from class to class. You can come anytime between 8am and 9:20am on Wednesday,
November 6 OR between 5pm and 8pm on Thursday, November 7. Teachers will be in each room as you move from one room to the next with the student leading the activity. This is a required student led activity for all 11th and 12th grade students. You do not need to sign up prior to coming.

**National Academy of Engineering Grand Challenges**

This past week a leading national expert from the NAE Grand Challenges visited our school. During that visit a team of our STEM teachers and administrators met with the expert to brainstorm implementation plans for the grand challenges into our curriculum. Some of the grand challenges include reverse-engineer the brain, secure cyberspace, provide access to clean water and enhance virtual reality. For information on all the grand challenges, please visit the following website: [http://www.engineeringchallenges.org/challenges.aspx](http://www.engineeringchallenges.org/challenges.aspx)

Our ultimate goal is to have our students learn about global issues that are impacting humanity and begin seeing themselves as people who can impact problems that matter. As for timeframe on implementation, 11th grade students already have begun having opportunities to work on PBLs that tie to grand challenge initiatives. Our 9th grade students will begin learning about the challenges in Tech Time this spring. And both 9th and 10th grade students will participate in a PBL during the 4th quarter this year around the grand challenges content.

**Website Highlight – Reference Guide of Terms**

Each month I will highlight a portion of the school website for you in these emails. We have a lot of information about our school that can be found at the link stemschool.hcde.org and this will provide the opportunity to emphasize a particular item for you.

This highlight is for the Reference Guide of Terms. The Reference Guide of Terms is a glossary of definitions for vocabulary unique to student and staff vernacular. For example, all the italicized words in the following student quote can be found in the Reference Guide of Terms - “We took a placement assessment last week that was not a summative so I could schedule myself in Buk, and will have it all figured it in my Google Drive by tomorrow.” The Reference Guide of Terms are posted on the website by clicking the “For Parents” tab and the link titled “Reference Guide of Terms”. Take a look at the list and feel free to speak the STEM language with your student.

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen
Principal