

August 26, 2022 – STEM School Info 08/26

Parents/Guardians,

Thank you to everyone for a tremendous start to the school year. We love our incredible staff, awesome student body and fantastic parents! Below are some items of note for you this week.

Parent Leadership Team (PLT) Committees

Thank you to our parents who participated in the Parent Leadership Team (PLT) meeting this past Monday evening! The PLT wanted to share some of the committees and efforts that will be taking place this year. If you have an interest in joining one of these committees, just let us know and we'll get your name added and connected. Also, *if you want to be on the PLT email list and were not at the Monday meeting, please email Dr. Donen (donen_t@hcde.org)*. In alphabetical order, the committees are:

Facebook Internal Parent Page: The Facebook page is for parents to share information; emails to parents are posted there; families will resell used (or unused) uniforms; carpool info is posted; it's a parent-support group; it is a private group; to join the group you must answer a security question; the current security question is "Who sends the majority of STEM emails to you?"; an email was sent out with information for parents who want to join.

HCS Parent Advisory Council: Advisory Councils provide important input and perspective to district leadership on initiatives, challenges, and decision-making. There is one representative from the STEM School who will be participating in monthly meetings throughout the school year.

Media Committee: This committee is working to update and create videos and multimedia for the school.

National Honor Society Committee: One-night job; the STEM counselor runs this event; members help coordinate the induction ceremony; the ceremony this year will include last year's inductees

as well as this year's; it is usually in late October or early November; this year's date is not determined yet.

Parent Connect Committee: This committee will be creating different ways for parents to connect, meet each other, and create opportunities to work together.

Silent Auction Committee: The auction is either in person or online (last year); it raises money for materials that kids use throughout the year (digital printing materials, etc.); all the money is used at the school's discretion; the auction ran virtual in January 2022 and raised \$6000+. Auction this year will be March 2023.

Staff Appreciation Committee: Brings meals monthly to the teachers; can be responsible for additional materials/supplies throughout the year; the team organizes meals or supply lists, creates a sign-up, the list is emailed to all parents for participation. New committee members are always welcome!

STEM Jam: The STEM Jam is a social event for STEM students that includes multiple activities. It is held in the evening and only for STEM students. Parents assist by volunteering to chaperone and organize snacks, drinks and food. STEM Jam will take place at the end of October.

STEM Jubilee Committee: This committee will support organizing and running the hospitality area for the STEM Jubilee on May 16 and 17. The STEM Jubilee introduces elementary school students to a variety of science, technology, engineering and math related concepts through hands-on activities with a mission to inspire STEM curiosity and interest.

Dress Code and Uniform Donations

As we navigate the early portion of the year and folks are waiting on dress code items to come in, we are being flexible with new students to the school (in particular, grade 9). In particular, if the grade 9 student only has one STEM shirt from orientation, the student can wear a solid color (blue, gray or white) shirt as they wait on other shirts to come in.

We received a supply of navy STEM t-shirts this week. Students interested in purchasing a shirt can see Ms. Amy in the front office. Cost is \$15. Here is a [picture of Mr. David](#) in the shirt!

If you are an upperclassmen family and have STEM uniform items which you no longer use, please consider donating these items to the school. Items can be dropped off at the front office. We are using items donated to help provide apparel to underclassmen.

Math Lab and ELA Writing Lab

This fall we will host Math Lab time and ELA Writing Lab time each week before or after school. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to get assistance on items they have for English classes as well as support for math homework, practice and summative assessment preparation. The lab days and times are as follows. All students are welcome to participate. No prior appointment is necessary.

ELA Writing Labs

- Each Monday afternoon from 4:30pm to 6:00pm in Ms. Bolus' room
- Each Wednesday morning from 8:15am to 9:15am in Mr. Kubisak's room

Math Labs

- Each Tuesday AND Thursday mornings from 8:15am to 9:15am in a math classroom (Jaynes and Williamson)

Labs started this past week.

School Pictures

Grade 9, 10, 11 – School Pictures

STEM Yearbook Picture Day for grade 9, 10, and 11 will be Thursday, September 1, from 9:30am to 1:00pm. Students will need to wear their STEM Dress Code for their yearbook pictures. Pictures will be taken inside the Riverside Conference Room this year using Lifetouch backgrounds.

Flyers were distributed this week to students with information about online picture ordering. Please remind your student to wear their favorite STEM dress code attire and a smile on Thursday, September 1!

Grade 12 - Senior Pictures

The deadline to submit senior portraits for the yearbook is Friday, January 13. For the STEM Yearbook, seniors can have their Senior Portraits taken by Prestige Photography, our official senior portrait photographer, OR seniors can use an outside professional photographer and send in their chosen photos. Prestige will send the portraits to the school automatically once the senior chooses the selected pose online, but portraits taken by an outside photographer will need to be sent to Ms. Bolus, bolus_lisa@hcde.org, as a digital file. Ms. Bolus will send a Google Form to seniors and families for submission in October.

Remember that the chosen Yearbook pose should be dressy casual (avoid hats, sunglasses, t-shirts, shorts). Seniors can also choose to use the formal tux/drape poses, but they are NOT required for the yearbook.

Prestige's Chattanooga studio is currently open for senior portraits, and students can book appointments online at prestigeportraits.com/studio with the STEM School Code: 8VHN9 or call 423-892-1332 x5 to schedule by phone. Be sure to schedule a session early as their calendar fills up fast.

Over-The-Counter Medication

Several parents and students have already contacted the school nurse about signing the form to have over-the-counter (OTC) medication given to their student at school. Last year was the first

year of the new policy and, over the course of the school year, an increasing number of students took advantage of being able to take OTC meds at school. It was especially helpful for students with frequent headaches, orthodontic pain, menstrual cramps, and stomach upset.

Over the summer, a significant change was made to the Hamilton County Schools policy. While OTC medications can still be administered at school, HCS will no longer supply the OTC medication. In order for your student to receive OTC medication at school, you will need to complete the Google form at this link: [**OTC Medication Permission Form**](#), AND send a supply of the medication to the school in a new, sealed bottle.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our school nurse, Ms. Scruggs (scruggs_larisa@hcde.org).

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen

Principal

August 19, 2022 – STEM School Info 08/19

Parents/Guardians,

First full week of school... check! Below are a couple of items to note as we continue to start the year.

Parent Leadership Team (PLT) Meeting – August 22

The first Parent Leadership Team (PLT) meeting will take place on Monday, August 22 at 6:30pm. The meeting is at the STEM School. This team is an opportunity for parents who want to lead parent initiatives. Mark your calendar to come and participate if you are interested. All parents are welcome to join this team!

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COVID-19 Procedural Update

Hamilton County Schools has updated many of their COVID-19 procedures this school year. For example, two of those changes include that schools are no longer completing contract tracing and there will no longer be an attendance code specific to COVID-19 for student absences. Here are some of the basic guidelines to follow for students in regard to COVID-19:

- If a student tests positive for COVID-19, please contact our school nurse, Ms. Scruggs (scruggs_larisa@hcde.org), to let us know. In addition, please stay home if you have a fever or are experiencing symptoms.
- Students should be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medications, before returning to school.
- The CDC recommends that individuals with a positive COVID-19 case isolate for a minimum of 5 days after onset and may return after they are without fever for at least 24 hours (without fever-

reducing medication), and show improvement in symptoms. It is recommended but not required to wear a mask for 5 days following the 5-day isolation period.

Please note that we will not be sending out email messages regarding COVID-19 cases this year. However, COVID-19 reported case counts will be displayed on the [**HCS COVID-19 Dashboard**](#) for all schools in HCS.

School Fees

Final reminder regarding school fees. The Hamilton County School Board sets the approved fee schedule each year for schools. The fees for the upcoming school year for STEM are a \$40 magnet programming fee (all grades) and a \$20 art, science and technology fee (grades 9 and 10). These fees are used to help support our STEM initiatives and activities at the school, and help pay for consumables needed each year. Fees can be paid [online](#).

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen
Principal

August 12, 2022 – STEM School Info 08/12

Parents/Guardians,

Happy Friday! We have thoroughly enjoyed seeing our students this week! This is a tremendous group of students and we look forward to having a fantastic year with them. Below are some items of note for you.

1st Day of Scheduled Courses – August 15

This upcoming Monday is a big day for the Chattanooga State campus and our STEM students. Monday is the first day of college classes on campus. The campus will be buzzing with activity that day with college instructors and college students back on campus. Please keep this in mind as you travel to and from school that day. Traffic will be heavier than normal across the campus.

Monday is also the first day where all STEM students will begin their class schedules. Grade 9 and 10 students will meet from 9:30am to 4:30pm each day. Grade 11 and 12 students will follow their individualized schedules and times.

Grade 9

--Fall Semester: Math Honors (Algebra I, Geometry, or higher), English I Honors, Physical World Concepts Honors, World History and Geography Honors, Art Honors, Tech Time, and PBL.

--Tech Time: Students will complete rotations in Engineering, Computer Science, Digital Fabrication, and Personal Development throughout the first semester.

--PBL: Students work in teams on cross-curricular projects each quarter. The first quarter project, using analog fabrication to design and create a foosball machine, will kick off this upcoming week.

--Spanish: Grade 9 students will take Spanish in the spring semester.

Grade 10

--Fall Semester: Math Honors (Geometry, Algebra II, or higher), English II Honors, Chemistry Honors, Spanish I or II Honors, Personal Finance, Tech Time, and PBL.

--Tech Time: Students will complete rotations in Engineering, Computer Science, Digital Fabrication, and Personal Development throughout the first semester.

--PBL: Students work in teams on cross-curricular projects each quarter. The first quarter project, using digital fabrication to reimagine and innovate a piece of art at the Hunter Museum, will kick off this upcoming Wednesday at the Hunter Museum.

--Coding 1: Students that are passionate about computer science will have the opportunity to add Coding 1 in the fall. In order to do so, these students will complete Personal Finance outside the school day as an independent study course.

--US History: Grade 10 students will take US History in the spring semester and complete a challenge exam that provides the opportunity to earn college credit for the course through Chattanooga State.

Grade 11 and 12

--Fall Semester: All students have varied schedules and courses. Each student has developed an individualized high school and college course plan. Finalized schedules are in the student's Google Calendar. Each student's parent/guardian will also receive an email with the Google Calendar link to view the schedule.

--STEM III: All grade 11 students are enrolled in STEM III. Kickoffs for the varied projects are taking place starting next week. Reminder – transportation to and from kickoffs is not provided by the school.

--STEM IV: All grade 12 students are enrolled in STEM IV. Teams have been formed and will begin the Stanford D'School process for creating business proposals. Inventanooga, the entrepreneurship pitch competition, will take place in December where the senior teams will pitch their business proposals.

--College Course Fees: Students MUST check their Chattanooga State accounts to view any balances they have for college courses. Any fees are due to Chattanooga State through their bursar's office.

--If you have questions about schedule or college items after speaking with your student, you can connect with our school counselor, Ms. Millard (millard_anna@hcede.org), for support.

Dual Enrollment Grant Expansion

The **Dual Enrollment Grant (DEG)** expansion recently passed by the Tennessee state legislature will now provide more funds so STEM students can take more classes under the grant. Chattanooga State Community College dual enrollment students have enjoyed the benefits of the DEG for several years. With the expansion, high school students can now receive **five tuition-free dual enrollment classes**. For more information, read [**this article**](#) posted on the Chattanooga State website.

Attendance

We ask that you make every effort to assure your grade 9 and 10 student arrives to school before 9:30am each school day. After that time, your student must sign in at the front office. Students in all grade levels are allowed three(3) parent-excused absences and five(5) unexcused absences each school year, after which action is taken and STEM School placement is in jeopardy for the following year. In addition, after these absences have been used, professional documentation is required to excuse an absence. For more information on what documentation is required, you can look under "Attendance" in our [**Student Handbook**](#). For questions about attendance and/or contacting STEM regarding student absences, please connect with our registrar Ms.

Pearson, pearson_g@hcde.org.

Pick Up and Drop Off

In the morning and afternoon, pick up and drop off for student car riders happens in the Wacker/CETAS parking lot. Please click on [this map](#) of the STEM Traffic Pattern for drop off. The lot next to the STEM School entrance is only for staff, visitors, and buses during the times of 9:00am-9:35am and 4:00pm-4:45pm. Please be mindful of this procedure.

As for STEM student drivers, the Wacker/CETAS parking lot is also where these students are to park. All STEM drivers must get a Chattanooga State parking pass, or they may be ticketed starting August 15. Chattanooga State police also patrol this lot often and will ticket any drivers who speed. The speed limit in the lot is 15 mph.

For parents that want to pick up students early from school, please note there is a 4:15pm cutoff. In order to maintain appropriate dismissal procedures, parents must arrive in the front office before 4:15pm in order to dismiss any student early from school.

The STEM School building hours are from 9am to 5pm. The building may be open prior to 9am and beyond 5pm, but we cannot guarantee that is the case on any given day. As for the Chattanooga State campus, the library is a popular spot for STEM School students to use before 9am and after 5pm.

Bus Routes

STEM bus routes have been established by the Hamilton County Schools transportation department. Here is a [**link to the routes**](#) (also will be posted online on our school website). Please note that every year, these times are the best estimates made by the transportation department. Our buses are on the last tier of routes, so we may have buses that run late. If transportation makes a permanent change in times for a route, we will update those on our website. We will also provide students with information if transportation makes a permanent change that impacts them and students will have a new sheet to share with their parent.

Parent Leadership Team (PLT) Meeting – August 22

The first Parent Leadership Team (PLT) meeting will take place on Monday, August 22 at 6:30pm. This team is an opportunity for parents who want to lead parent initiatives. Mark your calendar to come and participate if you are interested. All parents are welcome to join this team!

School Lunch Changes in 2022-23

All students in Hamilton County Schools temporarily received free meals for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. For the 2022-23 school year, you must apply for free or reduced meal benefits. School Nutrition has asked that you apply as soon as possible as it will take some time to process each application. Families may [**submit free/reduced meal applications**](#) for meal benefits and proof of hardship for other programs such as internet or summer camps. School Nutrition will continue to process those and provide proof of eligibility.

For additional information regarding School Nutrition and benefits, please visit the HCS [**School Nutrition website**](#).

School Fees, Supply List and Chromebooks

The Hamilton County School Board sets the approved fee schedule each year for schools. The fees for the upcoming school year for STEM are a \$40 magnet programming fee (all grades) and a \$20 art, science and technology fee (grades 9 and 10). These fees are used to help support our STEM initiatives and activities at the school, and help pay for consumables needed each year. Fees can be paid [online](#) at this time.

The supply list for STEM students includes 500 sheets of copy paper (1 ream), pencils (pack of 25), and headphones. The copy paper and pencils should be dropped off in the front office during the first week of school. The headphones are for each student to keep with him/her for personal use.

Please note that all students are provided a Chromebook for use throughout the school year.

Chromebooks will be distributed during the first days of school.

Uniforms

Students are expected to be in required [STEM dress code](#) starting the first day of school. For new students to STEM (specifically grade 9 students), there will be opportunities to order additional STEM garments during the first few weeks of school. If a new student does not have a STEM shirt to start the year, a white or blue shirt with no pictures or writing is permitted for the first portion of the year. Uniform ordering information can be found on our school website at [this link](#).

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen
Principal

August 5, 2022 – STEM School Info 08/05

Parents/Guardians,

Happy Friday! As the school years progresses, we plan to send STEM Info emails each Friday this year. They will normally be fairly brief with some items of note for you. Today's focus is registration. If you have not completed the online registration for STEM yet, please do so by the end of today! We also have included other items of note below as we head into next week and the first day of school for students.

Student Registration – TO DO

Please complete today, if you have not already done so

Hamilton County Schools official registration day is Friday, August 5. However, we do not hold an "in-person" registration at the STEM School. All registration items for both Hamilton County Schools and STEM School Chattanooga may be completed online. All forms are included in the links below, and electronic signatures are used so you can complete the registration from any device with internet access. Please note, you must complete **both**, the STEM School Registration and the PowerSchool Registration for Hamilton County Schools.

Registration STEP #1

All STEM School Chattanooga parents must complete a STEM specific registration form for their student. Everyone needs to complete the following this week: [STEM School Registration](#)

Registration STEP #2

In addition to the STEM School registration, please complete either the returning student OR new student registration below.

---Returning Hamilton County Schools Student---

If your child attended a Hamilton County school in 2021-2022 and will be attending STEM School Chattanooga this school year, your child will need to be enrolled as a returning student. Please log

into your PowerSchool Parent Portal to check your student's information and make sure it is correct to begin the new school year. If you have not already done so, here is the [Parent Portal](#).

For instructions about the Parent Portal, you may click[here](#). If you have trouble logging in or need your password reset, please email Amy Robinson atrobinson_amy@hcde.org.

---New to Hamilton County Schools Student---

If your student did not attend a Hamilton County school in 2021-2022, you will need to register as a new student by creating a PowerSchool Parent Portal account and completing the Hamilton County Schools registration. Please go to the [HCS Registration Page](#) and click on the “New Student 22-23 Registration” icon.

Rising Grade 9 Orientation – August 8

An additional day of orientation activities takes place for grade 9 students. On Monday, August 8 from 9:30am to 1:00pm, we will be hosting the incoming grade 9 students. This half day orientation activity session is important for grade 9 students to connect together, learn from upperclassmen leaders, and take their first step into their STEM house (will it be Staupers, Tesla, Einstein or Mirzakhani?). All grade 9 students should plan to attend.

1st Day of School – August 10

The first day of school for students is Wednesday, August 10. All students in all grades (9-12) are to report by 9:30am. The school day goes from 9:30am to 4:30pm each day. Students in each grade will have three full days of orientation activities on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. These days are vital to starting the school year well and getting everyone acclimated to the expectations for the upcoming year. Upperclassmen in grades 11 and 12 will begin their college type schedules on Monday, August 15.

Bus Routes

STEM bus routes have been established by the Hamilton County Schools transportation department. Here is a [link to the routes](#) (also will be posted online on our school website). Please note that every year, these times are the best estimates made by the transportation department. Our buses are on the last tier of routes, so we may have buses that run late, especially during the first week of school. If transportation makes changes in times and/or routes, we will update those on our website. We will also provide students with information if transportation makes a change that impacts them and students will have a new sheet to share with their parent.

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For additional information regarding School Nutrition and benefits, please visit the HCS [School Nutrition website](#).

Chromebook Insurance

Hamilton County Schools has partnered with Smartech Insurance to provide device insurance for families at \$15 per Chromebook per year. The device insurance is not required but recommended by

the district IT team. The coverage includes malfunctions, defects, accidental damage, liquid damage, batteries & power issues, and loss & theft. If you are interested in this optional insurance, please click the [link for the flyer](#) for information on enrolling your device in the program.

School Fees, Supply List and Chromebooks

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Please note that all students are provided a Chromebook for use throughout the school year. Chromebooks will be distributed during the first days of school.

Uniforms

Students are expected to be in required [STEM dress code](#) starting the first day of school. For new students to STEM (specifically grade 9 students), there will be opportunities to order additional STEM garments during the first few weeks of school. If a new student does not have a STEM shirt to start the year, a white or blue shirt with no pictures or writing is permitted for the first few days. Uniform ordering information can be found on our school website at [this link](#).

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen
Principal

August 2, 2022 – STEM School Info 08/02

Parents/Guardians,

August is here! We are super excited to get the school year started and seeing all of the students!!!
Here are some items to note as we approach the first day of school.

Student Registration – TO DO

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Tennessee Teacher of the Year Finalist – Kristin Burrus

Congratulations to Ms. Burrus for being selected as one of nine finalists for the Tennessee Teacher of the Year! The winner will be announced on Thursday night, August 25 at the 2022 Excellence in Education Celebration in Nashville. Ms. Burrus has led our efforts in planning, developing, and implementing the Global Center for Digital Innovation, the first ever K-14 digital fabrication and entrepreneurship facility in the world. Go Ms. Burrus!

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Dr. Tony Donen
Principal