

January 28, 2022 – STEM School Info 01/28

Parents/Guardians,

As we finish January, here are some items of note for you.

COVID Update

Thank you for everyone's patience as we continue to navigate COVID-19 and its impact on schooling. In particular, we know it is frustrating that recommendations and requirements by the state, local agencies and HCS change quickly and often. Please know we are doing our best here to try and maintain the best learning environment we can as items change, and as cases rise and fall.

As a reminder, for those looking for at home COVID test kits, the Postal Service is delivering one shipment of 4 COVID tests per residential address. Enter your name, address and email at www.usps.com/covidtest to request a shipment.

Please continue to monitor your student. Our recommendation is to act as if your student will come in contact with someone who has COVID-19. Talk with your student each day about how they are feeling. In particular, find out if your student is having any symptoms that are COVID-19 related: fever or chills, shortness of breath, uncommon fatigue, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

FIRST STEP: If your student is having symptoms, please keep them home and get them tested for COVID-19 before sending them to school.

NEXT STEP: If your student is having symptoms, please contact our school nurse, Lara Scruggs at 423-531-6270 or scruggs_larisa@hcde.org, to discuss the symptoms prior to sending your student to school.

Silent Auction Ends Today – January 28

Thank you to our amazing STEM Parent Leadership Team and Silent Auction Committee. Special thank you to Julie Gersch, the chairperson for the event, for leading the auction efforts. If you have not already checked out the auction items, you can visit the following website to view the auction: [STEM School Online Auction](#). Don't miss out to support the school and win some fun items for you and your family. The auction closes at 8pm tonight!!!

National Honor Society Induction Ceremony

We continue to tentatively schedule our long-awaited National Honor Society Induction Ceremony with Chattanooga State for February 15. We have two new member classes of inductees, 2020 and 2021; and we hope to honor them on February 15 at 6:00pm in the Bond Auditorium at Chattanooga State. New members will receive specific instructions in the upcoming weeks.

National Honor Society candidates are eligible after their freshman year with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. The National Honor Society creates enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulates a desire to render service, promotes leadership and develops character. As Covid restrictions begin to lift, we are looking forward to serving our community once again!

STEM General and Phase 2 General

Every student at STEM is part of a class in Canvas named STEM General, as well as a Canvas class for their grade level specific information (9th Grade General, 10th Grade General, or Phase 2 General for grades 11 and 12). School wide announcements are posted in these classes for students to view. The announcements also include opportunities for students beyond our school building. This is the location for students to view opportunities and get involved in items beyond their classes. For example, here are a few recent posts.

STEM General

-GenCyber Residential Student Camp at Tennessee Tech: A week long summer experience at TN Tech focused on the world of cybersecurity. Includes information about camp and registration details.

-Empower Your Future, Careers and Scholarships in Finance and Economics: A free forum for students interested in careers and scholarships in Finance and Economics at UTC.

-Spring Sports: Baseball, Softball and Soccer – Two posts with information about workouts and tryouts for partnership sport opportunities with CSAS.

Phase 2 General

-4k Microscope Grad Assistant: Application for the next 4K Microscope Team.

-UTC MLK Day Virtual Event: Information about participating in UTC's Virtual Discussion with Cornel West, Professor Emeritus at Princeton University, on MLK legacy and cultural topics.

-STEP UP Opportunity for Job Training and Internships: Information about STEP-UP program to gain support in job training and summer internship in Chattanooga region.

Email Updates – Posted on Website

These email updates are posted on the STEM School Chattanooga website by clicking the “Updates” tab. Not only will the current update be viewable, but you can look back through updates previously sent. We also share these updates in STEM General for the students in Canvas.

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen

Principal

January 21, 2022 – STEM School Info 01/21

Parents/Guardians,

It has certainly been an interesting start to the second semester. We appreciate everyone's patience and adaptability as we facilitate school this spring. Below are some items of note for you.

COVID Update

With the surge in COVID cases, this week has certainly been a challenge with school. The greatest challenge came when staff were impacted that prevented us from holding in person classes for underclassmen. At this time we are pleased to communicate that almost all staff will be back starting Monday, so in person learning for all grade levels is back in place on Monday, January 24.

For those looking for at home COVID test kits, the Postal Service is delivering one shipment of 4 COVID tests per residential address. Enter your name, address and email at www.usps.com/covidtest to request a shipment.

Please continue to monitor your student throughout this surge in COVID-19. Our recommendation is to act as if your student will come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 at some point. Talk with you student each day about how they are feeling. In particular, find out if your student is having any symptoms that are COVID-19 related: fever or chills, shortness of breath, uncommon fatigue, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

FIRST STEP: If your student is having symptoms, please keep them home and get them tested for COVID-19 before sending them to school.

NEXT STEP: If your student is having symptoms, please contact our school nurse, Lara Scruggs at 423-531-6270 or scruggs_larisa@hcde.org, to discuss the symptoms prior to sending your student to school.

Silent Auction Starts January 23 – Virtual

The STEM Parent Leadership Team Silent Auction starts on Sunday, January 23! The auction is online and will conclude on Friday, January 28 at 8:00pm. You can visit the following website to

view the auction: [STEM School Online Auction](#). Please note there is nothing to see until the auction begins on January 23 at 8:00am. Thank you to everyone who donated items for the auction and keep a lookout for more emails about the auction throughout the next week!

STEM Showcase

With this surge in COVID, we have postponed the in-person STEM Showcase scheduled for January 28 for our STEM families. Though we are unable to host the STEM Showcase right now, we are an optimistic bunch and are looking at potential dates in March. As we get closer to that timeframe, we will let you know about date and time.

National Honor Society Induction Ceremony

Speaking about being optimistic, we have tentatively scheduled our long-awaited National Honor Society Induction Ceremony with Chattanooga State. We have two new member classes of inductees, 2020 and 2021; and we hope to honor them on February 15 at 6:00pm in the Bond Auditorium at Chattanooga State. New members will receive specific instructions in the upcoming weeks.

National Honor Society candidates are eligible after their freshman year with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. The National Honor Society creates enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulates a desire to render service, promotes leadership and develops character. As Covid restrictions begin to lift, we are looking forward to serving our community once again!

4K Grad Assistant Application

The time has come for juniors to apply for the 4K Grad Assistant positions for 2022-23. Information about the origin of the 4K Microscope work can be found [here on the school website](#). Interested juniors will need to complete the online [application](#) in order to be considered for a 4K Grad Assistant. The application is viewable to students. The application is due Friday, February 4 by 11:59pm. The team choosing grad assistants will be looking at the applications as they roll in. Late

applications will not be considered. The original post for this opportunity is in the Canvas course: Phase 2 General. This Canvas course is where announcements are posted for juniors and seniors consistently throughout the year.

School Closings – Inclement Weather

Please note that the STEM School is part of Hamilton County Schools and is closed for inclement weather when Hamilton County Schools is closed. However, students that have Chattanooga State or UTC college courses are expected to attend their college courses if those campuses remain open. All upperclassmen should be on the TigerAlert system for Chattanooga State that will allow them to receive texts from Chattanooga State regarding any changes in their regular schedule of classes. Information on TigerAlert can be found at <https://tigerpedia.chattanoogaastate.edu/techhelp/faq/99866>. Students with college classes and transportation issues due to inclement weather should correspond by email with their college instructor (prior to class time).

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Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen

Principal

January 14, 2022 – STEM School Info 01/14

Parents/Guardians,

It was great to connect back with students for the entire week! I especially enjoyed seeing our upperclassmen each day as we completed our UP (enrichment) days prior to the start of their college type schedules next week. Below are some items of note as this week concludes.

COVID Update

The start of this semester has certainly been one of the tougher stretches for COVID infections. We have sent an email each day this week with information about new COVID positive individuals with STEM. This surge has impacted both students and staff, and we are working our best to continue moving forward even during times where we are short staff. Thank you to everyone for their patience as we navigate this surge.

Please note there have been 18 positive cases for individuals with STEM since we returned this semester. That is the most in any timeframe we have experienced the past two years. The good news is that we do not have any information that any of the cases had significant medical issues.

At this time, we are reliant on each of you to be vigilant in monitoring your student throughout this surge in COVID-19. Our recommendation is to act as if your student will come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 at some point over the next few weeks. Talk with your student each day about how they are feeling. In particular, find out if your student is having any symptoms that are COVID-19 related: fever or chills, shortness of breath, uncommon fatigue, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

FIRST STEP: If your student is having symptoms, please keep them home and get them tested for COVID-19 before sending them to school.

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Grade 11 and 12 Schedules – Starts Tuesday, January 18

Juniors and seniors begin their college type schedules this upcoming Tuesday, January 18. All schedules should be complete at this time, minus students who may have been out due to medical reasons. Schedules are posted in the student's Google calendar. Any students or parents with questions and/or concerns should contact Ms. Millard, millard_anna@hcde.org, by the end of the day on Tuesday.

STEM Showcase – January 28 from 5:30pm to 7:00pm

Reminder to mark your calendars for the evening of Friday, January 28. We will be hosting our in-person STEM Showcase evening. The STEM Showcase will feature student displays of work from grade 9 through grade 12. This is an excellent way to see the school and the work progression expected of students as they mature over four years. The showcase will include the CETAS, Wacker and STEM buildings. Guests will enter through the entrance to the GCDI in the main parking lot for CETAS. Guests will have an opportunity to view Silent Auction items, see the GCDI (Global Center for Digital Innovation), see STEM IV Business Plans developed by seniors in the CETAS hallway, STEM III Community and Business Partnership Projects by juniors in Wacker, and varied project work by sophomores and freshmen in the STEM building. All students are expected to attend and participate that evening as part of their STEM School requirement. Expectation for parents and guests: walk the hallways and see what our students are doing! See you on Friday, January 28 between 5:30pm and 7:00pm!

Silent Auction Information (from STEM Parent Leadership Team)

Our 4th annual STEM Showcase is combined with the finale of our fabulous Silent Auction! At the conclusion of this exciting in-person event, our week-long Virtual Silent Auction will come to an end, allowing families with winning bids to take home their items.

Because the auction raises funds to support STEM initiatives that all students benefit from, we ask each and every STEM family to secure one auction-able donation in the form of gift certificates,

merchandise, or professional services to be turned in to the school office by Thursday, January 20. What should you donate? Gift cards, certificates for services/experiences, or merchandise of any kind will do nicely. Be creative. Have fun. All donated items should be turned in to the school office as soon as feasible.

School Closings – Inclement Weather

Please note that the STEM School is part of Hamilton County Schools and is closed for inclement weather when Hamilton County Schools is closed. However, upperclassmen that have Chattanooga State or UTC college courses are expected to attend their college courses if those campuses remain open. All upperclassmen should be on the TigerAlert system for Chattanooga State that will allow them to receive texts from Chattanooga State regarding any changes in their regular schedule of classes. Information on TigerAlert can be found at <https://tigerpedia.chattanoogastate.edu/techhelp/faq/99866>.

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Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen
Principal

January 7, 2022 – STEM School Info 01/07

Parents/Guardians,

We hope you had a wonderful holiday break with your family. Even though as we start back from the holiday break, we are having to navigate inclement weather and another COVID surge, it is exciting to connect back with our students and dive into our STEM work. Below are some items for you as we start the semester.

COVID Update

As you are aware, there is a current surge in COVID cases. For a look at the caseload reported locally, a quick Google search can provide you with current case counts, seven-day averages and other statistics. For example, click the [link here](#). Please note that protocols from the state remain the same to comply with the [Tennessee State COVID-19 Omnibus Bill](#). Procedures and recommendations, however, will continue to change and be updated as has been the case since March 2020. The good news is that our school nurse, Ms. Scruggs, has continuously stayed on top of current procedures and recommendations, and is your resource here at STEM on what is current as of today.

A Couple of Recent Items:

--A student who has a fever is not allowed to be at school. In addition, the student must be 48 hours fever-free without the use of fever reducing medication in order to return to school.

--If your student is experiencing any cold/flu/covid-like symptoms, please keep them home and get them tested for Covid before sending them to school. Please do not send students to school if they have any symptoms.

--If a student is symptomatic and then masks symptoms with Tylenol, Advil, etc., they are still contagious. Sending symptomatic students to school could impact the health and well-being of the entire school community.

--Please continue to email our nurse if your student receives a positive Covid test.

Simple Rule of Thumb:

--If your student is displaying any COVID symptoms of illness, please contact our school nurse, Lara Scruggs, at 423-531-6270 or scruggs_larisa@hcde.org, to discuss the symptoms prior to sending your student to school. Ms. Scruggs will work with you to provide the most up-to-date recommendation and procedure for your student.

Vaccines:

--As we have learned, the vaccine does not provide 100% protection from contracting COVID. However, vaccine data has shown positive results in reducing COVID spread and hospitalizations. For example, the state of Washington shares up-to-date information on vaccines. Here is a link to their report: [COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by Vaccination Status](#). Two items of note in the report include that unvaccinated 12-34 year olds are two times more likely to get COVID-19 compared to vaccinated 12-34 year olds, and 10 times more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 compared to vaccinated 12-34 year olds.

Grade 11 and 12 Schedules

At this time juniors and seniors have access to their academic schedules in Google calendars for the spring semester. These calendars will begin on Tuesday, January 18. Juniors and seniors continue to report to STEM from 9:30am to 4:30pm every day for the week of January 10-14.

Grade 12: The schedule in Google calendar is complete for seniors. If there are items missing, questions, etc., seniors should meet with Ms. Millard during the week of January 10-14 to make corrections and adjustments.

Grade 11: The schedule in Google calendar is missing STEM III course times. Juniors will meet with their STEM III teams and work with Mr. Vanzant to select STEM III meeting times. These will be added to the Google calendar to complete the schedule. For any other items missing, questions, etc., juniors should meet with Ms. Millard during the week of January 10-14 to make corrections and adjustments.

STEM Showcase – January 28

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Silent Auction Information (from STEM Parent Leadership Team)

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School Culture and Diversity Committee

A new committee is being established as we start the second semester of our school year - the School Culture and Diversity Committee. This committee is part of the senate focused on leading efforts to promote an inclusive learning environment for all students. The committee will work to address concerns, issues, and disparities that are identified and will continue to work on improving processes implemented in the school. The committee will have 10 students and 3 teachers selected by the senate through an application process. The application for students and faculty to be considered for the committee is due by Friday, January 14. We are looking forward to the efforts that will be led by this leadership committee to have an ongoing presence in positively impacting school culture.

Graduation Date, Time and Location – May 19

The Class of 2022 will be graduating on Thursday, May 19 at 7pm in Memorial Auditorium. Seniors met with Balfour this week to work on their graduation item needs – caps, gowns, cords, announcements, etc.. Balfour will return on January 19 to pick up order forms and payments from the seniors. Parents with questions should connect with Ms. Pearson, pearson_g@hcde.org, our graduation coordinator.

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Dr. Tony Donen
Principal