

Frequently Asked STEM Questions

(*collection of FAQ's from various STEM education centers)

Is the STEM Academy right for me?

YOU are the only person who can answer this question.

Are you looking for a program that is:

- 1) Academically rigorous,
- 2) Going to fuel your desire to learn and challenge yourself
- 3) Focused on building and making real world connections
- 4) Designed to help you to become a better researcher/ create your own internship and have an opportunity to gain hands on experience

If you said “**YES!**” to all of the above, we strongly encourage YOU and your family to attend our STEM Academy information night. If you still cannot decide, you can email any member of the STEM Academy:

- Science:
 - Science Chair, STEM Biomedical Pathway: Dr. Ginny Berkemeier
 - E-mail: ginny.berkemeier@cobbk12.org
- Math:
 - Math Chair and STEM Accelerated Science/Math Pathway: Mr. Don Slater
 - E-mail: don.slater@cobbk12.org
 - Accelerated Science/Math Pathway: Ms. Debbie Poss
 - E-mail: <mailto:deborah.poss@cobbk12.org>
- Technology and Engineering:
 - STEM Engineering Pathway: Coach Keelan Seabolt
 - E-mail: keelan.seabolt@cobbk12.org
 - Robotics and STEM Engineering Pathway: Mr. Ward Mitchell
 - E-mail: ward.mitchell@cobbk12.org

What if all pathways hold interest for me?

You will need to let us know which holds the **most interest**. You may choose to apply for all 3 but the selection committee will independently consider your application in each pathway. You must also meet all pre-requisite requirements for the departments and courses to be eligible for any particular pathway.

Can I move from one pathway to another?

The STEM committee will decide on this request on a case by case scenario. Please understand that teacher allotments do not allow for flexibility once courses are established. So please make your considerations carefully, and submit an application if you are **genuinely serious** about the pathway. However, students may only enter the Biomedical pathway as a freshman since the courses must be taken in sequence with NO exceptions.

Will I have any flexibility in choosing my courses?

You will have a prescribed course of study in your pathway and will be registered for specific courses required for high school graduation that are aligned with the STEM program. These courses will include instruction focused on STEM, research, design and problem solving. You will be required to take the designated STEM courses based on your pathway each year.

What if I am a member of the band, chorus or the orchestra?

You will have limited flexibility as these music programs already occupy an elective in your schedule. You will not be able to substitute any of the cohort STEM courses which limit scheduling ability. There are several options available (*based on availability of the course and the circumstance*) for courses that might not fit in your schedule due to these activities and STEM:

- 1) Zero period (tuition course)
- 2) LHS Summer Academy/ other available Cobb Summer School Program (tuition course)
- 3) Online Cobb Virtual (tuition course)

You will be able to speak with the STEM Guidance Counselor or member of the STEM faculty for advisement with regard to your specific course schedule.

What if my grades fall below the expectations for LHS STEM Academy, is there a probation period?

The LHS STEM Academy is a rigorous pathway and students are expected to excel in their courses. STEM Academy students' grades will constantly be monitored and at the end of a semester a student may be placed on probation, OR dropped to a lower level class and removed from the program. Please make your considerations carefully, and submit an application only if you are genuinely serious about the STEM pathways offered. Keep in mind that many of the required courses, such as AP[®] and Project Lead the Way are college level courses and the course guidelines are set to be equivalent to a college level course.

What if I decide to drop out of the LHS STEM Academy?

By recommendation of the STEM faculty and/or the student's STEM Guidance Counselor, or in extreme cases in consultation with the parents and teachers, students may be released from the STEM Academy. Special sections of STEM courses are hand scheduled for students to obtain the best possible setting for success. Teacher allotments do not allow for flexibility once courses are established. So please make your considerations carefully, and submit an application if you are genuinely serious about your major.

If I don't apply now, can I apply in my sophomore or junior year?

No. Applications are taken for entering freshmen only.

What's in it for me?

1. Hard, challenging work toward a STEM Academy endorsement
2. The chance to learn through a project-based curriculum that focuses on the connections between Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
3. Expanded opportunities for authentic learning experiences through capstone project and internships
4. A unique opportunity to write about your experience and draw attention to your high school transcript in competition for college admissions
5. Gain college course credits with participating colleges through AP[®] and Project Lead the Way

Project Lead the Way: www.pltw.org

AP[®]: Advanced Placement College Board: <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/>