

STEM CAUCUS NEWS

The Congressional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education (STEM Ed) Caucus News is a collection of the major news stories, events, and legislation in STEM policy. The Congressional STEM Ed Caucus is co-chaired by Congressmen Dan Lipinski and Roscoe Bartlett. If your Member is interested in joining the Caucus, or would like to be removed from the Caucus distribution list please e-mail Jim Curry Jim.Curry@mail.house.gov (Lipinski) or Faye Powers Faye.Powers@mail.house.gov (Bartlett).

In the News...

Out-of-School Time Drawing Girls Into STEM

January 5, 2012

A group of high school girls listen eagerly for their mission: Use the tools on hand to design a self-propelled boat that can cross water with 50 passengers on board. The passengers: pennies. The tools: pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks, and balloons. The water: an inflatable kiddie pool. It's another engineering "design challenge" at Techbridge, an after-school program for girls that encourages interest in STEM—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—subjects. Close to 30 girls are here this day at Arroyo High School, one of 21 Techbridge sites in California's Bay Area that serve more than 600 elementary and secondary girls in total, close to 90 percent of them minority students.

Congressman Proposes STEM Education Office

January 20, 2012

Representative Honda has introduced the STEM Education Innovation Act of 2011 in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill will create an Office of STEM Education in the Department of Education headed by an assistant secretary of STEM education, who will coordinate the department's K-12 and higher education STEM efforts. The assistant secretary will partner with stakeholders, researchers, and businesses in STEM-related fields to help forge a competitive American workforce. The bill will also support a state consortia on STEM education to shape STEM best practices, in addition to developing strategies to increase participation of underrepresented communities in STEM disciplines. The third component of the bill is the Education Innovation Project, which will provide grant funding to outside entities—including for-profit companies, foundations, nonprofits, and institutions of higher learning—to develop educational technology innovations that will unleash the power of STEM education.

STEM Education Gets Boost from New Round of Grants

January 20, 2012

Efforts to improve STEM education are getting a boost from several recent announcements, including grants from the National Science Foundation and the Gates Foundation to drive research and development, as well as a new initiative that will send a lucky batch of science teachers down to Costa Rica for an eco-expedition.

[Obama Pushes STEM in State of the Union](#)

January 25, 2012

President Obama once again put the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) crisis front and center in his State of the Union address. "Think about the America within our reach: A country that leads the world in educating its people. An America that attracts a new generation of high-tech manufacturing and high-paying jobs," he said. Last year, Obama said America needed to train 100,000 STEM teachers over the next 10 years. He took a different tack last night, asking Congress to pass legislation that would retrain 2 million out-of-work Americans with skills they need to take high-tech jobs.

[GAO: Overlap in STEM Programs, But 'Not Necessarily Duplication'](#)

January 26, 2012

At a time when many federal lawmakers are looking to rein in spending and prioritize programs, the Government Accountability Office has just issued a report on the federal efforts to improve STEM education that are scattered across 13 agencies. It finds that while most of the programs identified "overlapped to some degree with at least one other program," this did not automatically translate into redundancy.

[Bringing STEM Into Focus](#)

January 30, 2012

What do we intend when using the acronym STEM? It literally stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, but what does it mean? Arguably, attempts to provide a meaningful response to these questions have not stuck. It is not for lack of trying, however. State education agencies, national membership organizations, advocacy groups, and state policymakers have been seeking definitions for STEM for quite some time, and with good reason. Today, not only do we have numerous definitions of STEM, but we also have branded numerous entities to be STEM councils, STEM schools, STEM networks, and STEM curricular outcomes. Despite the well-intended branding, understanding of the brand itself remains elusive. It is a conundrum.

[My View: Technology and engineering, the forgotten part of STEM education](#)

February 2, 2012

Often technology and engineering education is overlooked when people talk about STEM education or when governments make decisions about education policy.

[Could Alleyoop Be the Spotify of Math Education?](#)

February 2, 2012

Kind of a social network for math learning, Alleyoop combines video tutoring with online practice problems to give students constant feedback on how they're performing. If a student is struggling with proportions, for example, the system will automatically ask students if they want to practice precursors, such as fractions. Patrick Supanc, president of Alleyoop, says the personalization was designed to be like Web applications students frequently use.

On the Hill...

Rep. Kline Introduces ESEA Reauthorization Legislation

February 9, 2012

U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce Chairman John Kline (R-MN) today introduced two pieces of legislation to restructure the federal role in elementary and secondary education. The proposals reflect the latest effort by House Republicans to enact lasting reforms to No Child Left Behind. The Student Success Act (H.R. 3989) and the Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act (H.R. 3990) will replace broken accountability provisions (known as Adequate Yearly Progress or AYP) with state-developed accountability systems, roll back antiquated federal teacher mandates in favor of local teacher evaluation systems, and grant state and local leaders enhanced flexibility in the use of federal funds.

NSB Holds Briefing to Release “Science and Engineering Indicators 2012”

January 18, 2012

“This information clearly shows we must re-examine long-held assumptions about the global dominance of the American science and technology enterprise.” These comments by National Science Foundation Director Subra Suresh came on the day that the National Science Board released “Science and Engineering Indicators 2012,” a 575-page report measuring and characterizing R&D, education, workforce, academic, public attitudes and state data.

From the Administration...

Article: [Report calls for investments in STEM education, broadband](#)

Report: [The Competitiveness and Innovative Capacity of the United States](#)

January 6, 2012

The Commerce Department released a report on U.S. competitiveness Friday that highlights the need for federal investments in basic research, science education and infrastructure like broadband and the electric grid. The report recommends federal funding for basic research is increased and the R&D tax credit for private sector companies is enhanced. It underscores the importance of education in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics or STEM fields.

President Obama to Host White House Science Fair

January 31, 2012

On Tuesday, February 7th, President Obama will host the second White House Science Fair celebrating the student winners of a broad range of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) competitions from across the country. The President will also announce key steps that the Administration and its partners are taking to help more students excel in math and science, and earn degrees in these subjects.

No Child Left Behind, Announces Flexibility in Exchange for Reform for Ten States

February 9, 2012

President Barack Obama will announce today that ten states that have agreed to implement bold reforms around standards and accountability will receive flexibility from the burdensome mandates of the federal education law known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). In exchange for this flexibility, these states have agreed to raise standards, improve accountability, and undertake essential reforms to improve teacher effectiveness. The ten states approved for flexibility are Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

Recent Action on STEM Legislation...

**This is a record of recently introduced legislation related to STEM Ed. The Caucus does not endorse any specific initiatives or legislation but instead strives to inform Members and staff about matters related to STEM Education.

H.R.3990

Latest Title: Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act

Sponsor: Rep Kline, John [R-MN-2] (introduced 2/9/2012) **Cosponsors:** 8

Committees: House Education and the Workforce; House Armed Services; House Financial Services

Latest Major Action: 2/9/2012 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

H.R.3989

Latest Title: Student Success Act

Sponsor: Rep Kline, John [R-MN-2] (introduced 2/9/2012) **Cosponsors:** 9

Committees: House Education and the Workforce

Latest Major Action: 2/9/2012 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

H.R.3703

Latest Title: Fellowships for Undergraduate Training and Useful Research in Energy-related Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields Act

Sponsor: Rep Inslee, Jay [D-WA-1] (introduced 12/16/2011) **Cosponsors:** (none)

Committees: House Science, Space, and Technology

Latest Major Action: 12/16/2011 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

H.R.3373

Latest Title: STEM Education Innovation Act of 2011

Sponsor: Rep Honda, Michael M. [D-CA-15] (introduced 11/4/2011) **Cosponsors:** 20

Committees: House Education and the Workforce

Latest Major Action: 11/4/2011 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.