

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

H.B. 4  
Jan 25, 2023  
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40006-NGza-6

Short Title: Increasing Engagement in STEM Grant Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Paré.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE INCREASING ENGAGEMENT IN STEM PROGRAM, AS  
3 RECOMMENDED BY THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ADVANCING  
4 WOMEN IN STEM.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.(a)** Program; Purpose. – The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall  
7 establish the Increasing Engagement in STEM Program (Program) for the 2023-2025 fiscal  
8 biennium. The purpose of the Program is to provide grant funds to public school units to engage  
9 in experiential science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education programs.

10 **SECTION 1.(b)** Grant Application Time Line. – The Superintendent shall develop  
11 and publish an application for the Program on or before October 15, 2023. Public school units  
12 may submit applications for this grant until March 15, 2024. The Superintendent shall select  
13 recipients of the grants by April 15, 2024.

14 **SECTION 1.(c)** Grant Applications. – The application created by the Superintendent  
15 shall require a plan of how the public school unit would use grant funds to increase STEM  
16 engagement of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Applicant plans shall include the  
17 following:

- 18 (1) Evidence that the plan uses high-quality instruction methods and includes  
19 research-based best practices in the area of STEM education to further the  
20 purpose of the Program.
- 21 (2) How grant funds will be used to further the purpose of the Program. Allowable  
22 uses of funds include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 23 a. Stipends for teachers who participate with the Program.
  - 24 b. Partnering with third-party vendors to provide services or host  
25 competitions that further the purpose of the Program.
- 26 (3) How the public school unit would sustain their plan beyond the end of the  
27 grant period.
- 28 (4) Any other factors or criteria the Superintendent deems appropriate to advance  
29 the purpose of the Program.

30 **SECTION 1.(d)** Grant Recipients. – After reviewing the submitted applications, the  
31 Superintendent shall select applicants to receive grants for the Program. The Superintendent shall  
32 determine the size of grants awarded to each public school unit while ensuring a distribution of  
33 grant funds to each of the various sizes of public school units referenced in subdivision (3) of  
34 this subsection. When selecting applicants to receive grants, the Superintendent shall adhere to  
35 the following criteria:

- 36 (1) The total number of recipients shall not exceed 20 public school units.



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- 1 (2) Recipients shall reflect the geographic diversity of the State.  
2 (3) Recipients shall reflect the population diversity of public school units in the  
3 State by selecting recipients from the following:  
4 a. Up to five public school units consisting of no more than one school.  
5 b. Up to five units with an average daily membership from the previous  
6 school year of 4,000 students or fewer.  
7 c. Up to five units with an average daily membership from the previous  
8 school year of between 4,001 and 20,000 students.  
9 d. Up to five units with an average daily membership from the previous  
10 school year of 20,001 students or greater.

11 If there are fewer than five applicants in any of the categories listed in subdivision (3)  
12 of this subsection, the Superintendent may, in the Superintendent's discretion, award additional  
13 grants to applicants from other categories.

14 **SECTION 1.(e)** Initial Report. – The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall  
15 submit an initial report on the application process for the Program to the Joint Legislative  
16 Education Oversight Committee by May 15, 2024. The initial report shall include the following:

- 17 (1) A list of public school units that applied for grants.  
18 (2) A list of public school units that received grants.  
19 (3) A summary of how the grant funds will be spent on Program activities  
20 according to the plans submitted by grant recipients.  
21 (4) Any other information the Superintendent deems relevant.

22 **SECTION 1.(f)** Final Report. – At the conclusion of the 2024-2025 school year,  
23 public school units that received grants shall report to the Superintendent any information  
24 required by the Superintendent on the outcomes of their plans. The Superintendent shall submit  
25 a final report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2025.  
26 The final report shall include the following:

- 27 (1) An accounting of expenditures.  
28 (2) The number and percentage of students enrolled in the school who participated  
29 in the Program, including demographic data for participating students.  
30 (3) Student performance data in STEM-related courses.  
31 (4) How public school units would continue to use grant funds in the future if the  
32 Program were to continue beyond the 2024-2025 school year.  
33 (5) Any recommendations by the Superintendent to modify the Program to be  
34 more effective at furthering the purpose of the Program.

35 **SECTION 1.(g)** It is the intent of the General Assembly to reauthorize this Program  
36 for the 2025-2026 school year.

37 **SECTION 2.(a)** Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to  
38 the Department of Public Instruction the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in nonrecurring  
39 funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year to implement the provisions of this act. These funds shall not  
40 revert at the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year but shall remain available until the end of the  
41 2024-2025 fiscal year.

42 **SECTION 2.(b)** Evaluation. – As a condition of receipt of grant funds, a public  
43 school unit shall designate both students who complete the grant-funded activities in the  
44 Common Education Data Analysis and Reporting System and a matched set of students with  
45 similar demographic characteristics who did not complete the grant-funded activities, when  
46 possible, in a manner directed by the Department of Public Instruction that will allow future  
47 analysis of outcomes for these students related to all of the following:

- 48 (1) Enrollment in STEM-related elective clusters in high school.  
49 (2) Graduation from high school within four years of entry.  
50 (3) Enrollment in a postsecondary STEM-related major, degree program, or  
51 certificate program within three years of high school graduation.

- 1           (4)    Completion of a postsecondary STEM-related major, degree program, or  
2                    certificate program within six years of high school graduation.  
3           (5)    Employment in a STEM-related field within eight years of high school  
4                    graduation.

5            The North Carolina Longitudinal Data System shall, in cooperation with all agencies  
6 with relevant data, report annually to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on  
7 the outcomes for both groups of students on each available data point beginning December 15,  
8 2028, and ending December 15, 2039.

9            **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2023.