

MEDIA RELEASE

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Strong Gains in STEM According to Assessment Report

Higher test scores and interest in STEM careers among STEM participants; Rising commitment among parents and other metrics

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa – This morning, the Iowa Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Advisory Council shared the results from its 2016-2017 independent evaluation that measures the success of the STEM Council's efforts in advancing STEM education toward economic development across the state.

Highlights of the 200-page Iowa STEM Evaluation Report include:

- Students who participated in the [STEM Scale-Up Program](#), a program of the STEM Council that brings STEM programs to students around Iowa, scored an average of three percentage points higher in National Percentile Rank on the Iowa Assessments in mathematics and reading, and four percentage points higher in science compared to all students statewide.
- For minority student STEM participants the gains were even stronger: 6 percentage points higher in National Percentile Rank in math and reading, and 7 percentage points higher in science.
- STEM Scale-Up participating students (about 15% of all K-12 youth) were also more interested in someday working in Iowa compared to all students statewide (46% to 38% averages, respectively).
- Over 75% of all students statewide indicated they were very interested or somewhat interested in science, technology, engineering, or in pursuing a STEM career in 2016-2017.
- Greater than nine in 10 Iowans thought STEM education should be a priority in their local school districts, but only 50% said it actually is a priority.
- A total of \$3,169,738 in grants, Corporate Partner gifts and cost-sharing by other STEM partners was invested in Iowa STEM for 2016-2017 (about a 60% match to state investment).

"As co-chair of the STEM Council for the past six years, I've seen how the growing emphasis on STEM is transforming learning across the state," said Governor Kim Reynolds. "STEM provides students with knowledge, confidence and problem-solving skills that will help them succeed in their personal and professional lives. STEM provides educators with professional development that redefines the classroom, including working with business partners, so what students learn is more relevant and linked to the real world."

In addition to these Council-driven gains, evaluators also found more students are taking Advanced Placement (AP) STEM courses, more females and minority students are pursuing STEM degrees at Iowa's 2-year and 4-year public universities, and more than nine in every ten Iowans agree that increased focus on STEM will improve the state's economy.

"This annual report also points out that the growth in STEM jobs across our state are outpacing other occupations, and that over 12,000 vacancies -- some of those at Accumold -- arose in 2015-16," said Accumold President and CEO Roger Hargens, co-chair of the STEM Council. "STEM education is as much an economic development initiative as it is an educational undertaking, and the assessment report reminds us how far we've come and yet how much work we have to do."

This independent evaluation is conducted by an inter-university consortium of Iowa State University's Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE), University of Iowa's Iowa Testing Program and the University of Northern Iowa's Center for Social and Behavioral Research (CSBR). Key findings of this year's report range from measuring public attitudes and awareness of STEM to interest and achievement among Iowa students. The evaluation is funded in part by the STEM Council and a grant from the National Science Foundation (#DRL1238211).

To view the entire report, please visit <http://iowaSTEM.gov/iowa-stem-evaluation>.

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About the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council: Established in July 2011 via Governor's Executive Order, the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council is a public-private partnership of educators, companies and Iowa students and families addressing policies and programs designed to improve Iowa's educational system focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM Council works to engage and prepare students for a career-ready workforce path, regain our State's historic leadership position in education and provide a vital competitive economic advantage now, and for the future, to ensure that every Iowa student has access to world-class STEM education opportunities. The 47-member STEM Council is chaired by Governor Kim Reynolds and Accumold President and CEO Roger Hargens. For more information, visit www.iowaSTEM.gov.

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