STEM BEST® Programs of the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council

The STEM BEST (Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers) Program focuses on teachers and industry professionals working side-by-side to craft curriculum and projects that prepare students for exciting STEM careers local to their community in manufacturing, information technology, bioscience (agriculture and medicine), finance and more.

Programs on this document listed alphabetically by district. A-B, C, D-H, I-M, N-R, S-T, U-Z

A-B

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Allamakee Community School District	2023 and 2018	Ben Rausch brausch@allamakee.k12.ia.us Kelli Olson kolson@allamakee.k12.ia.us	Waukon High School (WHS) implemented an Allamakee Regional Welding Academy to serve the local community. By partnering with Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC), WHS and Allamakee County Economic Development (ACED), this helps create a talent pipeline to fill current and future welding vacancies within the region. The district also offers a STEM course to expand this CTE program to middle school to begin career exploration at an earlier age. Students will be able to explore physical computing, 3-D printing and design, microbiomes and engineering.
Ames Community School District	2025	Mike Todd mike.todd@ames.k12.ia.us	A new course, "Food, Ecosystems, and Community: A Greenhouse Approach" will be established. This semester-long, project-based science course offered each semester immerses students in hands-on learning in a large school greenhouse, focusing on environmental issues like sustainable food production and improving local ecosystems in order to meet the needs of our community. Students will collaborate to design and maintain projects that address local needs such as food security, waste reduction, water conservation, and natural resource enhancement. Through practical applications, they will learn core concepts in environmental science, plant biology, and natural resource management. Alongside scientific skills, students will develop abilities in project management, research, and communication, equipping them to make a positive community impact as environmental stewards.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Anamosa Community School District	2023	Darren Hanna dhanna@anamosa.k12.ia.us	Teachers will engage in quality professional development in conjunction with community partners to offer authentic learning experiences in existing classrooms like geometry in Construction and AMPED, Algebra, Manufacturing, Processes and Entrepreneurship and Design.
Ankeny Community School District	2023 and 2017	Joel Fox joel.fox@ankenyschools.org Jeffry Grassmeyer jeffry.grassmeyer@ankenyschools.org	In 2017 the Ankeny Community School District created a college and career readiness program called Orbis. Students engage in authentic projects submitted by our business and community members and use the Design Thinking process to create solutions to these challenges. Orbis focuses on developing leadership, problem-solving, and collaboration. Currently, ACSD is in the research phase to design and expand similar programming in the district through the creation of an innovative hub.
Assumption High School (Davenport)	2016	Andrew Craig andy.craig@assumptionhigh.org	The school works with Victory Enterprises to develop a Virtual Reality STEM Career Exploration program for students that introduces them to STEM careers in Iowa and across the U.S.
Atlantic Community School District	2017	Eric Miller emiller@atlanticiaschools.org Alyssa Dovenspike adovenspike@atlanticiaschools.org Heather McKay hmckay@atlanticiaschools.org	An apprenticeship approach to the welding trades. Business partners provide support and expertise (Master Licensed welders) as they create and implement a robust welding apprenticeship program.
BCLUW Community School District	2022 and 2019	Roberta Vanderah rvanderah@bcluw.org	The district provides service-learning through hands-on academic projects within the community to prepare 11-12 grade students for future careers. Students identify and creatively solve a problem. They reach beyond the regular classroom experience through building community, business and higher education partnerships to assist the transition from school to careers. BCLUW provides students with opportunities to explore healthcare careers and makes connections to jobs and training opportunities.
Belle Plaine Community School District	2018	Becky Herman bherman@belle-plaine.k12.ia.us	A comprehensive (non-profit) manufacturing/production or “makerspace” facility in the STEM Lab is offered for students to create projects and artifacts. The formation of “BP - R.O.C.K.S.” (Recognizing Opportunity from Commercial Knowledge and Skills) program provides an enhanced and more in-depth after-school option focused primarily on local business and industry needs. Students are engaged in training and education with local businesses, community partners and post-secondary institutions.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Bettendorf Community School District	2022 and 2014	Haleigh Hoyt hhoyt@bettendorf.k12.ia.us	With Eastern Iowa Community College and local health care providers, students will be placed in actual field experiences that will hone their skills in working with patients while working towards required hours for their CNA certificate.
Bondurant-Farrar Community School District	2022 and 2019	Donovan Hill hilld@bfschools.org	The current form of the program centers around engaging businesses and other stakeholders in the community to help students learn more about careers in the area. This has been achieved through working with partners from the original writing of the grant as well as expanding upon the partnership list. That growth has been possible due to the fact that with the program award the school district has added a dedicated person to oversee these partnerships with businesses. This has allowed for greater coordination between the school and businesses.
Boone EDGE	2022 and 2016	Jill Janes jjanes@boone.k12.ia.us Lindsey Hyman lhyman@boone.k12.ia.us	EDGE stands for Empowering Desire. Guiding Experience. Boone EDGE is a work-based learning continuum of awareness, exploration, training and preparation. Students engage in multiple ways through partnerships with a variety of community partners for grades PK-12. At the high school level, project-based courses, internships, and apprenticeship-based courses are offered, in addition to awareness activities through partner tours, speakers, mentors, and authentic projects in core classes. Our mission is to empower students to reach their goals, help students discover their desire, guide students toward what they want to do and give them the experience needed to continue on their path to success.
Boyden-Hull Community School District	2023	Dan Pottebaum dan.pottebaum@boyden-hull.org	Students will be immersed in the Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) for career exploration and professional training with local businesses. Students will participate in mock interviews, career discovery meetings and authentic learning.
Boyer Valley Community School District	2022	Rebekah Gross rebekah.gross@boyervalley.org Scott Frohlich sfrohlich@boyervalley.org	The Boyer Valley Community School District will create an elementary maker space that provides for STEM projects and activities that allows students to get hands-on experience in all HD fields, including field trips to major business partners that focus on manufacturing, computer science and health.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Burlington Community School District	2022	Brian Johnson brian.johnson@bcsds.org Sibyl McIntire sibyl.mcintire@bcsds.org	Burlington Community High School has partnered with Southeastern Community College, along with area health care providers such as Great River Health to expand work-based learning opportunities for BHS Health Occupation students. This includes updating and expanding the health occupation lab for a real “on the job experience” for students. This has also better prepared our students for when they participate in WBL programs, so that they have a better understanding of the experience.

C

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
CAL Community School District	2023 and	Kelsey Enslin enslink@cal.k12.ia.us Jill Craighton craightonj@cal.k12.ia.us	CAL Elementary is using the STEM BEST award to expand on current Agricultural and STEM related learning initiatives. We will make improvements, updates, and expansions to our school greenhouse and gardens. We will connect with industry professionals to provide real-world contacts, experiences and information so that they can make connections between what they are learning and how it is involved in career pathways in Agriculture and Technology. Students will focus on learning how their interests can be pursued as part of career pathways. Expanding to create a space designed to support student learning and exploration in food science and culinary arts providing our students opportunities of STEM learning in authentic ways that connect to outside businesses and partnerships within our community.
CAM Community School District	2021 and 2018	Richard Taylor rtaylor@cam.k12.ia.us	Students explore entrepreneurship by planning and opening a student-run storefront collaboratively with community partners. They sell student-made projects which are created in CTE, industrial arts, plasma cutter and small-business classes.
Carroll Community School District	2023	Nicole Cote ncote@carrolltigers.org	The district will implement a new freshman pathways course, Introduction to Pathways, while also assisting in providing staff with Project Lead the Way certification to provide students Introduction to Engineering, Cybersecurity, Biomedical Science and Environmental Sustainability.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Cedar Falls Community School District	2026, 2020, 2018, and 2017	Jaymie Odell jaymie.odell@cfschools.org Ethan Wiechman Ethan.Wiechmann@cfschools.org	Transform North Cedar Elementary into an authentic learning school using CAPS cornerstones and durable skills as the foundation. Students will engage in real world problem solving through community partnerships, STEM challenges, and interdisciplinary project work. This school serves as a pilot and proof of concept. The immediate focus is on building the model at North Cedar so students and staff experience deep, consistent authentic learning and durable skill development Cedar Falls Community School District offers Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) programming through strands that explore business solutions, careers, CAN, education, industries and medical pathways. New strands represent community demand for talent pipeline into critical industries.
Cedar Rapids Community School District (Metro High School)	2025, 2023, 2022 and 2021	Chuck Tonelli mtonelli@crschools.us Matt Secl msecl@crschools.us	METRO STEAM academy is a cross-curricular, project based, community centered, employability focused, personalized learning program within METRO High School. Students have several project options they can work on to earn credits towards graduation. Past projects have varied greatly and have included small business projects, museum exhibits, pure science investigations, community events planning, networking, marketing, outreach, and many others. The STEAM Academy works with organizations and community members to provide projects, mentorship, and learning experiences for our students. The cross-curricular learning space offers a farm-to-table nutrition/health program, an entrepreneurship outlet and a culinary arts workforce development. Creating an environment rich in technology for students to gain hands-on experience with industry-standard tools, enhancing their ability to interact with complex machinery and data essential skills in today's workforce. Embed resources to expand the program's ability to provide students with hands-on experiences in STEAM fields, addressing current limitations and creating a program unique within the STEM BEST network. This expansion will equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in industries such as aerospace, environmental science, and data analytics, all of which are vital to Iowa's economy and global trends.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Cedar Rapids Community School District (Thomas Jefferson H.S.)	2021	Charlie Goetzinger cgoetzinger@crschools.us	BlendED Academy is a 9th/10th grade school within a school program that aims to provide relevant experiences through community-based initiatives once students demonstrate proficiency. The program teaches core classes in a cohort-style seminar schedule which allows the students to demonstrate proficiency on content standards, provide targeted intervention for those not proficient, and authentic enrichment for those who are. This enrichment consists of partnerships with community members to engage our students in experiences that align with their passions.
Cedar Rapids Community School District Iowa BIG	2025 and 2014	Mark Matson mmatson@iowabig.org	Iowa BIG is a high school program that allows students to earn core academic credit through project-based learning. Students experience the community and learn in real-time by working with a variety of partners from business, nonprofit and government agencies. Expanding on our current model by equipping Iowa BIG with the tools necessary to assemble a Makerspace - an informal, flexible collection of resources that students can use to bring their ideas to life. Unlike a dedicated physical space, this Makerspace will be a functional toolkit housed within our existing environment. It will include 3D printers, CNC machines, design software, and other essential equipment.
Center Point-Urbana School District	2024	Andrew Kringle akringle@cpuschools.org	Program will procure cutting-edge CNC machinery to empower students to delve into precision manufacturing techniques. Students will gain proficiency in programming, operating and troubleshooting CNC systems, preparing them for high-demand careers in manufacturing and engineering
Centerville Community School District	2025	Mark Taylor mark.taylor@centervillek12.org Cameron Oehler cameron.oehler@centervillek12.org	Develop and build a technology-rich hub at the High School to foster cross-curricular opportunities across disciplines that connect students to college and career-related extracurricular activities. The goals of the HUB include enhancing education opportunities, promoting career readiness, encouraging collaboration and innovation and increasing student engagement.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Central Community School District - Elementary	2018	Leah Imoehl limoehl@central.k12.ia.us	The goal of the Central Elementary Makerspace is to equip students with skills to explore, create and discover how things work in the world around them! Students are introduced to computational making activities that promote crosscutting concepts across science, technology, engineering and math. We provide scaffold learning experiences so elementary students in Kindergarten through 6th grade become self-determined learners. In addition, the Makerspace utilizes community support volunteers for time, expertise and donation of supplies.
Central Community School District – Secondary	2022 and 2021	Leah Imoehl limoehl@central.k12.ia.us Ryan Bergan rbergan@central.k12.ia.us	The goal of its Clayton County BEST Program will be to offer unique learning opportunities that connect individual students to authentic workplace experiences and provide a strong focus on career and college readiness as a key outcome. Students will be paired with community organizations and businesses to address real-life concerns using 21st century skills and knowledge to provide solutions and products. Expanding to focus on advancing manufacturing education, integrating new industry partnerships, and expanding the student base from 7-12 to 3-12, ultimately preparing them for careers in high-demand sectors. High school students involved in SKILLS USA (grades 9-12) will lead STEM lessons for younger students (grades 3-6).
Central Lee Community School District	2023	Angie Fransk afransk@centrallee.org	A science lab will incorporate industry grade chemical and biology vent hoods to replicate industry grade laboratories. Community partners will provide job shadow opportunities and hands-on experience.
Central Lyon Community School District	2024	Sarah de Vries sdevries@centrallyon.org	Creation and implementation of career-linked opportunities for students to actively engage with community employers through the CAPS program. Students will be more empowered to develop essential career readiness skills and establish meaningful connections with the professional world.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Chariton Community School District	2017	Tracy Hall tracy.hall@chariton.k12.ia.us	Through a partnership with the Lucas County Development Corporation, the REAL (Relevant, Engaged, Applied, Learning) program was created to engage high school students in on-site, work-based projects. Students are exposed to high-demand fields such as design/engineering, diesel mechanics, IT, nursing, coding, finance and supply chain. The program will also include a welding and advanced manufacturing lab area to increase student capacity with updated equipment and allow the use of industry standard equipment for more professional level projects.
Cherokee Community School District	2022	Tim Stoneking tstoneking@ccsd.k12.ia.us	The Cherokee CAPS Program represents the collaboration of education, business and community and provides students with a unique, immersive experience, resulting in highly skilled, adaptable, global innovators and leaders. Our apprenticeship program connects students with local industry partners targeting the areas of health care.
Clarke Community School District	2026	Mike White mike.white@clarkecsd.org Stephanie Brown stephanie.brown@clarkecsd.org	Collaborative effort designed to connect classroom learning with hands-on, career-focused experiences in the skilled trades. This initiative represents a strong partnership between the City of Osceola, Clarke Community School District, Murray Community School District, Southwestern Community College (SWCC), and a network of local subcontractors specializing in concrete, plumbing, dirt work, and HVAC. Together, these partners aim to establish a sustainable and scalable program that bridges the gap between education and workforce readiness in central Iowa.
Clayton Ridge Community School District	2026	Nicole DeGidio ndegidio@claytonridge.k12.ia.us	River & Ridge Media Co., a new STEM BEST program at Clayton Ridge High School, will partner with the Guttenberg Chamber of Commerce to create real-world media production experiences for students. Students will work in podcasting, videography, branding, digital advertising, and other marketing products for Chamber business spotlights and partnerships.
Clear Lake Community School District	2020 and 2019	Emily Hill ehill@clearlakeschools.org	Clear Lake Community School District exposes students to STEM careers with local employers by bringing in business partners to interact with elementary students. Secondary students participate in internships and apprenticeships with business partners, specifically utilizing the Project Lead the Way curriculum.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Clinton Community School District	2021	Matthew Tobin matt.tobin@csdkq.org	A partnership with Keep Iowa Beautiful and Downtown Clinton Alliance to rebuild mural programs and provide professional development for staff to further develop project-based learning experiences.
College Community School District	2026, 2025 and 2023	Amber Osterkamp aosterkamp@crprairie.org Douglas Wheeler dwheeler@crprairie.org Joshua Eaton jeaton@crprairie.org	Integrating junior-level foundational courses with a revamped, project-based capstone, for students across multiple disciplines including welding, advanced manufacturing, and business/entrepreneurial, to further develop technical competencies, critical problem-solving skills, marketing acumen, and meaningful industry connections. An Anatomage Table has been added to the district's career and readiness program. The table offers a technologically advanced 3D anatomy visualization and virtual dissection tool. The table is currently being used by students in our Biology courses, Anatomy and Physiology, and Animal Science. We will be working with community partners to provide feedback to students through the use of the table to help them explore different career areas that are of interest to them. Expanding program by strengthening Career Technical Education offerings. Adding two new courses to our program of studies, providing students with opportunities to earn valuable industry certifications. A Welding Course to build on the foundational knowledge gained in the Welding, Automation, and Manufacturing. As well as an Advanced Manufacturing Course to delve deeply into computer-integrated manufacturing, guiding students through the entire process from CAD (Computer-Aided Design) to CAM (Computer-Aided Manufacturing), and culminating in the production of finished products using CNC (Computer Numerical Control) technologies for plasma cutting and milling.
Coon Rapids-Bayard Community School District	2023	Kelly Sigler kelly.sigler@crbcrusaders.org Anne Pudenz anne.pudenz@crbcrusaders.org	A school-based enterprise will be launched where students will design, create and market their products to school, students and the community. Local small businesses will mentor the students and provide classroom speakers, job shadowing and facilities access.
Council Bluffs Community School District	2024	Tracy Matthews tmathews@cbcsd.org	Adding three College and Career Exploratory Labs to serve students in 6th-8th grades. Designed to provide content knowledge and hands-on exploratory opportunities to assist students in determining their potential interests and strengths within a range of career pathways, many of which fall within STEM fields.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Creston Community School District - Elementary School	2021	Callie Anderson at canderson@crestonschools.org	The Creston ECC program connects STEM-focused instruction with thematic activities and curriculum. An Innovation Zone includes retail centers, medical play centers, the problem stop where critical thinking is used and sensory activities including art, music and design.
Creston Community School District - Middle School	2021	Kimberly Fourez kfourez@crestonschools.org	STEM learning opportunities for middle school students beginning career exploration. Projects include Future Fest/STEM Fair, Digital Student Portfolio and Lunch and Learn opportunities.
Creston Community School District - Secondary	2023	Callie Anderson canderson@crestonschools.org	Secondary students who receive special education services will gain employability skills, have the opportunity to explore future career pathways and receive support to be successful in the workplace. A Job Olympics will be developed where industry leaders are invited to observe the students demonstrating their current level of proficiency towards the identified employability skills.

D-H

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Davenport Community Schools	2022	Michael Vukovich vukovichm@davenportschools.org	Central, North and West High Schools will expand access to the Information Solutions/Computer Science pathway with improving technology and equipment required to expand programming as well as increase course and co-curricular offerings for robotics, software development and hardware maintenance. The district will work with our industry partners and advisory council to provide the professional development and support required to implement the programming.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Davenport West High School	2023, 2017 and 2015		The Advanced Manufacturing program partners with local businesses such as MA Ford, Arconic, John Deere, McLaughlin Body Company, to immerse high school students in the business environment and experience advanced manufacturing in their community. Davenport West High School has four CNC machines purchased in collaboration with HAAS. Using this equipment, students collaborate with local businesses to learn CNC programming and operating. From this pathway, students go on to a high school registered apprenticeship program, embedding them into our industry partners workforce.
Denver Community School District	2026	Karen Van De Walle kvandewalle@denver.k12.ia.us	Creating the Denver Agriculture Learning Center and Greenhouse to give students real-world experience that links classroom learning with careers in agriculture and STEM. Connecting students to college, careers, and their community through hands-on lessons, supervised projects, and partnerships with local groups. The Center will partner with groups like the Lions Club, Bremer County Farm Bureau, local agribusinesses, and the Iowa DNR at Sweet Marsh. These relationships show how agriculture ties together fields like environmental science, engineering, and business.
Des Moines School District - Central Campus	2026 and 2025	Jennifer Scott jennifer.scott@dmschools.org Kelsie Mouchka Kelsie.Mouchka@dmschools.org	Expand the welding program with the addition of eight new permanently installed welding booths, increasing capacity by 40%, and an extension of the existing ventilation system to support the expanded lab footprint. Prepare a diverse body of students for vital healthcare careers through a comprehensive, hands-on Health Sciences program that fosters knowledge, practical skills, and cultural responsiveness. By incorporating advanced technologies like the Anatomage Table and prioritizing innovative, inclusive learning experiences, the program will equip students to excel in diverse healthcare settings while inspiring curiosity and academic growth in STEM fields.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Diagonal Community School District	2026	Taylor Bentley tbentley@diagonalschools.org Samantha Crawford scrawford@diagonalschools.org	The Diagonal Innovation Lab will connect students in grades 6-12 with career-aligned, project-based experiences that bridge classroom learning and regional workforce needs. The Innovation Lab will feature hands-on learning zones in Energy, Building Trades, Health Sciences, Information Solutions, Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Business & Entrepreneurship, Arts, Media & Communication, and Education & Early Childhood. Students' progress through a three-phase framework: Discovery Innovators (Grades 6-8): Exploration through foundational STEM modules. Aspiring Innovators (Grades 9-10): Skill development via multidisciplinary, real-world projects. Pioneer Innovators (Grades 11-12): Capstones, internships, and work-based or postsecondary placements.
Dike-New Hartford Community School District	2022		At Dike-New Hartford, a more relevant and vibrant industrial technology curriculum will be developed. Specifically, improvements will be made to facility and equipment to offer courses in advanced welding, CNC machining, product development and enterprise, and laser fabrication.
Dubuque Community School District	2023	David Moeller dmoeller@dbqschools.org	Hempstead High school will purchase a CNC machine to increase student awareness and experience of quality careers available in manufacturing.
Durant Community School District	2025	Maria Brown maria.brown@durant.k12.ia.us Joel Diederichs joel.diederichs@durant.k12.ia.us	Modernize science classrooms to create safe, flexible spaces to be able to incorporate hands-on laboratory experiments while integrating real world STEM concepts. Planned upgrades include a chemical ventilation hood, eyewash stations, safety cabinets, and adaptable workspaces aligned to industry experiences.
Earlham Community School District	2023 and 2021	Kristin Sheffield ksheffield@ecsdcards.com	Building a systemic K-12 STEM experience through intentional curriculum redesign. Current opportunities for students include a STEM embedded into Kindergarten instruction and classroom design, a K-12 MakerSpace, a K-8 STEM Family Night, STEM elective courses for grades 6-8, and collaboration with local STEM professionals to provide career-connected learning opportunities for students and families.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
East Mills Community School District	2023	Kattie Lewis klewis@emschools.org	The East Mills School District will team up with regional school districts, business partners, and educational partners to create a regional career and technical education center, alongside launching a Farm to Table initiative featuring school gardens, greenhouses, and compost programs.
East Union Community School District	2023	Marcus Patten mpatten@eastunionschools.org	The district will develop a fully equipped, functioning maker space that will include the use of maker projects, coding products and a 3-D printer. This will support upper grade level partners by offering students hands-on work with the equipment at an earlier age.
Easton Valley Community School District	2024	Steven Eskildsen steven.eskildsen@eastonvalleycsd.com	The Agricultural Greenhouse Learning Center to enhance access to healthy food options for Easton Valley CSD students and Little River Hawks Daycare Center attendees by contributing fresh produce to the lunch program. The greenhouse will offer hands-on experiences for junior, senior high and elementary students.
Edgewood-Colesburg Community School District	2024	Melissa Meyer mmeyer@edge-cole.k12.ia.us	Program will utilize a GlowForge laser printer to provide exposure to digital fabrication and prototyping, entrepreneurship and small business ventures, visual arts and multimedia production, and STEM-infused projects with the support of community partners.
Emmetsburg Community School District	2020	Tracie Christensen tchristensen@e-hawks.org Darca Saxon dSaxton@e-hawks.org	Emmetsburg STEM Program: Increases opportunities for our students to explore career opportunities available that will help to make our students future ready. Incorporate STEM through various implementation steps throughout the District. Create a pathway using the Stem Innovator program from Kindergarten through 12th grade to engage students in learning and motivate them to complete their education. Expand this program to allow our students to collaborate with area partners and help them realize that they can stay or return to our community. Establish key partners within our community to develop real-world projects for students to help them develop real-world skills.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Forest City Community School District	2025	Ryan Friederich rfriederich@forestcityschools.org Sarah Leichsenring sleichsenring@forestcity.k12.ia.us	Program will focus on enhancing computer science education and future focused skills at Forest City Middle and High School by supporting the expansion of our computer science pathway, creating both curricular and work-based learning opportunities for students to develop critical 21st-century skills. The proposal intends to enrich our exploratory courses, add advanced programming options, and establish partnerships with local businesses to provide students with hands-on, work-based experiences in technology-related fields.
Fort Madison Community High School	2022 and 2016	Amy Wehrle amy.wehrle@fmcsd.org	The three Lee County school districts (Central Lee, Ft. Madison and Keokuk) are partnering with economic development partners, local business and industry, and trade unions, in addition to post-secondary institutions to increase access and awareness of the career opportunities in STEM fields.
Gilbert Community School District	2025	Adam Davis davisa@gilbertscd.org	Gilbert schools will enhance the rapidly growing welding and manufacturing coursework within the Agriculture Education program by expanding facilities, updating equipment, and incorporating new technologies like CNC equipment. These resources will strengthen opportunities for students to earn Industry-Recognized Credentials, such as those offered through the American Welding Society. Additionally and allow students to engage in advanced career-driven projects, building skills aligned with workforce demands.
Griswold Community School District	2023 and 2019	Brianna McCollum bmccollum@griswoldschools.org Jackie Brokaw jbrokaw@griswoldschools.org	Work-based learning opportunities for students to develop future job skills by partnering with businesses on authentic projects. With state-of-the-art resources, students gain high demand technical skills, including social media design and management, programming, video production and editing, broadcasting, creation of content for electronic information monitors, and advertising. A drone training program is utilized by both the Communication Arts department for media production as well as the Agriculture department for crop mapping.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Harlan Community School District	2026, 2025 and 2023	Sara Fink sarah.fink@hcsdcyclones.com Kyleigh Kumm kyleigh.kumm@hcsdcyclones.com Jacie Stuerman jacie.stuerman@hcsdcyclones.com Chad Swanson cswanson@hcsdcyclones.com	Create three distinct avenues in Middle School. FCS (Family & Consumer Science) classes will develop and supply new food products for the H.S. Cyclone Brew. The "maker" equipment affords opportunity for product design and development feeding into the Cyclone Corner business. Finally, the middle school Video Production class will serve as a training ground for our high school Authentic Learning courses, which handle all marketing and social media for our student-run businesses as well as the district. STEM teachers will explore successful STEM schools in Iowa and collaborate with local community partners to establish a STEM program. The program will provide learning spaces that expose students to careers and help with the transition out of high school. Launch a coffee shop and enhance the Cyclone Corner, a student-led business, which currently operates by offering an online catalog of Cyclone apparel twice per year to provide opportunities in business and entrepreneurship. Marketing students run this business also coordinating with Cyclone Activities to launch apparel sales for each sports or activities season.
Harris-Lake Park Community School District	2026	Matthew Barnhart mbarnhart@hlpcsd.org	The STEM Wolves D.E.N. (Discovery, Experience, and Navigation) program gives students hands-on learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, and math while helping them explore careers and connect what they learn in school to real jobs in our area The major partners for the STEM Wolves D.E.N. include Pure Fishing in Spirit Lake, Avera Medical Group, and Die Cast Manufacturing. These partners will help guide teacher curriculum, student projects, offer mentorship, and create learning experiences that mirror real workplace challenges.
Holy Family System (Dubuque)	2023	Korrin Schriver kschriver@holyfamilydbq.org Christine McAllister cmcallister@holyfamilydbq.org	A community supported Agriculture (CSA) business will be created and run by students who can enroll in one of three course pathways, including Agriculture Research, Construction, and Business and Marketing. Students enrolled in Agriculture Research will plan for a successful growing season as well as plant, care for, and harvest produce. In the Business and Marketing course, students will manage branding and promotion, as well as pricing and inventory. In the construction pathway, students will plan for and build the

I-M

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
IKM-Manning Community School District	2016 and 2017		Spark is our middle school student-run business, offering a variety of services to teachers and community members, including poster printing, lamination, and specialty projects. Every 7th and 8th grade student has the opportunity to participate in Spark each year completing class projects and creating one holiday-themed project. They also organize a pop-up sale to showcase and sell their items. In Spark, we focus on three main objectives: Foster entrepreneurship and teach career-ready skills. Provide hands-on learning through teamwork and collaboration. Learn key aspects of running a small business.
IKM-Manning Community School District	2016 and 2017	LuAnn Langel llangel@ikm-manning.k12.ia.us Kevin Lahndorf klahndorf@ikm-manning.k12.ia.us	FIRE (Finding Innovative Reasons to Excel) is a student-led business focusing on vinyl printing and laser engraving. Associates will utilize soft skills used in real-world business and focus on 21st Century Employability Skills while completing paid jobs. Every day is a different day with new challenges.
Iowa Big North	2017, 2015 and 2014	Mike Kuennen m_kuennen@new-hampton.k12.ia.us Krissy Anderson k_anderson@new-hampton.k12.ia.us	Iowa BIG North offers students the opportunity to experience in-depth and more sustained projects in professional business, community, and/or government settings. Students will engage in pursuing answers to professional problems and projects while being immersed in a professional work environment. Development of 21st century and employability skills (Universal Constructs) will be a strong focus of this program. IBN is competency-based, so students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the standards and content of the course in contextual performances for authentic audiences.
Iowa City Community School District	2026 and 2017	Danielle Riney riney.danielle@iowacityschools.org Heather Wacha wacha.heather@iowacityschools.org	This proposal introduces a place-based, community-integrated model designed to embed STEM experiences into daily instruction across grade levels and disciplines. The Outdoor Classroom and Greenhouse Project at Southeast, North Central, and Northwest Middle Schools will establish a new STEM learning ecosystem that connects science, technology, and agricultural education through real-world applications in environmental science, food systems, and sustainability. We have implemented the STEM Innovator program through the University of Iowa into our business and science courses.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Jesup Community School District	2019	Paul Rea prea@jesup.k12.ia.us	Jesup Community School District expands work-based learning through partnership and collaboration with Cedar Falls' STEM BEST Program (called CAPS). Students are provided opportunities for their knowledge and skills to intersect in real-world learning opportunities. They are able to explore careers, make connections to businesses and understand how the concepts and information they are learning in the classroom translate into real life.
Johnston Community School District	2022	Jyll Johnson-Miner jjminer@johnston.k12.ia.us	The Johnston Community School District will provide students an opportunity to explore, develop skills and receive EMS certification in emergency medical care and transportation for critical and noncritical patients who access the emergency medical system.
Keokuk Community School District	2026, 2022, 2021 and 2018	Nathan Harrison nathan.harrison@keokukschools.org Brady Martin brady.martin@keokukschools.org Jessica Koehler jessica.koehler@keokukschools.org	Develop a new Agriculture and Ag Mechanics program, designed to provide students with hands-on, technical training in machinery operation, welding, small engine repair, equipment maintenance, and precision agriculture technologies. Keokuk and Fort Madison high schools partnered with business and industry and economic development groups to create a regional career exploration center. The center provides students expanded opportunities in different career strands to build on the CTE courses currently offered at the high schools.
Lake Mills Community School District	2026	Nathan Sletten nsletten@lake-mills.org Steven Madson smadson@lake-mills.org	The Design and Marketing Print Lab will establish a professional-grade workspace where students apply graphic design, marketing, and entrepreneurship skills to real-world production. This initiative responds directly to needs identified in the district's Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA), including a lack of authentic, work-based learning opportunities in marketing and design pathways.
Laurens-Marathon Community School District	2025	Sabrina Booth sabrinabooth@lm.k12.ia.us Hannah Zylstra hannahzylstra@lm.k12.ia.us	"Fabricating Our Future" is a program designed to introduce students to a broader range of fabrication skills while also learning about various careers and running a business by incorporating laser cutting/engraving and commercial scale embroidery skills into our existing program and letting students experience how creativity can develop into careers. Students will also learn about entrepreneurship and design an in-class business plan to learn about running a business.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Lawton-Bronson Community School District	2022	Kayla Lundt lundtk@lb-eagles.org	The goal Lawton-Bronson would like to accomplish through the purchase and use of the zSpace is to increase interest in the healthcare field as well as prepare those interested for collegiate and workplace use of simulations.
Lewis Central Community School District	2024, 2022 and 2020	Dustan Kern dkern@lewiscentral.org	Our program combines teaching students about plastic recycling and plastic manufacturing to reduce plastic waste. We use pneumatic injection machines to make most products. The club uses CAD and CAM to design and cut aluminum molds with our CNC machine and students in the 6th grade design and resin print inserts for the molds. A 7th grade class makes keychains from recycled plastic. We have developed a method for turning plastic bags into solid sheets that can be vacuum formed or melted and molded into products. We use an extrusion machine that can make plastic lumber to build larger objects.
Lighthouse Schools	2026	Kemal Aydin grants@tlhschools.org	Implementation of Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Gateway courses in Automation and Robotics and App Creators, forming the foundation of a rigorous, hands-on STEM pathway. These courses launch deeper engagement in design thinking, coding, and engineering, fully integrated with TLHS's innovation labs, entrepreneurship curriculum, and real-world projects.
Linn-Mar Community School District	2021	Elyssa McDowell elyssa.mcdowell@linnmar.k12.ia.us	Venture Academics, located at Linn-Mar High School in Marion, IA, is a project-based learning initiative. It enriches traditional learning by integrating STEM processes into project work. Through Venture, students not only acquire foundational knowledge but also apply it to real-world issues, fostering crucial 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, time management, and collaboration. This program actively collaborates with local businesses and professionals, providing students valuable exposure to diverse knowledge and potential career paths.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Logan-Magnolia Community School District	2025 and 2024	Kenneth Killpack gkillpack@lomaschools.org Jacob Hedger jhedger@lomaschools.org	Expand the existing greenhouse to allow for the diversification of Big Cat Industries, a cross curricular, student-led business program. At the completion of implementing the project, there will be five content areas included: Science, Industrial Technology, Business and Marketing, Culinary Science and MultiMedia.Marketing, Culinary Science and MultiMedia.Culinary Science and MultiMedia. Four additional programs to be added to Big Cat Industries: Life Skills, Fashion and Design, Industrial Technology, Business, and Art. Life Skills is a special education program that teaches students skills needed for job attainment and performance, providing real world experiences for students in a safe, familiar environment. A school store will be created to sell student products and be managed alongside community partners through business classes.
Maple Valley-Anthon Oto Community School District	2022		The Maple Valley-Anthon Oto Community School District will partner with Maple Heights Nursing Home in Mapleton, IA, to provide opportunities for students to explore opportunities in Health Careers. The funds would be used to implement a Project Lead the Way Biomedical Sciences curriculum while also renovating my classroom to model a patient room.
Marion High School, Marion Independent School District	2024	Gretchen Kriegel gkriegel@marion-isd.org	Develop and enhance the implementation of AMPED (Algebra, Manufacturing, Production, Entrepreneurship, and Design) in Algebra and Geometry in Construction (GIC) courses at Marion High School through community partnerships.
Marion Intermediate School, Marion Independent School District	2024	Peggy Murphy pmurphy@marion-isd.org	Francis Marion Intermediate School will partner with the Marion Economic Development Corporation and Grant Wood Area Education Agency to help diverse young learners grow awareness of future high-demand careers impacted by computer science in the community and grow their identity as computer scientists.
Marshalltown Learning Academy	2017		The Marshalltown Learning Academy provides a personalized learning environment for students. Apprenticeship programs were added with area businesses that are often already in partnership with the school district.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Mason City Community School District	2026 and 2025	Jessica Sutcliffe jsutcliffe@masoncityschools.org Tammy Kacer tkacer@masoncityschools.org Angela Stark astark@masoncityschools.org	Create an automation & design lab to leverage the existing, universally mandatory STEM class at John Adams M.S. for early career exposure connecting to Mason City's key employment sectors-advanced manufacturing, precision agriculture, & logistics. Transforming classrooms from a place of conceptual learning into a professional "Innovation Center" where students directly engage with the future of work in the community. "Pathways to Green Energy Careers," aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in the high demand field of green energy. Through this program, hands-on training and practical exposure to careers in solar energy, wind energy, and biofuels, helping to meet the demand for a well-prepared workforce in the green energy industry in North Iowa.
Mediapolis Community School District	2026	Adam Magliari magliaria@mepoedu.org Natalie Ulloa ulloan@mepoedu.org	Develop a transformative VR-Enhanced Work-Based Learning (WBL) Program that bridges classroom instruction with local workforce demands, preparing all students for high-wage, high-demand STEM careers. Major partners include Afinitas (advanced manufacturing leader), Iowa Intermediary Network, IVRS (Pre-ETS), MTC Technologies, Technology Integration Team (TIT), and computer science curriculum providers. These collaborators co-design authentic experiences that align education with regional needs in manufacturing, IT, and healthcare.
MFL MarMac Community School District	2025, 2022 and 2021	Melissa Haberichter melissa.haberichter@mflmm.k12.ia.us Sarah Plaht sarah.plaht@mflmm.k12.ia.us	MFL MarMac MORE is an authentic learning program that empowers high school students to explore their skills and interests and engage with business and community professionals to complete projects that add value to the real world. Drone Applications is a class where students learn how to fly drones as well as different uses for them. Skills like photography, videography, crop scouting, and ethical flying are highlighted in this course. Developing a district-wide pipeline that connects students to local industry opportunities and prepares them for success in the global workforce. Through educators, community resources and the framework of our WBL Plan, the district will integrate career awareness, exploration, and preparation into all grade levels and content areas.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Midland Community School District	2025	Bobby Williams hsprincipal@midland.k12.ia.us	A comprehensive drone technology program to enhance students' career opportunities. The program will prepare students aged 16 and older to earn the FAA Remote Pilot Certificate (Part 107 license), an industry-recognized credential that qualifies them to operate drones commercially. This certification will position students for success in industries such as agriculture, media production, real estate, and environmental science.
MMCRU Community School District	2026, 2023 and 2019	Matthew Hansen matt.hansen@mmcruroyals.org	Obtain a high-definition CNC plasma table as well as a CNC press brake to further build on previous focus points in advanced manufacturing. MMCRU will serve as a regional hub for industrial technology coursework and partner with South O'Brien, Remsen-St. Mary's, River Valley, and Kingsley-Pierson Schools in the fall of the 2027 school year. New manufacturing equipment was purchased including a CNC machining center, advanced millwork processing technologies and welding robotic cells to provide industry grade technology to 9th-12th grade students. This will help prepare students for local careers with the tools, equipment and technology used by local tradesmen for metal fabrication and general machining sectors in an economic development effort in northwest Iowa.
MOC-Floyd Valley Community School District - Elementary	2022	Grant Hegstead ghegstad@mocfv.org	Working with community computer science education consultants, on-site professional development opportunities are available to prepare K-5 grade teachers to teach customized integrated lessons and integrate computer science into daily classroom activities.
MOC-Floyd Valley Community School District - High School	2023, 2022, 2021 and 2020	Grant Hegstead ghegstad@mocfv.org Michael Mulder mmulder@mocfv.org	Students at MOC-Floyd Valley High School are provided with a range of opportunities along a continuum of authentic learning experiences, including our Dutch Designs Program, Extended Career Experiences Program, and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. We also have CAPS Solutions, CAPS Education, and CAPS Medical pathways. The foundation of each of these programs is the relationship that exists between students, teachers, and community partners, allowing for value-added benefits for all.
Monticello Community School District	2026	Eric Schmitt eric.schmitt@monticello.k12.ia.us	Revitalize the district's 25-year-old greenhouse facility and outdated curriculum to better align with current industry practices and community needs to modernize, expand, and integrate agricultural science education through hands-on, community-connected learning all in partnership with Mainstreet Monticello.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Mount Ayr Community School District	2026	Jason Shaffer jason.shaffer@mtyarschools.org	Develop a program to provide employment-driven opportunities within the Automotive, Welding, Healthcare, and Education industries rooted in collaboration with community partners, personalized learning, and integration of cross-curricular standards, ensuring students gain relevant skills, experience, and credentials aligned with local workforce needs and multiple career pathways.
Mount Vernon Community School District	2022	Susannah Maddock smaddock@mvcsd.org Jessica Fitzpatrick jfitzpatrick@mvcsd.org	Students in manufacturing, advanced materials processing and construction technologies courses, along with middle and elementary school students, under the direction of their teachers, designed and renovated a discontinued school bus into a state-of-the-art enrichment classroom! KWWL News, CR Gazette
Muscatine Community School District	2023, 2022, 2020, 2017 and 2016	Brandon Welsch brandon.welsch@mcsdonline.org Pamela Joslyn pamela.joslyn@mcsdonline.org	Muscatine High School's Work Based Learning program provides students with experiences to explore, prepare and train in a career area of their interest. These experiences can include things such as job shadows, site visits, cooperative learning projects, internships and apprenticeships. The Muskie Innovator STEM BEST Program will expand the pathway model to Susan Clark Junior High where students will explore careers through job shadowing, internships or other work-based experiences.

N-R

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
New Hampton Community School District	2019	Rachel Bauler r_bauler@new-hampton.k12.ia.us	The New Hampton Agricultural Education Program has set goals to make some adjustments to the program when it comes to updating, repairing, and starting new traditions while keeping some old ones going! Through the utilization of our facilities and the professionals and industry leaders in the area, we look to start and continue projects by sparking student interests. This takes time and effort in educating the students on the base knowledge needed to responsibly manage resources and learn new skills.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
New London Community School District	2026 and 2023	Chad Wahls chad.wahls@nlcsd.org Matt May matt.may@nlcsd.org Allison Lair allison.lair@nlcsd.org Jessica Boyer jessica.boyer@nlcsd.org	Construct a greenhouse to build lessons around real jobs and careers, not just textbook topics. This greenhouse opportunity will help students explore different fields, see how subjects connect, and gain practical experience through projects and internships. The New London Community School District's main goal is to help students reach their best future. In order to do that, we've embraced technical training along with our college and career path
Newton Community School District	2026 and 2017	Derek Bair baird@newton.k12.ia.us	Establish a structured, for-credit course that connects directly to both the Industrial Technology and STEM pathways, Intro. To Robotics to focus on skills such as: advanced fabrication, programming, and engineering tools during the school day. Students will explore mechanical design, electrical systems, and autonomous control using industry-standard robotics platforms and project-based learning models. The curriculum emphasizes design thinking, iteration, teamwork, and communication-skills that mirror those required by Iowa's advanced manufacturing and engineering sectors. Fledge Innovator, a partnership between the high school, businesses and the community, provides authentic projects for students to work collaboratively on site or at the new NHS STEM Innovation Center called "The Incubator." The course supports STEM initiatives and follows the University of Iowa's STEM Engineering or Biz Innovator Curriculums.
Nodaway Valley Community School District	2025	Dakota Stormer dstormer@nodawayvalley.org	Create a hands-on outdoor classroom for PreK-5th grade students that integrates STEM-focused learning with real-world applications. The space will feature a butterfly garden, weather station, sensory tables, planting boxes, seating, and other interactive areas that allow students to explore life sciences, environmental sustainability, and engineering concepts.
North Polk Community School District	2026 and 2024	Seth Poldberg seth.poldberg@northpolk.org	Construct a greenhouse to build lessons around real jobs and careers, not just textbook topics. This greenhouse opportunity will help students explore different fields, see how subjects connect, and gain practical experience through projects and internships. By incorporating upgrades in CAD software will allow for the opportunity to intentionally collaborate with career-connected learning, project-based learning and work-based learning experiences with businesses.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
North Scott Community School District	2024	April Keating april.keating@north-scott.k12.ia.us	Create a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship for pathways into residential, commercial and industrial electrical trades that will include careers in residential/commercial/industrial electrical, electrical automation and controls, maintenance electrical, lineman, communications and more.
Northeast Community School District	2022 and 2014	Jennifer Huling jennifer.huling@northeastcsd.org	An innovative, problem solving and discovery-based environment for students, created in partnership with Lyondell Bassell, that focuses on authentic, real-world problems through the infusion of technology and curriculum and a second HD award created a partnership with Twin State Technical Services that offers student internships, the re-outfitting of a computer lab and STEM room, and building opportunities in computer science
Odebolt Arthur Battle Creek Ida Grove Community School District	2024	Travis Chizek tchizek@oabcig.org	Program will provide industry relevant workshops that allow students to get hands-on experience with the latest machinery and tools used in manufacturing to develop skills in CNC machining, production planning and lean manufacturing principles.
Oelwein Community School District	2026 and 2017	Dalton Lape dlape@oelwein.k12.ia.us Kris Martin kmartin@oelwein.k12.ia.us	Integrate new pathways in Computer Science, Family and Consumer Science, while expanding Health Careers/Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training. Introduce a Work-Based Learning Coordinator role, a critical new element that ensures long-term coordination between educators, businesses, and postsecondary partners. PROJECT ONE was created by the district in conjunction with the Oelwein Economic and Area Development to create opportunities for students to flourish in robust work-based learning environments. With support from local businesses, authentic learning opportunities will provide students with a rich opportunity to explore interests, learn in cross-curricular classrooms and develop skills of the universal constructs.
Ogden Community School District	2023	Reed Smith reed.smith@ogden.k12.ia.us	Create authentic learning opportunities for students through community projects with the goal of engaging students in classes and extending that learning into a real-world setting

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Okoboji Community School District	2023	Alex Spooner aspooner@okobojischools.org	The Curious Minds program immerses students in the world of virtual reality, 3-D design, and game development, fostering collaboration with experts across various fields. Through cutting-edge software and tools like VR goggles and 3-D printers, middle schoolers actively engage with designers, building their portfolios and honing the skills needed to excel in STEM.
Okoboji Community School District	2018	Becky Rients brients@okobojischools.org Kori Clouse kclouse@okobojischools.org	No Boundaries for high school students and No Boundaries Middle School for 8th graders at Okoboji Middle School. The vision of this project is to provide real-world and relevant opportunities that don't exist in the traditional school setting and to expand this model to students across the region.
Osage Community School District (Communications)	2025	Kiesha Trettin kiesha.trettin@osage.k12.ia.us	Expand the Green Devil Sports Network (GSPN), a student-run streaming program that teaches media production, marketing, and business communication. Through GSPN, students gain hands-on experience by streaming school sports and events while collaborating with local businesses to create professional digital content. This aligns with our district's goal of preparing students for success by fostering leadership, communication, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.
Osage Community School District (CNA)	2022	Kelley Molitor kmolitor@osage.k12.ia.us	A CNA program was developed for junior and senior students then a health care career pathway for students. The model will be started with Osage Community Schools students and then offered to students in St. Ansgar and Riceville, creating a county wide academy.
Osage Community School District (Heavy Equipment)	2023	Brent Jennings bjennings@osage.k12.ia.us Craig Christensen (St Ansgar) cchristensen@stacsd.org	Osage and St. Ansgar Community School Districts are collaborating with local businesses to create a pathway to introduce students to careers in operating large equipment. Two CAT simulators, a small wheeled loader, and an excavator simulator, are housed in an enclosed trailer that can easily travel between the two districts. These simulators are part of the Industrial Technology Departments at each school. Each school will have the trailer for two of the four quarters of each school year.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Pella Community School District	2026, 2023, 2022, 2021 and 2020	Lowell Ernst lowell.ernst@pellaschools.org Teri Vos vost@central.edu	The Pella Schools Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program has the objective of providing students with career exploration and an in-demand, work-based learning experience as an EMT, expanding on existing career awareness opportunities. Connector guides K-12 students from career awareness through career experiences and into local careers. Modules were identified based on in-demand careers in Marion County, including technology, hospitality, patient care and early childhood education. A new automation cell in advanced manufacturing will provide opportunities to work in teams to understand the inputs and outputs of an automated system. The automation cell provides learning competencies which are key to the Industrial Technology program and Engineering Assistant Apprenticeship.
Pleasant Valley Community School District	2022	Greg Smith smithgreg@pleasval.org	Pleasant Valley Community School District will update existing classroom and coursework to provide an introductory course in CNC Machining. Students successfully completing the introductory courses can take advanced course work on the SCC campus where they can complete an industry recognized CNC Machine Operator Certificate. We have three students who have completed or are active in a registered apprenticeship at Arconic. There is even more demand for this program now than when we originally submitted as expressed by area businesses.
Pocahontas Community School District	2026	Ayssa Maske amaske@pocahontas.k12.ia.us	Our STEM BEST school to work program will bridge classroom learning and real-world application through authentic, employment-driven opportunities that prepare students for future work-based experiences. The program will be built upon partnerships among local industries, community organizations, and higher education institutions to design personalized, standards-aligned learning that develops both academic and career-ready skills across multiple disciplines.
Red Oak Community School District	2024	Janelle Erickson ericksonj@redoakschools.org	Structured opportunities for career-focused learning to be achieved through planning and reflection activities, authentic learning activities and competency growth-focused projects, both within the school walls and in supervised workplace environments.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Riverside Community School District	2025 and 2021	Jamie Meek jmeek@riverside.k12.ia.us	RSTN provides online streams of all home events for Riverside Community Schools. We work with local businesses to create ads to play during breaks in the activities and also with KJAN on sports broadcasting of the events. Developed a greenhouse with a dynamic, interdisciplinary initiative designed to equip students with hands-on, career-aligned learning experiences in STEM, agriculture, and sustainability. By leveraging strong partnerships with local businesses, educational organizations, and community members, the program will serve as a catalyst for workforce readiness, community engagement, and academic excellence. Combining STEM principles with real-world challenges in food production, resource management, and ecological preservation. Students will engage in project-based learning to design, construct, and manage a functional greenhouse, equipping them with skills in engineering, data analysis, plant science, and sustainability practices.
Rock Valley Community School District - Rocket Manufacturing	2014	Micah Weber mweber@rvclass.org Eric Van Veldhuizen evanveld@rvcsd.org Nancy Dickmann ndickman@rvcsd.org	Rocket Manufacturing is a student-run manufacturing business that works with local businesses by crafting metal machined parts and tools and fabricating items requested by businesses or individuals. Students carry out the marketing, accounting, ordering, design, production and customer communications.
Roland-Story Community School District	2025	Nathan Clausen nclausen@roland-story.k12.ia.us Andrew McQuillen amcquillen@roland-story.k12.ia.us	Program will provide opportunities for advanced welding students to research, plan, estimate, and fabricate new, more efficient industry grade welding booths to meet growing enrollment needs within the industrial technology classes with industry partners for the school district.

S-T

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
St. Ansgar Community School District	2026	Craig Christensen cchristensen@stacsd.org	Utilize a CDL Truck Driving Simulator to replicate a commercial truck in a safe, controlled environment. Uses realistic steering, pedals, and gear shifts, and simulates real-world driving situations such as highway travel, backing maneuvers, shifting, and operating in different weather conditions. The simulator allows students to safely practice essential CDL skills-pre-trip inspections, coupling/uncoupling, and handling emergencies-without the risks or costs of using an actual truck.
Saint Albert Catholic Schools	2019	Jeremy Hulshizer hulshizerj@saintalbertschools.org	A mobile STEM Lab where teachers will be able to check out materials to implement the building of robots, coding and computational thinking into their curriculum. Components include Elem. and MS robotic teams, 3rd grade coding, and 8th grade exploratory coding course, and Ozobots unit in 8th grade.
Sergeant Bluff-Luton Community School District	2023	Chad Janzen janzecha@sblschools.com	An expansion of healthcare pathways and biology courses to work with community partners and expose students to the breadth of healthcare careers with use of Anatomage Table.
Seymour Community School District	2025		The Seymour Alternative School Project-Based Learning Program serves students identified as At-Risk for dropping out of school. Using improved projects-based, hands-on learning opportunities such as welding simulators or carpentry skills these students will be provided an experience to do product design and improvement, production planning, production shop management, financial management and the logistics of planning, resourcing, and producing a product which is marketable within the community.
Sheldon Community School District	2022	Cindy Prewitt cindy.prewitt@sheldonschools.com Amanda De Groot amanda.degroot@sheldonschools.com	Sheldon CAPS is a project-based work experience class where students are paired with organizations in their community as clients. The CAPS associates complete projects for their clients, learning about leadership, communication, purpose, innovation, and professionalism along the way. The innovative program has spurred many other tangent work-based learning classes including internships and pre-apprenticeships in Sheldon. The work-based learning coordinator meets with students and business partners to place students in workplaces that include banking, healthcare, manufacturing, and more.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District	2025	Casey Hertz casey.hertz@thegenerals.org Katie Schroder katie.schroder@thegenerals.org	Expanding the school-to-career and CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies) programs that are a part of the work-based learning pathways program. The goal for the school-to-career (STC) program is to provide students with a career exploration experience where students will choose a business/organization that is a career interest of theirs and then work on real projects and learn skills to be successful in a variety of work environments.
Sigourney Community School District	2026	Jenny Bell jenny.bell@sigourneyschools.com Shannon Webb shannon.webb@sigourneyschools.com	Implement the Savage Advantage program to ensure every student has a voice and a pathway into STEM-related careers, entrepreneurship, and community leadership. By emphasizing student-driven learning, community partnerships, and equitable participation, this initiative will provide students with the tools so they might see themselves as a capable creator, innovator, and future professional contributing to Iowa's workforce and economy.
Sioux Center Christian School	2023	Paul Brenner pbrenner@siouxcenterchristian.com	A new space will be created where students can practice STEM future-ready skills while being led by industry experts. This strategy will help develop leaders for tomorrow, increase classroom engagement and help students discover careers in STEM fields.
Sioux Center Community School District	2022 and 2021	Jill Harskamp jill.harskamp@scwarriors.org	Our STEM BEST program is focused on authentic learning experiences and career exploration. Self-discovery and understanding are central to our program. Students explore their gifts, talents, and career interests. They complete real-world projects and simulations that allow them to experience a variety of careers. Our program includes a Career Explorations class for 9-12 grade students. This class connects students with businesses in our community to introduce them to the opportunities right in their backyard as well as give them meaningful connections to local business leaders.
Sioux Central Community School District	2023	Melanie Bloom mbloom@siouxcentral.org	Educational greenhouse, plant science, food security, work-based learning. Few opportunities to purchase food produced locally exist. Our agriculture education program is working to improve this through work-based learning projects and improving production practices through the application of STEM practices.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Sioux City Community School District	2024, 2022 and 2018	MacKenzie Hiserote hiserom@live.siouxcityschools.com Eric Kilburn kilbure@live.siouxcityschools.com	The inspiration for enhancing our health science pathways tied to the business community and addressing real-life scenarios, comes from student interest and industry needs. The STEM Best funding helped support the purchase of the Anatomage Table. Students can interact with well-preserved digital cadavers instead of aged and degenerated bodies. The accurate details and rich content draw students' interest leading to more effective education outcomes. The table is also made available to our business partners for their own training purposes creating a stronger partnership between education and industry.
South Hamilton Community School District	2026 & 2025	Heather Holm heather_holm@s-hamilton.k12.ia.us Dede Henderson dede_henderson@s-hamilton.k12.ia.us	Expanding to include a discovery Center by creating a fully immersive, career-connected environment that bridges STEM exploration with real-world professions. The Discovery Center introduces clearly defined Discovery Stations in fields such as flight, light, engineering, life sciences, robotics/coding, technology, creative arts, and media. Each station will include signage and prompts that explicitly connect skills to future careers, helping students understand real-world applications of their learning. By collaborating with local businesses and community organizations through the Jewell Area Development Enterprise, we will transform a traditional classroom into a flexible learning environment to facilitate multidisciplinary learning experiences that connect real-world applications to academic knowledge. Students will engage in projects that integrate STEM, literacy, math, and science.
Southeast Warren Community School District	2024	Alex Rodgers alex.rodgers@se-warren.k12.ia.us	The Animal Learning Center will focus on advanced cattle production, specifically feed efficiency and record keeping by upgrading a cattle barn. Additional space will provide the potential to partner with local 4-H clubs and students outside of the program
Southwest Valley Middle School of Villisca	2017	Erin Wetzel ewetzel@southwestvalley.org	Career Stop will offer a learning space where area businesses can come in to teach students skills they use on the job. Teachers and businesses will work together to create curriculum units that integrate entrepreneur and apprenticeship skills and hands-on learning for students.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Spencer High School	2016	Nathan Wendt nwendt@spencerschools.org Kiersten Doebel kdoebel@spencerschools.org	Students have multiple career pathways to choose from. No Boundaries is a passion-driven, project-based learning experience where students tackle real world issues for community organizations, and develop professional skills along the way. Students can also take extended career experience classes focusing on agriculture, manufacturing, health sciences, entrepreneurship, construction, or even a custom-made experience to fit the interests of the students. Each program allows students the opportunity to make connections with professionals in the area and gain necessary employability skills.
Spirit Lake Middle School	2017	Kyle Zankowski kzankowski@spirit-lake.k12.ia.us	A multipurpose educational makerspace was created to connect the school with the community and provide hands-on, creative ways for students to innovate while engaging in all academic disciplines.
St. Mary School (Humboldt)	2018	Ashlyn Clark aclark@stmaryhumboldt.org	K-6 large and small group STEM classes
Stanton Community School District	2019	Jeff Grebin jgrebin@stantonschools.com Jill Isaacson jisaacson@stantonschools.com	Students gain work-based learning experiences by working on authentic projects with a business partner. Using state-of-the art equipment and software, students identify a solution that adds value to the business.
Starmont Community School District	2022	Cassie Gruman cassiegruman@starmont.k12.ia.us Payton Rundle prundle@starmont.k12.ia.us	Our program is a pull-out program where students K-12th grade have the option to explore a Makerspace. Sometimes small groups come or whole classrooms. The elementary classes have an eight-day rotation and the opportunity to come twice in that rotation to the Makerspace. The secondary come to the Makerspace on their own time when they have STAR(Intervention) or study hall. Our Makerspace teachers also co teach with teachers if requested. The goal is for all K-12th grade to have access and explore the Makerspace throughout the year.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Storm Lake Community School District - Elementary	2022	Jacquie Drey jdrey@slcsd.org	Storm Lake Early Elementary School, aims to link early learners with agriculture through community partnerships. In our county, fewer farms with higher yields result in diminished generational agricultural knowledge. To enlighten our students about our nation's reliance on a thriving agricultural system driven by science and technology, the EES offers hands-on activities in the regular classroom as well as in an outdoor learning space. These educational opportunities and connecting with our community foster appreciation for the vital role farming plays in our lives.
Storm Lake Community School District - Secondary	2026, 2025 and 2022	Stacey Cole scole@slcsd.org Mel Fisher mfisher@slcsd.org	Expand program to offer “Invention Education” teaching students to think like inventors, combining creativity, problem solving, and real-world application. Introducing the concept of applying all areas of STEM at one time, and not in isolation, mirroring how professionals solve real world problems. This expansion builds on our current successes and aligns with our mission to provide students with authentic, multidisciplinary learning experiences that connect academic content to real-world skills. The Ascend Program at our high school was created to open up time in kids schedules so that they could get out into the workplace and have opportunities not available in a traditional classroom. Ascend is competency based allowing us to both accelerate and remediate within the same program. Expanding to launch Stormy's, a school store that will operate as an extension of the AMPED on Algebra course. Students earn both Algebra 1 and Business credits by learning the fundamentals of business operations, from product design and creation to pricing, marketing, and customer service. Guided by two instructors and supported by business partners, students will produce and sell merchandise such as T-shirts, tumblers, and other products. Students in Geometry in Construction will also contribute by creating and selling items like benches and sheds built using geometry standards.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Sumner-Fredericksburg Community School District	2026	Taylor Volker volkert@sfcougars.k12.ia.us	Sumner-Fredericksburg Middle School (SFMS) proposes Pounce Into PBL, an innovative, schoolwide project-based learning experience designed to connect STEM concepts with real-world applications and career pathways. This 10-day immersive program will engage all students in grades 5-8 in hands-on, interdisciplinary projects that integrate literacy, science, math, and technology. Students will have the opportunity to select from multiple project options based on their personal interests, strengths, and goals.
Tri-Center Community School District	2019	Angela Huseman ahuseman@tctrojans.org	Tri-Center Community School District will introduce students to career opportunities available in the medical field and provide hands-on experiences for those students who are interested in pursuing a career in the medical field through strong partnerships with local medical agencies.
Turkey Valley Community School District	2022	Michelle Hoy mhoy@turkey-v.k12.ia.us	We have constructed a Greenhouse. Students have been actively working on several projects within the greenhouse. FarmBot, a computerized farming system, hydroponic tower system in which we will be having lettuce grown in the system and students and staff will be able to choose for a lunch item. Students will be planting vegetables and flowers for our spring open house. Then STEM BEST Funds have allowed us to start a student manager program in which a student manages the greenhouse after school hours.

U-Z

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Unity Christian High School	2024	Kevin Haan khaan@unitychristian.net	Utilize Aquaponics in Biology to offer a hands-on, non-traditional approach to learning and provide authentic opportunities for students to practice being community citizens.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Urbandale Community School District	2025	Darlene Wagner wagnerd@urbandaleschools.com Brandon Schrauth schrauthb@urbandaleschools.com	Program will provide district wide exploratory and work based learning opportunities for students. “Discover Your Path” intends to scaffold opportunities to grade levels as follows: PreK-5 Launch: Build career awareness by connecting learning with real-world contexts, introducing students to diverse career fields and their relevance. 6-8 Explore: Embeds career exploration within core content and STEM programming, fostering self-awareness and career identity. 9-12 Soar Service Areas: High school students engage in one of five Service Areas aligned with career fields.
Van Buren Community School District	2023	Jessie Greiner jessie.greiner@van-burencsd.org	VBCO Print Shop is a print shop ran by students. Students meet with community business partners or Van Buren County School personnel to design graphics, measure spaces, print designs and install graphics to help beautify the community.
Wapsie Valley Community School District	2021	Jordan Cusick jcusick@wapsievalleyschools.org TJ Murphy tmurphy@wapsievalleyschools.org	CAPS is a Future ready program designed to promote students in the work-based learning areas related to STEM fields.
Waterloo Community School District	2026, 2023, 2022 and 2019	Erin Sale salee@waterlooschools.org	Developing an innovative new course: AI in the Workplace, providing students with hands-on experience in applying artificial intelligence concepts to real-world scenarios, enhancing both technical proficiency and problem-solving skills. This course bridges classroom instruction with workforce readiness, ensuring students graduate with a combination of foundational knowledge, specialized expertise, and an innovation mindset. A Biomedical Lab Technician program will be added as part of the Health Sciences pathways in their career center. The partnership will utilize skills learned through classroom instruction to navigate scenarios in health professions. The Computer Science/IT pathway will be expanded to offer a Cyber Security Pathway. Students will be able to obtain certifications, including Security Pro, COMP TIA and other ethical hacking certifications. The district will enhance the Electrical Career Pathway with the purchase of a Switch Vehicle. This will provide students the challenge of building a full size, road-worthy electric vehicle.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Waukee APEX	2022 and 2016	Kathleen Sender ksender@waukeeschools.org	Waukee Aspiring Professional Experience (APEX) develops highly skilled, adaptable global innovators and leaders. Waukee APEX draws on the expertise of area business partners to bring passion-based learning and authentic experience to high school. Students add value to partners while exploring career possibilities identified by economic trends within the metro area and state. Students gain valuable experience, earn credentials and college credits, and connect to community business partners.
Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District	2024	Bryan Benham bryan.benham@wsr.k12.ia.us	Gohawk Manufacturing to help teach technical and soft skills for industry partners. Students will work at company sites and the school shop to build customer parts and projects working alongside industry professionals as they learn the trade.
West Des Moines Community School District	2022 and 2019		Equipment was added to the manufacturing lab, including the HAAS Lathe and Wireless Probe. These additions will help build classroom hours and skill development towards apprenticeship agreements with partners for welding, computer integrated manufacturing, and beyond.
West Des Moines Community School District - Walnut Creek Campus	2025	Randi Glaser glaserr@wdmcs.org Jason Fantz fantzj@wdmcs.org	Integrate hydroponics into the curriculum to provide students with hands-on experience in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) while fostering entrepreneurial, social-emotional, and leadership skills. By combining hydroponic cultivation with traditional STEM education, students will gain a deeper understanding of biological processes, sustainable agriculture, and technological innovation introducing students to fields of biotechnology and sustainable agriculture. By equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary for these emerging industries this program contributes to the development of a future workforce that is both innovative and environmentally conscious.
West Lyon Community School District	2022	Nate Sievers nsievers@wlwildcats.org	Day-long field trips will take place to tour businesses in the advanced manufacturing sector. Students will be connected with businesses to meet employers, have the students witness what is happening in those facilities and come back to our program and practice skills that relate to those careers.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
West Marshall Community School District	2022	Mari Haley mhaley@wmcsd.org Amy McKibben amckibben@wmcsd.org	The major aim of West Marshall's STEM BEST HD program is to start students younger and to take them farther along the computer science path before graduating from high school. The district works to accomplish this through four different strategies. These include developing a comprehensive K-12 computer science curriculum, building a K-5 STEM lending library, leading STEM teacher academies and hosting an annual K-8 family STEM night.
Western Christian High School	2024	Shawn De Stinger shawn.destigter@westernchristianhs.com	Enhance and grow the JumpSTART Pathway and CTE Program, which are non-traditional educational programs that train and equip selected students to enter the trades workforce sector upon graduation. Programs teach students to become career-ready and servant-hearted individuals through unique "hands-on" course offerings and through a variety of authentic field experiences within the local community.
Western Dubuque Community School District	2025	Lindsay Schlichtmann lindsay.schlichtmann@wdbqschools.org	Create a Maker's Space classroom to utilize technology, tools, and materials that would enhance learning in industry-related products for 6-8th grade students. Establish partnerships within the community to support student exploration and learning in Core Standards through 21st century skill application with authentic experiences.
Winterset Community School District	2024	Cam Smith csmith@winterset.k12.ia.us	Create pathways for students within the healthcare field and to expose students to the variety of healthcare careers with the addition of an Anatomage Table to be used in Health Science Program, Biology, Human Body, College Biology and Genetics, and College Anatomy and Physiology classes.
Woodbine Community School District - Elementary	2022 and 2021	Tracy Kelley tkelley@woodbine.k12.ia.us Maureen Allen mallen@woodbine.k12.ia.us Jill Ridder jridder@woodbine.k12.ia.us Shawna Harris atsharris@woodbine.k12.ia.us	Interest-based STEM activities are available for students in grades K-4. Students participate in four, 30 to 45-minute classes on a weekly basis with 16 career-oriented options.
Woodbine Community School District - IGNITE Pathways	2023, 2022, 2021 and 2020	Michelle Barry mbarry@ignite-pathways.com	IGNITE Pathways is designed for students to “learn by doing.” IGNITE provides hands-on experiences that will easily transition into post-graduation life and high-demand jobs. Exploration includes instruction modules for an automotive program, applied sciences, health sciences, human services, robotics and automation and exercise science courses. Introductory healthcare courses are also available for 7-12 grade students.

Awarded School	Year(s) Awarded	Contact(s)	Description
Xavier High School	2025	David Schubert david.schubert@crxcs.org	Expand manufacturing lab and machining pathway to provide students with the opportunity to build industry-specific skills within the advanced manufacturing pathway for students 9-12.