

Every Student Succeeds with STEM Mobilization Challenge #1

The Challenge: Reach out to your state's ESSA plan writers encouraging them to prioritize STEM learning.

As states develop new plans under ESSA, all members of the STEM community have an important role to play to keep great STEM teaching and great STEM learning a top priority for students.

But what can I/should I be doing?

Below are several tools you can use as you (1) comment on your state plan, (2) identify the right person to contact, and (3) contact your state education agency directly. These tools include:

- Tips for **identifying the right person** to contact
- **Phone call** talking points and tips
- **Email** template and guidance for crafting your response
- **Sample tweets** to adapt and post

What can you expect to your outreach? Maybe just a form letter? Or maybe just a simple thank you. But all the responses together add up to real momentum.

As you track your impact, share any responses you receive back with us at:

Twitter: [@success_STEM](https://twitter.com/success_STEM)

Email: successwithSTEM@100Kin10.org

Thanks for everything you are doing to make a difference in STEM learning for our young people!



Every Student Succeeds With **STEM!**

Tool #1: Tips for Identifying the Right Person to Contact

Get your message to the right person! Knowing who you are talking to will help shape your message. Finding the most influential person right now is key.

1. You can't go wrong in writing to your chief state school officer and/or governor. Download contacts at <http://www.successwithstem.org/resource/directory-sea-governor/>

In any state ultimately these two public officials are responsible for the plan and will have systems to receive, track and respond to your outreach.

2. Identify the actual writers/contributors to the plan. Find your state's ESSA website. Search: [your state] + ESSA and you are likely to find a portal quickly. Or there's a [source](#) for ESSA Websites by State from the National PTA.

Look for the "Steering Committee" or "Implementation Committee." Do you know any of the people on this list? Do you know if any of the people on this list are STEM-friendly? Find their emails first.

Look for "sub-committees" or "work groups." Do you know any of the people on this list? Do you know if any of the people on this list are STEM-friendly? Find their emails next. You don't need to find them all, but look for influencers like committee chairs or members of the "school improvement" or "Titles" committee.

3. Identify STEM champions in your state department of education. Go to your state's department of education website

Go to "About"

Look for an organizational chart and someone responsible for instruction, curriculum, STEM or related like mathematics or science.

The header features a dark blue background with a network diagram of lines and dots. On the left and right sides, there are icons of a document with a green highlight. The text 'Every Student Succeeds With STEM!' is centered in white, with 'STEM!' highlighted in a bright green box.

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Tool #2: Call your Chief – Phone Call Talking Points and Tips

Phone calls make a difference. Even if you don't speak directly to someone, staff members often pass the message along in one form or another. Even a voicemail needs to be logged and noted as stakeholder feedback. Don't be shy!

Steps for a Successful Phone Call to Make STEM a Priority:

1. Call the main number at the state education agency.

I'm -----, a [insert your role: teacher/education leader/STEM expert] really passionate about STEM education. Can you please connect me with the right person to talk about the ESSA state plan development?

2. Talk to the State Plan Manager.

[About you]

I'm -----, a [insert your role: teacher/education leader/STEM expert] really passionate about STEM education. I know you are developing the state plan right now and I'm eager to make sure that STEM education is included and prioritized.

[Make the Case]

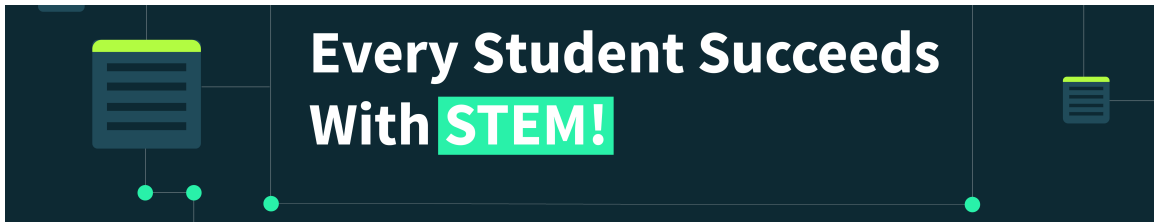
We know that STEM education helps ensure students have the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they need to succeed in school, work, and life. Making STEM a priority in [our state] under ESSA can help ensure all our children have the opportunity not only to receive a great education, but also to pursue the college or career pathway of their choice.

[Be specific]

I hope that STEM learning is represented in our overall state vision. Additionally, STEM should have priority in Title II programs and funding to help teachers in these critical areas. And in Title IV where we know that high-quality STEM education is essential to a well-rounded education for all students.

[Offer to Help]

Are there ways that STEM stakeholders can help you in writing and reviewing the plan to ensure STEM is available for young people in our state?



Tool #3: Template and Guidance for Crafting Your Email: Share your story and request that your state prioritizes STEM

Write a simple, personalized and clear email advocating for your issue.

- A. Think for a minute: Why is it important to me to prioritize STEM in the state plan, and ultimately the future of education in my state?
- B. Review the [messaging framework](#) to understand the big ideas.
- C. Brainstorm something specific to share like:
 - a. A story of an individual kid who got really excited about STEM in your class
 - b. Your experience of how a specific professional development activity changed your teaching
 - c. A data point(s) about how STEM learning has changed/improved over the years in your classroom/school



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EMAIL TEMPLATE:

Dear [formal title/name of official]:

[Explain your reason for writing]

I'm writing today because I believe that making STEM a priority in [your state] under the new Every Student Succeeds Act can help ensure all our children have the opportunity for not only a great education, but also to pursue the college or career pathway of their choice.

[Introduce yourself and why it matters to you]

Example: I am a mathematics teacher with more than 10 years of experience in middle schools. I care about our children's future and know they need a strong mathematical foundation to develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they need to succeed in school, work, and life.

[Capture their imagination with a story or data point]

Example: I want to share some interesting data that shows with more hands-on learning experiences, our students increased their science scores on states tests by XX%.

[Help tie their work to your work]

As you develop the ESSA state plan, I hope you will think about me and my classroom. I know that STEM learning opportunities and support for STEM teachers are mentioned specifically throughout the new law and its guidance. And I understand that ESSA provides states with flexibility to set new policy and funding priorities, and you can do that to support STEM learning.

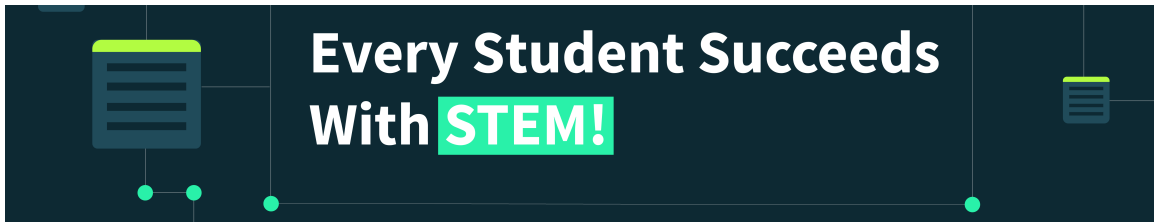
[Reinforce your request]

We need strong STEM learning today for our future tomorrow. STEM is critical for a well-rounded education for all students. It is a way of thinking and learning as much as it is tied to a specific curriculum. It helps engage kids in school and learn important life skills, such as creativity, perseverance and experimentation. It is fundamental and I hope our state plan in [your state name] will reflect that.

[Thanks and contact information]

Thank you for all you are doing to make education stronger in [our state]. For more stories about STEM learning, don't hesitate to contact me at [contact info].

Sincerely,
[signed]



Tool #4: Sample Tweets to Adapt and Post

Share your successes! Tweet updates about your outreach.

Examples:

#STEM matters! We need inspired leadership from @[chief office] to make STEM a priority in our [state] #ESSA plan @success_STEM

I just sent an email to @[chief office] about the need to prioritize #STEM and well rounded edu in [our state] #ESSA plan @success_STEM

#STEM opens doors for all students to be #innovators and #creators. Let's make STEM a priority in our [state] #ESSA plan @success_STEM