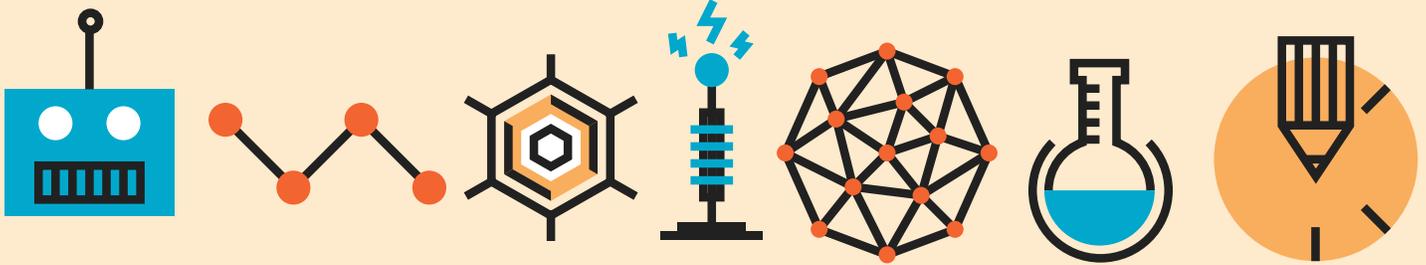


STEM Education in California

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics



↓ BACKGROUND

Seven of the ten fastest growing occupations are in STEM fields, making STEM education a key part of career-readiness. Yet, currently in California, many schools don't even offer courses critical to STEM education and, ultimately, STEM careers: 25 percent of students attend schools that don't offer calculus, 15 percent attend schools that don't offer physics and 10 percent attend schools with no chemistry classes.

Part of the limited STEM education in California is a holdover from old policies, such as No Child Left Behind, which forced teachers to drop science and technology classes in order to meet math and language arts requirements. STEM education is also hobbled by limited professional development for teachers, inadequate learning materials, and insufficient opportunities for hands-on learning.

★ WHAT WE'RE DOING

Children Now and the California STEM Network

California's lawmakers must make STEM education an immediate priority, so that all high school students in California graduate prepared for college and the opportunity to pursue challenging STEM professions, should they choose.

As a project of Children Now, the California STEM Network is working to increase access to STEM curricula and instruction for youth throughout the state, with a particular emphasis on girls and kids of color. We want STEM learning to be continuous for students, and include early exposure, expanded access to afterschool and summer STEM programming, and connected K-12 and post-secondary education experiences. With targeted state funding and local accountability plans, the California STEM Network is pushing lawmakers to increase investments in STEM education, including better recruitment and training for STEM educators.

▲ PROGRESS

California's students now have better access to quality STEM education. Just as the Common Core State Standards raised expectations for achievement in math, the Next Generation Science Standards represent a huge victory for STEM education. The standards will help ensure that all schools teach science and engineering in a way that is relevant to the challenges of today's world, with topics like clean energy production and space exploration.

→ THE FUTURE

California's schools have begun implementing Common Core mathematics standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. With the new state strategy for school funding, called the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), school districts have an unprecedented opportunity to improve student outcomes by investing more budget dollars toward the teaching of critical subjects, including STEM. LCFF requires districts to engage the public as they develop their budgets, which means community members have the opportunity to work with their schools to promote STEM education in the coming months. Under LCFF, local leaders are the decision-makers, and we are working hard to encourage educators, parents, business-people, and community members to get involved and get their schools to invest in STEM education.

