



Advisory Board Meeting Summary

Thursday, October 23, 2025
10:00 AM to 11:30AM

Location: Virtual

Board Members Present

Bev Berns (Vice Chair) Keystone AEA	X	Seth Harms West Delaware High School	X	Anderson Sainci City of Dubuque	
Sue Burrack Waldorf University	X	Doreen Hayek (Chair) University of Northern Iowa	X		
Kendra Crooks Extension and Outreach	X	Jeff Jacobs TDS Automation	X		
Rachel Dillavou Boys & Girls Club of the Cedar Valley		Marla Loecke Iowa Workforce Development	X		
Larry Escalada University of Northern Iowa	X	Allison Plunkett John Deere Dubuque Works	X		

X – Present

Others in Attendance: Jeff Beneke (Northeast Iowa Regional STEM Hub), and Kari Britain (Iowa STEM Council).

Meeting Summary

Doreen called the board meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

Budget/Expenditures

Beneke presented the Year-to-Date financial statement. As of September 30, 2025, year-to-date expenditures for the Northeast Iowa STEM Hub totaled approximately \$309,580 representing about 41% of the overall fiscal year 2026 budget.

Update on Scale-Up Awards

Beneke provided an update on the Scale-Up awards.

The Scale-Up Request for Proposal closed October 22. The STEM Council received approximately 40 proposals. Three proposals will be selected for the 2026-2029 menu. One program will be selected in each of the three categories: Math/Engineering, Computer Science/ Technology and Science.

Cedar Valley Family STEM Festival

The Cedar Valley Family STEM Festival occurred on October 16 at Wartburg College in Waverly. Beneke noted the festival report will be presented during the next Board meeting. The festival had 53 exhibitors representing 740 people in attendance.

Iowa STEM Teacher Award

Nominations for the Iowa STEM Teacher Award have closed. The Northeast Iowa STEM Region received 59 nominations representing 44 unique teachers.

Teachers have until November 5 to apply for the award. Thank you to everyone that volunteered to review applications.

STEM BEST

Three funding opportunities are available to K-12 public and private schools under the STEM BEST programming.

STEM BEST Enhancement – Application closes November 5.

- Award Amount: Up to \$15,000 | Performance Period: Dec. 2025 – June 1, 2026
- Purpose: Support and remove barriers for active STEM BEST® Programs. Examples may include but are not limited to staff professional development, industry-grade equipment purchases, or space renovations.
- Requirements: Only available to schools with an existing STEM BEST® Program.

STEM BEST New or Recurring Grants close November 10.

- Award Amount: Up to \$50,000 | Performance Period: 17–18 months
- Purpose: Expand or grow your STEM BEST® Program. Examples may include but are not limited to scaling to a new grade level, adding new course strands, expanding to a new building or developing new partnerships.
- Requirements: Must propose a new idea/program not previously funded; requires a 2:1 cost-share; applicant must be an accredited Iowa public or private school.

Iowa STEM Council Updates

Computer Science Week will be December 6 through March 12. To learn more, visit

<https://educate.iowa.gov/headline-story/2025-12-02/celebrating-csed-week>

Announcements

No further announcements.

Important Dates

Event/Activity	Date	Time	Location
STEM BEST Enhancement application deadline	November 5	4:59PM	Iowagrants.gov
STEM Teacher Award Application deadline	November 5	4:59PM	Iowagrants.gov
STEM BEST Application closes	November 10	4:59PM	Iowagrants.gov
Computer Science Week	December 6-12	NA	NA
Northeast Iowa Regional STEM Advisory Board meeting	December 16	10:00AM to noon	TBD

Meeting adjourned at 11:30AM.

The next meeting will be held in-person on December 16 at 10:00AM. Location to be determined.