



Manchester Community Schools
STEM Five-Year Plan
2020 - 2025
[#SquireSTEM](#)

*STEM Logo design by MCS student, Noelle Walt

Meet the MCS STEM Innovation Team

(Team Member Bio Slide Presentation)

STEM Innovation Team

1. Sue Gnagy, Manchester Community Schools Curriculum Director, Indiana Science Olympiad Executive Board Secretary
2. Amy Korus, Manchester Elementary School Principal
3. Thomas Baldwin, Manchester Intermediate School Principal
4. Jon Lippe, Manchester Jr/Sr High School Principal
5. Mary Randall, Manchester Community Schools Media Specialist
6. Joel Eichenauer, PK - Gr 3 STEM Teacher, Math Interventionist
7. Andrew Chinworth, Gr 4 - 6 STEM Teacher, Technology Coordinator, Science Olympiad Coach
8. Jen Birch, Gr 6 Science Teacher, PLTW Gateway Facilitator
9. Jabin Burnworth, HS Biology, Anatomy & Physiology, & AP Environmental Science Teacher
10. Greta Miller, HS Biology & Advanced Biology Teacher
11. Jason Doehrman, Geometry & Calculus Teacher
12. Aaron Hooks, Advanced Manufacturing, Computer Science, & Robotics (CTE) Teacher
13. Shelly Leifer, Work-based Learning Coordinator, Business (CTE) Teacher
14. Stacy Stetzel, Manchester University Education Professor
15. Suzanne Beyeler, Manchester University Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies
16. Tara Whicker, Certified Environmental Educator, Fort Caswell, NC

STEM School Leadership Team Chair Contact Information

Sue Gnagy
Manchester Community Schools
404 W. 9th Street
North Manchester, IN 46962
sue_gnagy@mcs.k12.in.us
260-982-7518 ext. 206

Principal Information

Amy Korus
Manchester Elementary School
301 S. River Road

North Manchester, IN 46962

Thomas Baldwin
Manchester Intermediate School
20 W Woodring Road
Laketon, IN 46942

Dr. Jon Lippe
Manchester Jr/Sr High School
1 Squire Drive
North Manchester, IN 46962

Superintendent Information

Dr. Teresa Gremaux
Manchester Community Schools
404 W. 9th Street
North Manchester, IN 46962
260-982-7518 ext.

Manchester Community Schools

Located in the northern part of Wabash County, in the town of North Manchester, Indiana, Manchester Community Schools (MCS) is a public school system that is home to approximately 1,400 students in grades Pre-K - 12. Manchester Elementary School (MES) serves students in grades PK - 3, Manchester Intermediate School (MIS) serves students in grades 4 - 6, and the Manchester Junior/Senior High School (MJSHS) campus serves students in grades 7 - 12. The faculty and staff at MCS are committed to helping all students attain high levels of academic success and personal achievement despite veritable or perceived barriers.

The town of North Manchester resides in the Hoosier Heartland with access to thriving business and industry opportunities in areas such as agribusiness, advanced manufacturing, orthopedic companies, food processors, and senior living. The town is also home to Manchester University, a small private liberal arts university with a recently added School of Pharmacy. Many partnerships have been forged between the district and these and many other local/regional businesses. Because of the generous investments and commitment to excellence extended to our district through these partnerships, MCS has access to cutting edge technology, industry expertise, and financial support.

STEM Plan Executive Summary

In keeping with the purpose and overarching goals established by the National Research Council (of the National Academies, 2012) in *A Framework for K - 12 Science Education (Framework)*, Manchester Community Schools (MCS) aspires to “ensure that by the end of 12th grade, all students have some appreciation of the beauty and wonder of science; possess sufficient knowledge of science and engineering to engage in public discussions on related issues; are careful consumers of scientific and technological information related to their everyday lives; are able to continue to learn about science outside school; and have the skills to enter careers of their choice, including (but not limited to) careers in science, engineering, and technology” (*Framework*, pg. 1).

Built on a foundation of literacy, the pillars of MCS STEM education reflect the three dimensions of the *Framework*, Scientific & Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Academic Standards. At the elementary level, STEM activities are woven into each grade level’s scope and sequence. Using phenomenon-based lesson hooks and “I wonder...” questioning, our youngest scientists and engineers are encouraged to be curious deep thinkers and innovative problem solvers. Learning intentions and success criteria (*I Can* statements) are developmentally progressive and focus on the process as much or more than product.

Evidence-based STEM curriculum delivered by extraordinary educators make MCS STEM unique. These exemplary courses are often used as models for educational best practices. Grade level Scope & Sequence documents include career exploration activities. Whenever possible, unit plans address college/career readiness and employability skills, as well as target the 4 C’s (collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity).

MCS engages faculty & staff in weekly PLC conversations focused on student-centered learning and driven by data and results. Professional development initiatives reflect the District Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. The district has invested in teacher training specific to project- and inquiry-based learning. Each building has established goals for STEM integration. MCS STEM teachers have presented at local, regional, state, and national level conferences and serve on a variety committees, advisory boards, and state organizations. MCS actively pursues grant funding to maximize STEM opportunities, PK - 12.

MCS STEM Vision Statement

Never stop wondering!

Anchor Text: *Never Stop Wondering* by Emily Morgan (NSTA Press)

MCS STEM Mission Statement

Manchester Community Schools creates learning environments that challenge and empower students to reach their highest academic potential and use their learned skills to better their communities.

4 Domains on Evaluation Rubric (Overview)

Culture

- I. Key Focal Points, Concepts, and Common Language
 - A. Practicing Scientists & Engineers
 - B. Curiosity & Wonder
 - C. Deep Thinkers
 - D. Innovative Problem Solvers
 - E. Professional Learning Community (PLC)
 - 1. Collaborative Teams
 - 2. 3 Pillars
 - a) Focus on learning
 - b) Create a collaborative culture
 - c) Results orientation
 - 3. 4 Essential Questions
 - a) Q1 - What do you want your students to know and be able to do?
 - b) Q2 - How will you know if they've learned it?
 - c) Q3 - What will you do if they have not learned it?
 - d) Q4 - What will you do if they already know it?
- II. Profile of a Graduate Attributes
 - A. Literate
 - B. Communicator
 - C. Collaborator
 - D. Problem Solver
 - E. Passionate Learner
 - F. Persevere

Manchester Community Schools is a practicing Professional Learning Community (PLC) at Work.™ In this environment, teachers and administrators, in their collaborative teams, embrace a focus on learning, a collaborative culture and collective responsibility, and a results orientation. Collaborative teams meet at least once a week to examine data, integrate and align curriculum, and identify interventions and extensions to ensure all students learn at high levels. Our commitment to STEM education begins with our preschoolers and extends beyond our graduates. From day one, our youngest students are referred to as practicing scientists and engineers and are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions as they begin to explore and learn about the world around them. Our district has identified six “*Profile of a Graduate*” attributes that all students who graduate from MCS should possess. Developing these attributes is the collective responsibility of all MCS stakeholders.

Over the past several years, the district has made a concerted effort towards STEM certification. The addition of daily common prep time at the elementary and intermediate levels as well as twice weekly collaboration team time at the junior/senior high school has allowed teachers time to collect actionable data, discuss instructional best practices, and plan integrated STEM learning opportunities. The formation of the MCS STEM Innovation Team, with representatives from each building (administrators and teachers) as well as the district level (Curriculum Director) and community partners, has yielded a STEM braintrust. This team conducts STEM conversations with all teachers and welcomes feedback and input at all levels. Student/parent/community feedback data is collected during strategic planning meetings, community engagement nights, and through formal surveys, such as Project Tomorrow's *Speak Up* survey.

The importance of relevant, robust STEM/PBL integration is articulated in the district's strategic plan, vision, and mission. One student achievement goal (INtelligrants pre-application) states that "Students engage in authentic problem solving through participation in STE(A)M, Project- and Inquiry-based learning (PBL, IBL)." Teachers receive instructional supports to assist in the highly effective delivery of academic content.

The district finds unique ways to increase the awareness and connectedness of all things to STEM as well as to celebrate learning. Some examples include social media posts, author/artist visits, display of student work in the community, regional/state competitions, field trips, and hosting STEM events.

Curriculum

- I. Key Focal Points, Concepts, and Common Language
 - A. Literacy
 - B. Three Dimensions
 - 1. Practices (Process Standards)
 - 2. Crosscutting Concepts
 - 3. Integrated Core Content (Academic Standards)
 - C. Developmentally Progressive
 - D. Place-based

Well-trained, passionate educators are our most important resource. Curriculum is selected based on identified high priority Indiana Academic Standards (cross-curricular inquiry-based approach), the Next Generation Science Standards, and the Framework for 21st Century Learning and aligned to the Indiana Department of Education's STEM Six-year Strategic Plan. Age-appropriate employability skills and career exploration are intentionally embedded into

curriculum frameworks. Teachers seek ways to bring the curriculum to life by developing cross curricular lessons, introducing students to authentic contexts (field trips, guest speakers, local issues), and providing opportunities for extending the learning.

STEM at **Manchester Elementary School** (MES) is driven by authentic, place-based learning. Our model is much more than a curriculum, it is a mindset. At the earliest ages, students are referred to as practicing scientists and engineers. Students are immersed in STEM and Computer Science during their “specials” rotations as well as in their classrooms.

Exemplary resources in the hands of stellar educators has allowed MES to develop a STEM program that connects our youngest scientists and engineers to local issues/opportunities while introducing multiple career pathways. *Create2THINK* units provide a comprehensive approach to learning with cross-curricular connections to high priority academic standards as well as links to career exploration and employability skill development. Teachers also use NSTA Press, a recognized leader in science education. NSTA trade books contain up to date classroom-ready, inquiry-based activities that promote literacy, creativity and exploratory thinking. Cornell Lab, a world leader in Ornithology, brings STEM to life with age-appropriate, authentic field research and innovative technology. The *BirdSleuth* curriculum and *Citizen Science* projects take our students from information consumers to practicing scientists. *Mystery Science* lessons are often used as “hooks” to spark excitement and develop schema.

As students progress to **Manchester Intermediate School** (MIS), integrated STEM learning experiences expand to state, national, and global issues/opportunities. Teachers trained in *Project Lead The Way* (PLTW) deliver engaging cross-curricular lessons that include standards-based computer science content. Additionally, *STEM Road Map* curriculum (real-world learning context, delivered through authentic problem-solving pedagogy) from NSTA Press, provides our intermediate students with project-based learning opportunities. *Create2THINK* units provide a comprehensive approach to learning with cross-curricular connections to high priority academic standards as well as links to career exploration and employability skill development. *Generation Genius*, (NSTA) along with other online video resources, provides standards-based learning videos, lesson plans, and activities to enrich the curriculum.

At **Manchester Jr/Sr High School** (MJSHS), STEM opportunities continue to broaden as students take advantage of internships, work-based learning, advanced placement classes, and a wide-range of Career and Technical Education (CTE) course offerings. Teachers meet not only with content area collaborative teams, but also with grade level teams to discuss cross curricular connections and curriculum development. Labs are equipped with tools that facilitate hands-on, experiential learning across the curriculum. Strategic plans include the addition of more collaborative space and state of the art equipment as we continue to chase excellence in all that

we do. As innovative problem solvers (one of the six Portrait of a Graduate attributes), MJSHS is committed to developing opportunities for students across business, marketing, industrial tech, agriculture, and art to work together on authentic projects and business ventures. Teams work in a continuous cycle of improvement, to ensure the units taught align with best practices in instruction and assessment. Our mission is to create robust learning experiences that equip and empower students to create solutions to real world problems, to think deeply, and to stay curious. These attributes are the why that drives what we do and how we do it.

The district provides robust extracurricular offerings to all students. All buildings offer after school computer clubs. These clubs provide extensions to the computer science content taught in the classroom. Additionally, the intermediate, junior, and senior high schools offer robotics and *Science Olympiad. Our FFA program has received national recognition and provides unique STEM learning experiences to our junior/senior high school students. Elements of robotics, Science Olympiad, and FFA are woven into our elementary curriculum.

*Science Olympiad, a National organization founded in 1984, was recognized as a model program by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. Activities at all grade levels are aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and cover all STEM disciplines. MCS has a wealth of success stories generated from our participation in Science Olympiad. Many of our students have cultivated a passion and have chosen a STEM career as a result of their participation in Science Olympiad.

Instruction

- I. Key Focal Points, Concepts, and Common Language
 - A. Project-Based Learning (PBL)
 - B. Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL)
 - 1. Phenomenon-inspired
 - 2. Natural World
 - a) Field Trips
 - b) Guest Speakers
 - C. Project Lead the Way (PLTW)
 - D. *Visible Learning* (Hattie's Effect Size/Influences on Student Achievement)
 - E. Create2THINK

Manchester Community Schools is committed to the training and professional development of all faculty and staff. The district has developed an Instructional Framework that defines common language and best practices to guide teachers and administrators in the delivery and evaluation of highly effective instructional practices. Teachers are encouraged to pursue personalized professional development through participation in workshops, books studies, peer to peer

observations, and webinars. The district has developed a mentor program for faculty and staff “new to MCS.” This program provides “need to know” information, training segments on district initiatives, and a platform for mentees to ask questions and garner feedback.

Project-based learning (PBL) was first introduced at MCS in 2012. The district identified lead teachers that received intensive training through Buck Institute. Using the “train the trainer” model, those teachers conducted PBL training sessions for colleagues, K - 12. In subsequent years, additional PBL training has been offered. The district uses book studies to engage stakeholders in relevant conversations surrounding instructional best practices. Recent book studies have included *The Teacher Clarity Playbook* by Fisher & Frey, *How to Differentiate Instruction in Academically Diverse Classrooms* by Carol Ann Tomlinson, and *Accessible Mathematics* by Steve Leinwand. MCS has several active grants that are providing funds and resources to engage teachers in project- and inquiry-based instructional strategies, blended learning best practices, and STEM-integrated curriculum writing. Whenever possible, teachers connect academic content with real-world problems to create authentic learning experiences.

Collaboration is important both for our teachers and our students. All teachers are members of collaborative teams that collect, discuss, and act on data to plan/drive instruction. Teachers also incorporate collaborative group work in their classrooms. Students engage with their peers on a daily basis as they learn to communicate (speak & listen) and work toward common goals. Career Exploration and Employability Skills components are woven into unit plans with opportunities to explore deeper as students’ interests are peaked.

MCS provides teachers with advanced technology tools and resources to support and enhance instruction. Additionally, the district employs building level technology coaches, trained to assist colleagues in lesson development and effective use of technology. Students also have access to a variety of technologies and learning tools, such as 1:1 Chromebooks, computer software, data collection/lab instruments, simulations, and online research resources.

Partnerships

As evidenced by the letters of support submitted with our STEM Certification application, Manchester Community Schools is blessed to have the support of and access to a tremendous group of community partners. These partners open their doors to our students, share their expertise and feedback with our teachers, and support extra-curricular STEM opportunities for all students.

I. Manchester University

MCS works with a variety of Manchester University departments to connect students to and with post-secondary educational experiences. Walk Into My Future, an annual event hosted by Manchester University in partnership with the Community Foundation of Wabash County, introduces K-3rd-graders to college and careers while establishing 529 savings plans.

II. OrthoWorx

Manchester partners with OrthoWorx to introduce students to opportunities in the orthopedic industry. Together we provide students with basic skills required for a production position in orthopedics.

III. Boy Scout Troop 465

Eagle Scout projects often address a need in the community or school system. Two recent projects added handicapped-accessible trails and raised bed gardens to the MES Outdoor Learning area.

IV. Equitable Education Solutions (Create2THINK)

Through an IDOE Digital Learning Community Partners grant, MCS partnered with Equitable Education Solutions for professional development and materials to increase the knowledge and instructional capacity for PBL implementation for teachers and administrators.

V. Community Foundation of Wabash County

“In 2012, the Community Foundation of Wabash County committed one half of its unrestricted grantmaking to a set of strategic initiatives designed to help advance the educational attainment level in the county. Instead of waiting for needs to arise, the Foundation, in partnership with others, asked where it could apply grants strategically to change conditions at the source of community problems. The persistent problems of unemployment, hunger, poverty, and illiteracy repeatedly led back to low levels of education. Strategic programs to support education dovetail with the regional work of the Big Goal Collaborative, a program of the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership for Economic Development. The partners of the collaborative are working to raise the number of working adults with post-secondary education or high quality industry certifications from 32% to 60% by 2025.” (copied from:

<https://www.cfwabash.org/grants/education-matters>) The Community Foundation financially supports programs and initiatives that directly impact MCS families. Programs such as Beginnergarten and The Promise Scholars equip students for learning and incentivize the pursuit of post-secondary education. The Community Foundation grant program funds a variety of school-related activities such as the elementary outdoor learning lab and high school media center upgrades.

VI. Bayer Foundation

The Bayer Foundation provided start-up funds that supported activities surrounding the construction, use, and maintenance of our Outdoor STEM Learning Lab gardens.

VII. Indiana Science Olympiad (INSO)

“Science Olympiad employs cross-cutting concepts in all of its standards-aligned events, building 21st century skill sets essential to today’s science, technology, engineering and math

(STEM) workforce. There are 23 events each in Division B (middle school) and Division C (high school), providing a platform for students to apply and display a wide variety of talents, from design and prototyping, to technical writing, to chemistry lab skills.” (copied from <https://www.soinc.org/bc-events>) Our long-standing partnership with Indiana Science Olympiad has provided hundreds of students the opportunity to dive deeper into areas of STEM that they are passionate about. Students visit college campuses, interact with professors and like minded peers, and often discover a career pathway through the Science Olympiad experience. Social media hashtags used to communicate accomplishments: #INSciOly #SquireScience #SquireSTEM

VIII. Grow Wabash County

Grow Wabash County serves as a bridge to connect MCS students with local businesses for internships and work-based learning experiences. This organization served as an advisor and also wrote a letter of support for our successful Next Level Programs of Study Implementation grant.

IX. Ivy Tech, Fort Wayne

Ivy Tech, Fort Wayne partners with MCS to offer Dual Credit opportunities to our students. They have played an integral role in the creation of a Next Level Program of Study in Business Administration, which Manchester will serve as the pilot program for the state.

- X. Work-Based Learning placements: Precision Medical Technology, Instrumental Machine and Development, Paragon Medical, Inc, Crossroads Bank, Parkview Hospitals, Indiana Physical Therapy

STEM Timeline and Strategic Planning Roadmap

2018

- Start of SY18/19. Manchester Elementary School introduces STEM as a specials rotation.
- Robotics Club and Robotics Competitions begin at MIS.
- February. Science Olympiad teams compete in Goshen College Regional and qualify for the state tournament. This is the 16th consecutive year MCS Science Olympiad teams have advanced to the state tournament.
- March. Science Olympiad teams compete in the Indiana State Science Olympiad tournament.
- October. Amy Rauch, IDOE Director of STEM visits MES to observe MES STEM and to meet with Joel Eichenauer, Jabin Burnworth, and Sue Gnagy to discuss STEM initiatives.
- November. The Indiana Department Of Education launches a six-year STEM strategic plan. That plan outlines a vision to improve STEM instruction, scale evidence-based STEM curriculum in classrooms, and foster early STEM career exposure.

2019

- February. MCS secures Digital Learning Grant 2019. Funds support professional development (PBL training), STEM curriculum, and equipment (PLTW).
- February. Science Olympiad teams compete in Goshen College Regional and qualify for

the state tournament.

- March. Science Olympiad teams compete in the Indiana State Science Olympiad tournament.
- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.
- Start of SY19/20. Manchester Intermediate School introduces STEM as a specials rotation.
- Start of SY19/20. MHS adds AP Computer Science to course offerings.
- May. Awarded Bayer Foundation Grant. Funds support the development of an elementary Outdoor Learning Lab.
- Community Foundation Grant. Funds support the construction of trails, raised-bed gardens, and other outdoor learning opportunities.
- October. MJSHS receives the Region 8 and Schwab Foundation “Make It Your Own” Makerspace grant.

2020

- February. MJSHS Makerspace team presentation for “Make it Your Own” grant at Region 8.
- February. Science Olympiad teams compete in Goshen College Regional and qualify for the state tournament.
- March. COVID closes schools. Extracurricular activities are canceled.
- March. MCS receives Digital Learning Community Advisory Grant. Equitable Education Solutions consultants provide a cycle of professional development to all teachers and administrators, K - 12, in PBL through a Create2THINK model utilizing the engineering design process and integrated, computer science, technology, and employability skills.
- April. MCS receives the Career Ladders Planning Grant. Funds support the development and implementation of an evaluation tool (RISE/PBL Crosswalk) that defines excellences in project and/or inquiry-based teaching and supports the attainment of leadership roles for exemplary teachers
- May. Brainstorming session with Manchester University education and environmental science professors and the MCS STEM Innovation Team to discuss STEM acceleration, potential roles Koinonia Environmental Center might play (MU), authentic research, and academic vocabulary/writing.
- May. MJSHS receives grant to offer Business Office and Technology (Microsoft) courses for dual credit through Ivy Tech.
- Summer. MJSHS receives Robotics Start Up Grant from TechPoint Foundation for Youth to support the addition of junior/senior high robotics club/competition teams.
- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.
- September. MCS receives Digital Learning Capacity Building Grant. Funds from this grant provide competency-based training in blended learning in order to equip micro-credentialed Digital Ambassadors for the district.
- September. Strategic Plan Presentations at board meetings.
- SY20/21. Computer Science teacher training to facilitate the addition of CS I to course

offerings for SY21/22.

- October. District-wide PLC training with Michael Roberts, Solution Tree.
- October. Planning team begins work on Crosswalk rubric.
- October. District hosts community engagement events to discuss elements of the proposed strategic plan, as well as to gather input, and garner support.
- October. STEM Certification Application submitted.
- November. Teachers begin micro-credential certifications.
- December. District-wide PLC follow-up training with Michael Roberts.

2021

- Ongoing. Collaborative teams (PLCs at Work™) revisit Q1 & Q2 while addressing Q3 & Q4. Intentional focus on equity and teacher clarity (0.75 effect size, Hattie).
- Second semester, SY20/21. Pilot RISE/PBL Crosswalk Evaluation Tool (year 1 of 3).
- Provide teacher training before and afterschool for Makerspace/curriculum integration.
- Summer. Begin work on the outdoor amphitheater area (per MES Strategic Plan).
- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted PBL training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.
- SY21/22. Continue teacher training in PBL/IBL, K - 8 (Equitable Education Solutions).
- SY21/22. Revise RISE/PBL Crosswalk Evaluation Tool (year 2 of 3).
- SY21/22. Integrate Makerspace into the media centers at MES and MIS (work suspended due to COVID).
- SY21/22. Update and repurpose Makerspace at MJSHS, utilizing materials provided by the Region 8 and Schwab Foundation “Make It Your Own” grant. (work suspended due to COVID).

2022

- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted PBL training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.
- Ongoing. Collaborative teams (PLCs at Work™) revisit Q1 & Q2 while addressing Q3 & Q4. Intentional focus on responsibility and teacher collective efficacy (1.57 effect size, Hattie).
- SY22/23. Finalize, publish, obtain approval for RISE/PBL Crosswalk Evaluation Tool (year 3 of 3).
- Computer Science II course added to MJSH course offerings.

2023

- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted PBL training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.
- Ongoing. Collaborative teams (PLCs at Work™) review all essential PLC questions. Intentional focus on advocacy/student confidence (self-reported grades 1.44 effect size, Hattie) and feedback (0.7 effect size, Hattie).

2024

- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted PBL training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.

- Ongoing. Collaborative teams (PLCs at Work™) review all essential PLC questions.

2025

- “New to MCS” teachers and administrators receive targeted PBL training through participation in the district’s mentoring program.
- Ongoing. Collaborative teams (PLCs at Work™) review all essential PLC questions.

Sustainability

The Manchester Community School’s Strategic Plan includes support for STEM education at all levels. The allocated funds and resources increase our capacity to deliver high quality STEM experiences and promote the exposure to, and pursuit of STEM careers for all students. Funds will be used to support teacher training, curriculum development, equitable access to STEM materials and activities, and extra-curricular programs. The district will continue to use Title I, II, IV, and High Ability funds for STEM training, programs, and curriculum development, as allowed per grant parameters. Additionally, the district will pursue other grant funding to support future projects.

MCS created an Instructional Framework that articulates the district’s expectations for instructional best practices in a highly effective classroom. The district recognizes the need for ongoing support in the area of instructional best practice. To that end, the district has developed a mentoring program for “new to MCS” teachers. This program provides a platform for teacher training and will be used to train any faculty member not formally trained in PBL. Title II funds provide access to targeted professional development, peer to peer observations, book studies, and curriculum writing. All teachers participate in one (or multiple) forms of professional development on (at least) a quarterly basis.

Program success will be monitored and measured using data gathered from stakeholder surveys, formative assessment growth data, summative assessment performance data, as well as anecdotally through observations of student engagement and teacher/parent feedback. SMART goals have been created at the building level and are articulated in school improvement plans. Additionally, becoming STEM certified will affirm our efforts as we work to create learning environments that challenge and empower students to reach their highest academic potential, use their learned skills to better their communities and to never stop wondering!