



APS STEM Focus Schools for the Future

Happy Holidays!

Congratulations once again that your school has been selected to be part of the *APS STEM Focus Schools for the Future* project. The goal of the *APS STEM Focus Schools for the Future* project is to create STEM-focus schools by developing teacher leaders and school-specific STEM action plans. We are looking forward to joining you on your journey into STEM teaching and learning. This letter is intended to inform you of our upcoming professional development in January, subsequent professional learning plans, and some project logistics.

We are inviting you to our first professional development session to be offered Friday and Saturday, January 25-26, 2013 at the High Country Conference Center, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff. The conference center is adjacent to the Drury Inn and the NAU Mountain Campus. Both lead teachers and a school administrator are required to attend. Our session will begin at 8:30 with registration, paperwork, and iPad distribution for lead teachers. We will begin the group session at 9:00 and continue until 4:30.

Each teacher leader will receive a \$125 stipend for Saturday's professional development and a \$100 subsistence stipend if overnight stay is required. There are no stipends for administrators and schools will be responsible for covering additional costs for full participation in the professional learning sessions.

Our content at the January professional development session will focus on the following:

- Developing an understanding of what STEM teaching and learning is
- Learning how to affect systemic change with an innovation like STEM
- Preparing for the school's kick-off event announcing the school as APS STEM Focus School for the Future school (School banner, media involvement, APS volunteer involvement, and community involvement). We anticipate that you will plan this event between the end of January and March 31st, 2013
- Discussing school data that will be collected.

Important! *The project will be collecting school and teacher leader information to document and evaluate the project. A sample evaluation research letter is attached to this document for your district superintendent. Please send or bring this letter completed and signed on district letterhead on or before our gathering on January 25th.*

Mark your calendars for the following upcoming professional learning sessions:

- Spring Institute for teacher leaders –Friday/Saturday, May 3rd & 4th, 2013 with a focus on building school capacity for STEM

- Summer Institute for teacher leaders - June 3rd through 7th, 2013 with a focus on finalizing school STEM action plans
- Fall Institute for teacher leaders - Friday, Saturday, TBA with a focus on implementation of school STEM action plans

Teacher Leader Expectations:

- Attend and actively participate in all professional learning sessions.
- Collaborate with fellow lead teachers and critical stakeholders within school community to develop and begin implementation of a STEM action plan.
- Participate in data collection for evaluation of project.

School Administrator Expectations:

- Attend and fully participate in the orientation professional learning on January 25-26, 2013.
- Support teacher attendance and participation at professional development sessions, school kick-off event, electronic follow up sessions, data collection, and school visits.
- Collaborate with teacher leaders on creation of school STEM action plans and any decision-making authority involved in developing the plans.
- Maintain open communication with NAU regarding any issues relevant to the project.

Benefits for full participation:

- Teacher leaders will receive high quality professional learning experiences.
- Teachers leaders and other school staff will receive online and/or on-site support for STEM teaching and learning development and implementation.
- Teacher leaders will receive engraved project iPads and additional STEM materials.
- Schools will receive \$1,000 towards initial STEM implementation.
- Teacher leaders will receive stipends for off-contract professional development participation and subsistence stipends if warranted.

Note: if teacher leader or school is unable to meet the requirements of the project, it will be expected that a suitable replacement teacher leader can be identified and the iPad is turned over to the replacement; or if the school withdraws any electronics, materials, or other project materials be returned to Northern Arizona University.

We look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email Joëlle Clark at 928-523-8797 or Joelle.Clark@nau.edu.

Joëlle Clark
 Professional Development Coordinator
 Center for Science Teaching and Learning