



The PAST Foundation

Opening Statement - Marcy Raymond, Chief Strategy Officer PAST Foundation

Good morning, esteemed members of the committee and Chairperson Fowler Arthur. Thank you for allowing us to be here today to present the STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative on behalf of the PAST Foundation, our partner schools, districts, and most importantly - the K12 students in Ohio. I'm Marcy Raymond, Chief Strategy Officer at PAST Foundation, and with me today is Julius Jenkins, a student at the Ohio State University and former workforce participant, and Justin Deaner, Superintendent Noble Local Schools.

Our request is simple yet impactful: we urge the State to invest \$750,000 in each fiscal year of the next budget cycle for our STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative. This investment will prepare Ohio's educators to develop talent for the emerging workforce, directly impacting over 321,000 students in the next five years.

The Need - Marcy Raymond, PAST Foundation

As a lifelong educator and school administrator, I've seen firsthand the challenges our educators face in preparing students for STEM careers. The statistics are clear:

- STEM occupations are projected to grow 10.8% by 2031, compared to 5% for non-STEM jobs.
- STEM jobs make up 20% of all jobs today, with the highest-earning bachelor's degrees in STEM fields.
- Yet, one-third of U.S. students pursuing STEM majors change their major before graduating.
- More alarmingly, 57% of high school freshmen interested in STEM lose that interest by graduation.

These numbers underscore the urgent need for innovative STEM education approaches.

The State of Ohio is taking many steps to address this challenge, including a focused strategy to increase post-secondary enrollment and completion in STEM fields and to strengthen its supply of talent necessary to fill critical in-demand jobs and careers.

Yet K-12 educators face unique challenges in developing talent to meet those enrollment goals. That is where PAST Foundation has been able to fill a gap within our K-12 schools and districts. PAST Foundation is a non-profit provider of STEM education, curriculum design, and workforce development. PAST stands for "Partnering Anthropology with Science and Technology" and was formed in 2000 to improve education by linking learning to real life through hands-on, student-centered activities and instruction. In close collaboration with industry partners, PAST helps communities design curricula, internship programs, pathway programs, and mentoring opportunities that, over 22 years, have allowed more than 2.3 million students to develop skills necessary for a successful career in a high-demand STEM field.

The Solution - Marcy Raymond, PAST Foundation



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Our **STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative** addresses these challenges head-on:

1. We provide educators with industry-recognized credentials in areas
 - a. Drone Pilot License (FAA Part 107)
 - b. USI Unmanned Safety Level 1
 - c. Lean 6 Sigma Yellow Belt
 - d. Lean 6 Sigma Green Belt
 - e. Certified SolidWorks Associate
 - f. Entrepreneurship & Small Business
 - g. Leadership Excellence
 - h. CompTIA A+
 - i. CompTIA Network+
 - j. CompTIA Security+
2. We're launching portfolioOH, a tool for students to track their progress in work-based learning experiences.
3. We're developing Advanced Manufacturing, IT, and Telecommunications pathways for K-12 districts across Ohio.

The legislature has invested in the PAST Foundation's **STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative** over the last two biennial budgets. To date, 243 educators from 31 Ohio counties have participated, impacting over 36,000 students.

Student Perspective - Julius Jenkins, OSU Student and Program Participant

As a former participant in this program and a current OSU student, I can attest to its impact. The hands-on experience and career exposure I gained were instrumental in solidifying my interest in STEM and preparing me for college-level work.

The Impact - Justin Denius, Superintendent Noble Local Schools

In Noble County, we've seen the transformative effect of this program. Our educators are now better equipped to provide hands-on, career-relevant STEM education. This is particularly crucial in rural areas like ours, where access to advanced STEM programs can be limited.

The program's cost-effectiveness is remarkable. By FY27, we project the cost per student exposed to industry-recognized credentials will be just \$10.491.

Impact on Ohio of Funding Request - Marcy Raymond, PAST Foundation

With an increased investment, the STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative is projected to impact over 321,000 students across Ohio over the next five years. This program not only enhances STEM education but also empowers local districts and supports parental choice:

1. Empowering local districts: The STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative provides flexibility to local schools, allowing them to tailor the program to their specific needs and workforce demands. This aligns with Rep. Fowler Arthur's interest in extending flexibilities to districts,



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enabling them to create innovative, locally-relevant STEM education programs.

2. Supporting parental choice: By enhancing public school offerings with industry-recognized credentials and work-based learning experiences, the program provides more options for parents within the public system. This expansion of high-quality STEM education opportunities allows parents to choose schools that best prepare their children for future careers.
3. Cost-effective impact: The projected program cost per student for industry-recognized credential exposure decreases from \$18.07 in FY24 to \$10.49 in FY27, demonstrating increasing efficiency and value.
4. Widespread reach: The program is set to engage 1,650 educators and 780 educational leaders and directly impact 258,925 students by FY27.
5. Additional direct instruction: Nearly 20,000 students will receive direct instruction from PAST or PAST Fellows, further enhancing the program's impact.

Closing Statement - Marcy Raymond

In conclusion, our STEM Educator Workforce Collaborative is a strategic investment in Ohio's future. For less than \$11 per student, we can provide industry-relevant STEM education that prepares our youth for the jobs of tomorrow.

We respectfully ask for your support of \$750,000 per fiscal year to continue and expand this vital program. Thank you for your time and consideration.