

Dear John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School Families and Friends,

We, as a governing board, began discussions in the late fall of 2020 with regards to the STEM school evaluation and the respective goals with which to conduct the evaluation.

Questions arose as to how we might think about articulating those goals with the intent of aligning with the expected outcomes of the STEM School. Much of the premise of the STEM School was to build energy and a deeper knowledge of STEM education through the engaged passion of students and the increased expertise of our teachers.

The vehicle for achieving that premise was the STEM School model of four comprehensive public school districts and one private university on the university campus. The students are taught by staff members from each of the school districts in collaboration with university staff. The model is enhanced through the expertise of corporate and community partners who engage with the students and staff regularly to ensure authentic experiences. The planning that went into the John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School was visionary, and all partners have enjoyed the benefits of this innovative collaboration.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, we are committed to reviewing the STEM School model to ensure it is the most appropriate way to achieve our goals. It will take some time to complete our review, however, there will be some changes starting as early as next school year.

- First, leadership will be different as Director Arin Carter has resigned to complete work on her dissertation and doctorate of education degree at Aurora University. We appreciate her dedication to the students and her work to advance STEM education in our communities.
- Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly challenged school systems across the country, and the STEM School is no exception. We will review the implications of the pandemic on the STEM School and look to reflect upon instructional practices as appropriate.
- Finally, we have decided to pause any new enrollment to the school. This means that we will not add a third-grade cohort nor will we add students to any other grade levels at this time.

Rest assured that all stakeholders have an interest in continuing the partnerships and as such, we will use the coming weeks and months to collaborate on an improved STEM School model. Parents can expect that the coming year will include the same quality education that has been a part of their child's previous experience—*everything from engaging STEM courses to enriching nontraditional partnerships, all led by an experienced and respected staff.*

Sincerely,

John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School Governing Board

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*President*

Aurora University

**Dr. Adrian Talley**

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Indian Prairie School District 204

**Dr. Lisa Hichens**

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Batavia Public School District 101

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**Questions? Please contact your district's Dunham STEM School representative:**

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