

Global STEM Challenges Program



Admissions:

1. What are the basic requirements of students interested in pursuing Global STEM?

The only academic requirement is successful completion of Algebra 1. Beyond this academic requirement, students in the program say that it helps to have an interest in learning in groups and curiosity to learn through STEM challenges. Students should genuinely like math and science.

2. How many students are accepted into Global STEM Freshman year? Is the process lottery-based or academically-based?

We have a maximum capacity of 90 spaces for each grade-level. The program is filled by students zoned for Edison High School on a first-come, first-served basis (so talk to your counselor ASAP to register). If there are still remaining spaces available, students who are not zoned for Edison HS will be enrolled based on the order in which paper transfer forms were submitted to Monica Bentley. The paper transfer form can be found on the Global STEM page of the Edison High School website (edisonhs.fcps.edu/academics/stem).

3. How do I apply for Edison High School's Global STEM as a transfer student?

Navigate to the Edison High School website>Academics>Global STEM Challenges Program (edisonhs.fcps.edu/academics/stem), and scroll to the bottom of the page, you will find a transfer application. Submit this application to Monica Bentley at mebentley@fcps.edu.

Transportation:

4. Is transportation provided for transfer students?

No, Fairfax County Public Schools does not provide transportation for transfer students who are not zoned for Edison HS. Many students who have transferred to our school use a variety of methods to get to school. Carpooling is another option, but this requires parents making connections to other parents and making these arrangements. A school bus is not available to transport students who do not live in the Edison boundary.

Academics:

5. What is the benefit of attending Global STEM versus traditional high school classes?

Students in the Global STEM program learn all of the same content as their peers in traditional classes at an honors or International Baccalaureate (IB) level plus a computer science credit, but in Global STEM students learn how to apply this content to real-world challenges. Essentially, they are able to answer the question "Why do I need to learn this?" or "When will I ever use this in real-life?" Students learn in groups and develop the Portrait of a Graduate (POG) skills they'll need in college and careers, such as creative and critical thinking, collaboration, ethical citizenship, resilience, and communication skills.

6. What is the pass rate for the Virginia SOL for math and science?

The pass rates for the geometry, algebra 2, biology, and chemistry SOL tests have ranged from 96% - 100% since the beginning of the program with approximately 30% pass advance. The most recent cohort to take the biology SOL had a 98% pass rate.

7. After the completion of the 3-year program, where does the transfer student attend senior year?

The transfer students are able to remain at Edison High School for their senior year through a senior status or IB transfer. Necessary information is sent to Global STEM students in February of their junior year.

Student Life:

8. Will the student be able to pursue fine arts or other programs at Edison High School?

Each student's schedule can vary so it is important for students to discuss the courses they are interested in and their options with their counselor. Global STEM is an elective program with an elective course built into the schedule. Many 9th and 10th grade students do not have room for additional electives. However, some Global STEM students have taken courses online or over the summer to accommodate their additional elective requests. There are also several after school clubs and activities for students who want to participate in fine and performing art but do not have room for a course.

9. Will the student be able to balance school with sports, clubs, social life, etc.?

Students have large blocks of time to work on their Global STEM projects with their teams during class. If they use their time wisely, they should be able to complete most of their requirements during class time. Students in Global STEM do not have any additional requirements outside of class time beyond the homework they would find in traditional classes. Most Global STEM students are active throughout the school in a large variety of sports, clubs, and activities.

Additional Information:

10. How can a student exit the program before completion?

Students may not change their class schedule during the school year. If a student decides that he/she would like to exit the program after their 9th or 10th grade year, they will request a meeting with Dr. Ketchledge in April. Students who have transferred to Edison for the Global STEM program would be required to return to their home school if they exit the program before completion.

11. How are completed, successful projects shared with the community?

During and at the end of projects, students set up a science fair presentation format and the community is invited to attend student presentations. During this time, guests visit each student group and learn about their project, the design process, and the science and math students used during the process. Guests are able to ask questions and give feedback.