

All schools must act to promote valued skills

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FOR the past few years, the buzz in education has been STEM. Why is it such a hot topic? In short, STEM education is being implemented in many schools from grades K-12 because students need greater literacy in these areas to function in today's society and meet the future needs of the global economy. STEM is meant to



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some schools simply do not have the funding for a proper program. Another downside is that teachers are not prepared for the integration. Some schools are leaving STEM education up to the teacher to integrate and therefore have

provide students with authentic purposes for learning and solving problems, as well as introduce students to STEM-related jobs and skills. Students are encouraged to enquire, explore, create, collaborate and think critically.

A major drawback to STEM education is that funding for a proper program. Another downside is that teachers are not prepared for the integration. Some schools are leaving STEM education up to the teacher to integrate and therefore have

an unbalanced curriculum. Many teachers do not have the qualifications to teach in STEM areas.

As a veteran teacher of 15 years in the areas of science, technology and design, I am an advocate of STEM. I see many benefits of getting students involved and excited about learning in STEM areas. Many schools are faced with low test scores in the areas of math and science; students are unprepared for college level courses in these areas. This has translated into fewer students majoring in fields of study requiring a significant amount of math and science, which is slowly evolving into a shortage of workers in these fields. Part of a STEM curriculum aims to create a greater interest in the areas by tapping into the skills our 21st century learners need to succeed.

Schools with enough funding have become entirely STEM schools while

other schools have integrated certain aspects of STEM into their curriculum. Many schools employ specific coordinators to ensure STEM education is taking place. Some schools have adapted by developing specialized classes for STEM or by starting after-school activities, such as robotics and engineering clubs.

With advancements in technology creating new and innovative careers, students have a myriad of future professions to choose from that did not exist even five years ago. Schools shouldn't be sending students into the work force without preparing them for what is out there. There are options; regardless of how schools do it, they should be implementing STEM into the curriculum. The vision of all schools should include preparing students to excel in STEM fields of study in order to succeed as leaders and innovators.