Education Research Center Awarded Grant to Evaluate Stephen F. Austin State University STEM Academy Project

9/19/14

The Education Research Center at Texas A&M University (ERC at TAMU) is pleased to announce that it recently received a contract to conduct a formative evaluation of the new Stephen F. Austin (SFA) State University STEM Academy. Jackie Stillisano and Hersh Waxman will be the principal investigators for the study. Additional ERC researchers involved include Kim Wright and Anna Boriack.

Designed as a partnership among SFA State University, Nacogdoches Independent School District, and Lufkin Independent School District, the SFA STEM Academy seeks to provide a seamless matriculation into undergraduate STEM majors for participants, through a cohort model that involves students in research experiences with SFA faculty. The Academy will engage academically capable high school students in real-world applications of science and mathematics through hands-on research experiences and support from academy master teachers, SFA faculty, and peer mentors.

“This external evaluation will provide formative information regarding the development and implementation of this innovative STEM school-within-a-school concept, as well as feedback for incremental change and improvement,” said Stillisano. “The study will help determine the extent to which the SFA STEM Academy is effective in achieving its Year 1 goals, objectives, and outcomes and will provide valuable information about a model of STEM education in Texas high schools that has potential to be transferable, replicable, and scalable.”

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