



## New Study Shows Positive Impacts of STEAM Ahead Program for Students

*Researchers say students who participate in STEAM Ahead have higher GPA's than students in traditional learning environments.*

May 25, 2017 – Manchester, New Hampshire – A program evaluation of Manchester High School West's STEAM Ahead program reveals a number of positive impacts for participating students. The research, conducted by Dr. Lisa Speropolous from the University of New Hampshire, Department of Sociology, found that students participating in STEAM Ahead had higher grade point averages and PSAT scores than students in the traditional learning environment. STEAM Ahead is a hands-on, project-based learning model emphasizing science, technology, engineering, arts, and math. The curriculum encourages students to solve problems in teams using multidisciplinary techniques.

"The findings suggest that STEAM Ahead is positively impacting students' academic performance and engagement in school," Speropolous stated. "Additionally, students who participate in the program reported feeling more motivated to attend school, more engaged with the material, and more prepared to enter college and the workforce after graduation."

In addition, the research found that students who participate in STEAM Ahead had fewer days tardy or absent when compared with students in the traditional learning environment, which suggests that students' engagement in the program may be motivating them to attend more regularly and on-time. Further, students in STEAM Ahead had fewer days suspended than their peers who study in a traditional learning environment.

"I am pleased with the positive results of this study," said Bob Baines, Executive Director of STEAM Ahead. "I thank the exemplary teachers and administrators at Manchester High School West who have led this important school reform effort, now in its third year, and the many local foundations and businesses that have provided financial support for the program. The success at West has resulted in STEAM Ahead being implemented at the Henry J. McLaughlin Middle School in Manchester and White Mountains Regional High School in Whitefield, NH."

Dr. Bolgen Vargas, Manchester School District Superintendent of Schools also lauded the program, stating, "the research on STEAM Ahead validates common sense; engaged students do better and have a sense of excitement about the future. I'd like to expand this model to the entire school."

The research was conducted by Dr. Speropolous during the 2015-2016 academic school year and was funded by the University System of New Hampshire. To read more on the study please click [here](#).

## About USNH

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