Nikola Tesla STEM High School

Frequently Asked Questions 2026-27

What are Tesla STEM's current hours of operation?
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:05 to 2:45 with two lunch sessions
Wednesday: 8:05 to 12:30 with one lunch offered from 12:30 to 1:00

What is the district's transportation plan for Tesla STEM?
Transportation options include parents, the district-provided shuttle buses, and carpooling. Regarding the district shuttle buses:

- This transportation option is at no charge to families.
- Shuttle buses run from the four LWSD comprehensive high school sites to Tesla STEM each morning and return to these same sites each afternoon.
- Shuttle start and end times are determined by the LWSD Transportation Office and are available in Skyward for all families.

What is the Tesla STEM curriculum?

- For grade 9, Core Course Work: Honors Physics, Graphic Production, Honors English, Math, Honors Spanish, and AP Computer Science Principles. Problem-Based Learning Innovation Project conducted in the second semester.
- Tesla STEM offers Spanish as our only world language option. Most students choose to take Spanish at Tesla STEM regardless of any middle school language courses. If you are a student who is already taking a world language other than Spanish and instead want to continue this language out-of-district, then summer school, online courses, and/or community colleges are all options. Students taking language through an outside source are still expected to maintain a full course load of 6 classes at Tesla STEM and will work with their academic counselor once enrolled at Tesla STEM.
- For grades 10-12, Advanced Placement (AP) course offerings include: Physics (Mechanics, Electricity/Magnetism), Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Calculus (AB/BC), Statistics, English Language, Psychology, and Computer Science. Students do not need special permission or staff approval to enter into an AP course.

Is there a music program at Tesla STEM?
Yes, there is an after-school (period 7) full orchestra program at Tesla STEM, meeting twice per week. We have a certificated music teacher in place, and students earn course credit (0.5 credit per year) in orchestra while also participating in concerts and competitions. Families are responsible for arranging transportation after orchestra.

What does Tesla STEM offer besides AP?

- Tesla STEM High School offers not only AP courses but also courses that are dual credited with the University of Washington or Bellevue College.

- UW/BC in the High School Program specifics:
    - Through the UW in the High School (UWHS) or Bellevue College (BC) programs, high school students can complete UW or BC courses, and earn credit, in their high school classrooms with their own teachers.
    - Students and teachers use college curriculum, activities, textbooks, tests, and grading scales. Students earn a final grade over time; a grade does not depend on one exam. Students receive recognition for their college work at most public institutions and many private schools as well.
    - Who teaches dual credit courses? Courses are taught by very qualified high school teachers who have been approved and trained by UW or BC academic faculty. Teachers are selected based on an evaluation of their professional and academic credentials. Teachers follow the same curriculum, tests, and grading standards required of a regular UW or BC course. They are officially recognized as UW Professional & Continuing Education Lecturers, or BC faculty.
    - Are credits transferable? Any credits earned through the UW or BC in the HS program will be accepted at their institution. We cannot guarantee that another institution will automatically accept college in the HS credits. Most public and private colleges and universities, however, will accept the credit. Students can check with the institution they plan on attending to see if and how credits will transfer.

- STEM Lab Concentrations and the Two Pathways:
    - Tesla STEM High School Juniors and Seniors take STEM Lab Concentrations during their final two years at STEM.
    - These STEM Lab Concentrations include Environmental Engineering and Sustainable Design (EESD), Forensics/AP Psychology, Biomedical Engineering, and Advanced Physics/Global Engineering.
    - The Two Pathways: Engineering and Computer Science. For the Engineering Pathway, Tesla STEM instructors (trained at the University of Texas, Cockrell School of Engineering for the Engineer Your World curriculum and instruction) offer Engineering 1, 2, and 3. Students use the industry-standard engineering design process to complete the course work. For the Computer Science Pathway, students have a 4-year program that includes Advanced Placement courses.

What about college readiness?
Colleges want to see students who have a rigorous academic history over time, not just pockets of rigor posted on a transcript. Colleges are looking at the total package and are looking for students who take the full four years of core subjects. Students at Tesla STEM High School will not only exceed standard in terms of rigor but will also be steeped in college-level research and problem-based learning while they work in labs that are modeled after university level structures. In addition, our STEM industry internships/partnerships give students the real-world experience as Tesla students work with experts in multiple STEM and STEM-related fields.

Can students take math over the summer to advance to the next level?
If you are considering taking a one-year math course over the summer, please contact your counselor or visit https://tesla.lwsd.org/counseling/online-course-requests. Approval paperwork is required.

Elise Cho elcho@lwsd.org Last Names A - J
Chase Covington chacovington@lwsd.org - Last Names K - Sh
Anthony Smith antsmith@lwsd.org Last Names Si - Z

How will my student participate in school athletics?
As per all choice schools in the state, WIAA (Washington Interscholastic Activities Association) has ruled that students must return to their home schools to participate in sports. We have done this for years and many students have continued to participate in sports at their home schools and excelled while holding leadership positions on their respective teams. The district shuttle buses get students back to their home schools in time for athletics.

What about school clubs and activities?
We have a full complement of ASB clubs and organizations.

Is Tesla STEM High School still a Lake Washington School District school?
Yes, all our LWSD Choice Schools are district schools. We follow the same calendars, district policies and procedures, high school graduation requirements and credit requirements.

Do we have National Merit Scholars?
For the Class of 2026 National Merit Scholarship Competition, Tesla STEM results:

- National Merit Semifinalists: 18 scholars
- Commended Merit Scholars: 35 scholars

DO NOT PRINT

Lottery Timeline

Application Available Online:	11/01/2024
Application Deadline, 4:pm:	12/01/2024
Lottery:	1/10/2025
Notification to Families:	1/17/2025
Responses due to Schools:	1/31/2025