

# Policy Section 7

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## **Section: 7.1 Student Selection Process**

**A. Participating divisions will receive applications from any interested rising 11th or 12th grade student who meets the requirements for selection listed below.**

Eligibility of private and home school students to apply for admission to the XLR8 STEM Academy is determined by the policy of the participating school division in which the student resides.

Criteria for selection shall be established by the XLR8 Academy Board to ensure that students selected for the XLR8 STEM Academy participation meet the requirements for selection listed below.

The Lynchburg Regional XLR8 STEM Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in its programs, activities, or employment practices, as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504. No otherwise qualified student with a disability shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination for any school-sponsored program or activity. For purposes of this policy, a student with a disability shall be one who satisfies the definition set forth in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulations.

Qualified students with disabilities may require supplemental aids, equipment, or other accommodations in order to access and/or participate in programs or activities of the Lynchburg Regional XLR8 STEM Academy. The sending school division will be responsible for providing and/or funding any supplemental costs required accommodating the qualified student with disabilities.

XLR8 STEM Academy student records, application forms and faculty recommendations should be used in the XLR8 STEM Academy admission process and forwarded to the XLR8 STEM Academy Director. A copy of those forms should be retained by the home schools.

## **B. Requirements for Selection**

Student participants in the XLR8 STEM Academy will be selected through a holistic review process. During the application review process, test scores, attendance records, academic records, discipline records, review of student characteristics and recommendations by teachers and counselor will be considered. Interest in STEM careers as well as documented participation in school based programs may help to determine the level of qualification. Students recommended for participation must possess these characteristics:

1. Strong interest and ability in the areas of applied science and mathematics.
2. Strong interest in hands-on learning.
3. Academic achievement reflected by a minimum GPA of 2.0 (un-weighted) in mathematics and science classes taken for high school credit.
4. Strong interest in continuing their education and careers in STEM-H (science, technology, engineering, math and health).
5. Demonstrate a good work ethic.

### **C. Openings for the Senior Class**

Beginning with the school year 2014-2015, school divisions may have an opportunity to send additional students for the senior class. Openings in the senior class will be available under the following conditions:

At the end of second semester, the XLR8 STEM Academy will notify a school division if a student is not invited back for his/her senior year because of academic deficiency. The opportunity to attend the XLR8 STEM Academy will be offered to students from the waiting list in that school division. If the school division does not send a replacement, the vacancy will be made available to the other divisions.

Therefore, each school division should check the waiting list sent to them from last year's selection committee to establish if students on the waiting list are still interested in participating in the senior program. Also, school divisions should advertise for students interested in being considered for the waiting list for the senior program. Students interesting in attending as seniors will need to complete and application to be submitted to the Director of the STEM Academy.

### **D. Student Participants**

The number of students served in the XLR8 STEM Academy will be determined by the XLR8 STEM Academy Board based on the available programs and facilities.

The students served will represent each of the participating school divisions on a quota system determined by the XLR8 STEM Academy Board based on school population and the number of high schools in the participating school division. Divisions are obligated to maintain their per pupil contributions in the event the division quota is not filled.

In addition to the students served from the participating school divisions, beginning with the junior class in the 2019-2020 school year, an additional five (5) at-large seats will be available per cohort. Students wishing to take advantage of one of these seats will need to apply to the STEM Academy and will be evaluated according to the STEM rubric. Each of these seats will require a two year commitment to fund the seat. The additional seats can be filled using any of the following options:

1. STEM Academy Scholarship(s) may be used to fund a seat for an additional student from the waitlist. Currently, donors may choose to support the scholarship fund in three(3) categories:
  - a. Specific Locality (Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell or Lynchburg)
    - i. The waitlist from the sponsored locality, regardless of specialty area, will be used to fill the sponsored seat
  - b. Specific Specialty Area ( Engineering/mechatronics, biotech/health or Cyber Security)
    - i. The waitlist for all students in the specialty area , regardless of locality, will be used to fill the sponsored seat
  - c. Support for students on wait list
    - i. The waitlist for all students , regardless of locality and specialty area, will be used to fill the sponsored seat
2. A school division may choose to pay for an additional student(s) in their division to attend the STEM Academy from the wait list for their school division.

**E. Quota and Distribution**

Division	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
	<b>Juniors</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>Juniors</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>Juniors</b>	<b>Seniors</b>
Amherst	3	3	3	3	3	3
Appomattox	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bedford	8	8	8	8	8	8
Campbell	6	6	6	6	6	6
Lynchburg	7	7	7	7	7	7
At-Large	0	0	5	0	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

**F. Unfilled Quotas**

Should a division not fill its quota with qualified participants or should a student withdraw from the program prior to June 1, that division will have the option to identify additional students using the waiting list until its quota is filled. If a division does not fill its quota by June 1, the available positions will be opened to students from the participating school divisions. If another school division chooses to fill any unfilled slots with one of their students, that school

division would be financially obligated for that student. If by the first day school of the fall semester a seat remains unfilled in a school division, that division would be financially obligated for that seat.

In the event there are unfilled junior and senior positions in a division, the opportunity to attend the XLR8 STEM Academy will be offered to students from the waiting list in that school division. If the school division does not send a replacement, the vacancy will be made available to the other divisions. Divisions will be notified of students selected for the unfilled positions.

Top priority for available senior positions will be given to juniors currently enrolled in the XLR8 STEM Academy under this policy. School divisions may advertise for students interested in being considered for the waiting list for the senior program. Students interesting in attending as seniors will need to complete and application to be submitted to the Director of the STEM Academy. In the event that divisions fill their senior positions through recruitment, the responsibility for payment of tuition for rising seniors enrolled under this policy will revert to the students' home school division. Therefore, divisions enrolling junior students under this policy should plan for the possibility of assuming the XLR8 STEM Academy tuition payments for the students' senior year.

## **7.2: Criteria for Admittance to the Senior Year Program**

A. At the end of the junior year, the student must have a 2.0 grade point average in XLR8 STEM Academy classes in order to be admitted to the senior-year XLR8 STEM Academy program. Furthermore, the student must successfully complete two semesters of the following courses: Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, Applied Math and Applied Chemistry. The first step to determine the student's grade point average will be to assign semester letter grades (un-weighted) the following grade points: A – 4.0, B – 3.0, C – 2.0, D – 1.0. Next, the sum of the grade points for the junior courses will be divided by the number of semester grades.

In some cases, a student may steadily improve throughout his or her junior year but still fail to attain a 2.0 GPA due to a difficult transition into the XLR8 STEM Academy program. If the student is one letter grade short of the required 2.0 GPA (1.83 GPA), the student may be admitted to the senior year program with approval from the Director of the STEM Academy. Students invited to return for their senior year with approval by the Director may be required to seek remedial help, take specific courses or sign a contract as a condition of enrollment.

Students with a GPA less than 1.83 will be placed on academic probation and may be required to seek remedial help, take special courses, or sign a contract as a condition of enrollment.

Rising seniors applying for admission to XLR8 STEM ACADEMY for the first time must meet the requirements specified in the XLR8 STEM ACADEMY Student Selection Process including having a 2.0 GPA (un-weighted) in mathematics and science classes their junior year.

### **7.3: Criteria for Successful Completion of XLR8 STEM ACADEMY Program**

A. To receive a certificate certifying successful completion of the science, mathematics and specialty area requirements of the Lynchburg Regional XLR8 STEM Academy program, a student must earn a passing grade both semesters of their junior and senior year.

### **7.4: Student/Parent/Guardian Appeals**

An appeal is the act of expressing an objection to a condition, a circumstance or a punishment imposed by an instructor or administrator. For the purposes of this policy, appeal means those objections beyond the normal discussion and questioning that a student or parent/guardian might pursue with an instructor or administrator.

In order to provide due process for all XLR8 STEM Academy students, parent(s) or a legal guardian of any student or a student who has reached age eighteen has the right to initiate an appeal. The steps in the XLR8 STEM Academy Appeals Process are:

1. Schedule a meeting with the XLR8 STEM Academy Director to discuss the matter.
2. If the matter is not resolved in Step 1, an appeal of the Director's decision can be made to the XLR8 STEM Academy Board. The request for an appeal hearing must be made in a letter sent by the parent(s), legal guardian or student who has reached age eighteen to the XLR8 STEM Academy Director no later than ten (10) days following the meeting with the XLR8 STEM Director. The Director will then include a closed session to discuss student matters on the agenda of the next XLR8 STEM Academy Board Meeting.
3. The parent(s), legal guardian or student who has reached age eighteen must be present to state the appeal at the scheduled Governing Board Meeting. The Board will then consider the appeal and the decision of the Board will be conveyed in writing to the parent(s), legal guardian or student via a letter written by the XLR8 STEM ACADEMY Director.

## **7.5: Student Attendance**

Since the academic pace at the XLR8 STEM Academy is accelerated it is important that student absences be kept to a minimum. If a student knows in advance that he/she will be absent from XLR8 STEM Academy for personal reasons or base school academic activity, it is up to the student to bring a note from a parent or guardian and to make arrangements for assignments to be completed prior to the absence. Students should not miss XLR8 STEM Academy for home school activities except awards assemblies, Honor Society inductions or similar academic events. Club activity periods are not considered academic events.

### **A. Returning to School Following an Absence**

If a student is absent from the XLR8 STEM Academy for illness or a base-school activity, the student must bring a written explanation signed by the parent or guardian to the instructor of his/her first XLR8 STEM Academy class. If no note is received within two days after the student's return to school, the student will receive an unexcused absence. The Director will notify the student's parent or guardian of the unexcused absence. Any student receiving 2 unexcused absences from the XLR8 STEM Academy will be placed on probation and after the 3rd unexcused absence will be required to meet with the Director, the student's parent/guardian and be placed on a behavior contract which will be developed and signed at the meeting with the Director.

### **B. Excessive Absences**

If a student is absent 5 or more times during a semester, a letter will be sent to the student's parents, base school principal and school/division advocates by the Director. A similar procedure will be followed when a student has missed 10 or more days during a semester. In addition, after 10 absences, the student's parent or guardian will be called and a conference arranged. If a student misses 15 days in a semester, she/he will be dropped from XLR8 STEM Academy roster. Under extenuating circumstances (such as extended illness with verification from a doctor), the student may be allowed to enroll again with the approval of the Director if the student is able to complete the requirements by the end of the semester for the courses in which she/he enrolled.

### **C. Home Bound Instruction**

Due to the laboratory/project-based nature of the XLR8 STEM Academy courses; it is not possible to offer them in a home bound instruction format. If a student needs to enroll in home bound instruction, she/he will be dropped from the XLR8 STEM Academy roster.

### **D. Arriving Late**

Students arriving late will report immediately to the XLR8 STEM ACADEMY main office and sign the attendance notebook. Consistent tardiness will be addressed in each course outline and will result in the student's grade being affected or the student being placed on probation.

### **E. Leaving Early**

Early dismissals MUST be prearranged. An explanatory note signed by the student's parent/guardian must be approved by the Director before a student may leave the campus. Students are required to SIGN OUT in the XLR8 STEM Academy office notebook prior to leaving the building. If a student becomes ill during XLR8 STEM Academy hours, his parent/guardian will be contacted by the secretary or school official before the student can be dismissed. Students are not permitted to leave XLR8 STEM Academy before their scheduled departure unless the above procedure is followed. Disciplinary actions will be taken if a student leaves campus without approval prior to scheduled departure for any reason. It is the student's responsibility to follow these procedures.

## **7.6: Procedures for Student Discipline, Suspensions and Expulsions**

Each XLR8 STEM Academy student is responsible for his own actions while on school property or under the supervision of XLR8 STEM Academy faculty members during school activities. Students are expected to be punctual to class and to respect fellow class members, XLR8 STEM Academy faculty and school property. Disruption of the learning process by a student and or a student's actions which jeopardize his safety or the safety of others will not be tolerated.

Students who choose not to comply with the school policies or with the local, state and federal laws pertaining to the sale/possession or distribution of drugs, look-alike drugs, alcohol, weapons and explosives are subject to disciplinary action and to the consequences of the legal system.

Disciplinary actions which result from a student's inappropriate behavior will be implemented as outlined in the following paragraphs.

### **A. Drug/alcohol/weapon/explosives/assault related offenses:**

The student will have a conference with the director to discuss the incident in detail. Since Lynchburg City Schools is the fiscal agent of the XLR8 STEM Academy, Lynchburg City School Board policies regarding drug/alcohol/ weapons/explosives and assaults will apply. A copy of the LCS policies is available for review in the XLR8 STEM ACADEMY main office.

In the event of a violation, the XLR8 STEM ACADEMY director is required by Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) policy to:

1. Notify the Superintendent -In- Charge, the base school superintendent and immediately suspend the student from XLR8 STEM ACADEMY and;

2. Confiscate the weapons, explosives, drugs or alcohol and turn them over to the CVCC Security Department or Lynchburg Police Department for appropriate action and;
3. Notify the parent/guardian by phone and with a follow-up letter of the offense, the results of the conference with the director and the Director's recommendations to the Superintendent-In-Charge and;
4. Request the Superintendent-In-Charge to recommend to the XLR8 STEM Academy Board that the student be permanently dismissed from the XLR8 STEM Academy and;
5. Refer the student to his/her base school officials for counseling and placement.

**B. Non drug/alcohol/weapon/assault related:**

First Offense:

Students will have a conference with the Director to identify the problem and the policy in question. A letter will be sent to the student's parent/guardian and base school principal explaining the reason for the meeting and any disciplinary action which may be taken.

Second Offense:

Students will have be given an overnight suspension/mandatory conference with student's parent/guardian and Director to develop a behavior contract and/or plan of action to address the behavior in question. The base school principal and parent/guardian will be notified in writing concerning the disciplinary action taken.

**C. Base School Reciprocity**

According to XLR8 Board policy, students who are suspended or expelled from their base schools will be automatically suspended or expelled from the XLR8 STEM Academy for the duration of the penalty. In this type of suspension, XLR8 STEM Academy will follow the base school's policy regarding making up academic work missed during the suspension.

## **7.7: Communication Devices**

Students are allowed to have in their possession cellular phones and other portable electronic and communication devices while at XLR8 STEM Academy. The permitted use of all such devices is described in the XLR8 STEM Academy Student Handbook.

## **7.8: Dress and Appearance**

Students should follow the dress and appearance guidelines outlined in the XLR8 STEM Academy Student Handbook.

## **7.9: Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability**

All support services for a student with disabilities are provided by the student's School Division.

## **7.10: Medical Insurance**

XLR8 STEM Academy students are required to have medical insurance in order to participate in all aspects of the XLR8 STEM Academy program such as field trips, tours, field studies, conferences, field research projects, and internships. Families without medical insurance can purchase low cost school insurance through their participating school division which covers the student on school activities and allows the XLR8 STEM Academy staff to get medical care should the need arise.

**Approved by the XLR8 STEM Academy Board: May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

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