# ABSTRACT


Author: Jedrek Wittenberger

Title: Increasing Interest in STEM Education

Thesis Advisor: Carrie-Anne Sherwood

Department: Department of Curriculum and Learning and Honors College

Year: 2021



With STEM becoming such a growing industry with a large number of jobs unfulfilled, it begs the question why students are not interesting in pursuing careers in STEM fields (Smithsonian, 2016). In this paper I will be trying to answer why students are not interested in pursuing STEM fields after high school and what teachers' beliefs are about integrating STEM in non-STEM classes. Throughout the research leading up to this study, there was not a lot of literature on why students do not want to pursue STEM fields after high school, from the student's point of view. I also did not find much literature that had the opinion of non-STEM teachers, along with if integrating STEM into non-STEM classes would increase interest in STEM fields. I went about answering these questions by conducting three surveys with high school students, STEM teachers and non-STEM teachers. After conducting these surveys, I learned that students and teachers think that their needs to be more real-world connections in the STEM classroom to help improve interest. When it comes to STEM topics in non-STEM classes both non-STEM and STEM teachers think that more communication between each other could help integrate STEM better into the non-STEM classes. The findings in this paper can help with increasing student interest in STEM fields.