



## Alma Martinez STEM Academy FAQs

The purpose of the Alma Martinez STEM Academy is to teach learners to explore, create, and innovate by engaging in problem-solving using the Engineering Design Process and Design Thinking. Learners will be immersed in real-world problem solving with STEM integration in the core courses. Learners will have design time built into the schedule that will allow them to work on design challenges and project/problem-based learning incorporating design thinking within an innovative learning environment.

### CURRICULUM

#### **What does STEM stand for?**

STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering, and math.

#### **Will the Alma Martinez STEM Academy be different than a traditional school?**

Yes. The STEM lessons are designed to give learners hands-on learning experiences that challenge learners to think critically, value mistakes, and learn from them. Learners are encouraged to create, build, and think “outside the box” as they learn 21st-century skills vital to success in life such as; communication, collaboration, creative innovation, critical thinking, and character. Critical thinking skills are incorporated into the curriculum along with STEM field trips and integrated lessons designed by the teachers. Learners will experience different aspects of science, technology, engineering, and math to help advance their interest in STEM fields.

#### **Will learners follow the State Standards and MISD Curriculum?**

Yes. by law MISD must follow the state standards. Alma Martinez STEM Academy will follow the MISD curriculum, which is aligned to the state standards. Teachers will integrate STEM instruction within the core classes.

#### **Will my child have access to clubs and extracurricular activities?**

Yes. The STEM Academy will have a variety of clubs to experience during the school day and after school.

#### **Will my child participate in PE, Fine Arts?**

Yes. Learners at this Academy will continue to participate in PE and Fine Arts as required by the Texas Education Agency. It’s important to note that the Fine Arts credits offered may be unique to Martinez STEM Academy and are not the same Fine Arts courses found at comprehensive campuses.

### ENROLLMENT

#### **If my learner is currently enrolled in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Brenda Norwood STEM Academy, will they need to apply for 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Alma Martinez STEM Academy?**

No. Learners who currently attend 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Brenda Norwood STEM Academy will roll up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Alma Martinez STEM Academy as long as they are achieving expected academic progress and behave according to the expectations outlined in the STEM handbook.



**If my learner is currently enrolled in 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Alma Martinez STEM Academy, will they need to reapply for 6<sup>th</sup> grade?**

No. Learners who currently attend 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Alma Martinez STEM Academy will roll up to 6<sup>th</sup> grade as long as they are achieving expected academic progress and behave according to the expectations outlined in the STEM handbook.

**Who can apply for the Alma Martinez STEM Academy?**

Any MISD learner going into the fifth or sixth grade can apply for the Alma Martinez STEM Academy.

**What qualifications is the Academy looking for to accept my child?**

The STEM Academy is looking for learners who are inquisitive and excited about learning more about science, technology, engineering, and math. STEM Learners would be most successful if they are reading on grade level and performing on grade level in core subjects.

**Is this Academy free?**

Yes. There is no cost to attend Alma Martinez Intermediate School or its STEM program.

**How do I apply?**

Applications will be completed online. When available, the link will be posted on the [MISD Power of Choice page](#).

**What is the timeline for the application process for this Academy?**

Applications will open each Spring semester. An application timeline will be posted to the [MISD Power of Choice page](#) each fall.

**How will I know if I was accepted, and when will I find out?**

Each applicant will receive a decision letter by email and will be required to return a commitment letter to the academy. All dates are part of the application timeline posted to the MISD Power of Choice website.

**How are students selected?**

A random lottery will be completed for all learners who follow the requirements of the application process. Consideration will be made for equal representation from all areas of the MISD school district.

**How many learners will be accepted in each grade?**

There will be 100 learners accepted for the fifth grade. Up to 44 spots can be taken by current 4<sup>th</sup> graders enrolled at Brenda Norwood STEM Academy; no less than 56 spots will be open to new applicants. Sixth grade spots will be filled as they become available. If we do not have spots available applicants will be placed on a wait list for that academic school year.

**Will transportation be provided?**

Yes. Transportation will be provided to any learner accepted who resides in the MISD attendance zone.



**Are there other schools I can apply to if my child does not get accepted?**

Yes. Any MISD learner can apply for a transfer to any of the [branded schools](#) (Leadership and STEAM Academies) as space is available. If you are interested in attending one of our branded schools, please contact the MISD Student Service office at 817-299 -6378.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Are there any information meetings scheduled for me to get more information?**

Yes. Dates and locations will be announced on the [MISD Power of Choice web page](#).

**Whom do I contact for more information?**

Please reach out to Alma Martinez STEM Academy front office for additional information at 682-320-9250.