

Credit Flexibility: Instruction

School and districts across the country are investing in innovative instructional programs to support student achievement, primarily focused on the three big Rs—rigor, relevance, and relationships. Ohio’s credit flexibility policy encourages districts to think about how to implement system-level changes with those focus areas in mind: academic rigor for all students to ensure college and career readiness, clear relevance and real application to the demands of the 21st century workforce, and positive, constructive relationships within schools and between schools and their community partners.

All three areas are present in high-quality, effective, multidisciplinary instructional models.

The [Metropolitan Cleveland Consortium for STEM \(MC²STEM\) High School](#), a regional public high school in Cleveland, has developed an innovative instructional delivery system rooted in transdisciplinary capstone projects.

Transdisciplinary Instruction

The MC²STEM High School is a year-round school that has organized its structure around 10-week, transdisciplinary [capstones](#).

The high school maps out the state benchmarks to each capstone over the course of the year. The capstones are:

- Developed collaboratively by the instructional staff at the high school
- Designed using a planning rubric that evaluates capstone design and provides a framework for the development of the course
- Based directly on state benchmarks and mapped back to larger, broader thematic capstones
- Developed in collaboration with all postsecondary and industry partners involved

Each capstone is organized around a specific [theme](#), and teachers work together to plan the instruction and class schedule for each week of the capstone. This often means that students don’t attend classes the same way every day. Because the teachers are working together, rather than in traditional siloed departments, schedules can be very fluid and flexible and change from [week](#) to [week](#).

Students in each grade level take the same capstone and have three weeks off between each capstone, while school staff have two weeks off between capstones. During the third week, school staff collaborate for the following reasons:

- Individual professional growth and development with a focus on research
- Capstone design and planning
- Rubric development
- Class project planning

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“We don’t want to be a school that does projects. We want to be a **project-based school.**”

Jeffrey McClellan
Head of School
MC²STEM High School



Jeffrey D. McClellan

Head of School
Administrative Office General Electric
(Nela Park)
1975 Noble Road, Bldg. #336
East Cleveland, OH 44112
Phone: (216) 780-6455
E-mail:
jeffrey.d.mcclellan@cmsdnet.net

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- Getting Started
- Staff Coordination
- Assessment
- **Instruction**
- Partnerships