# Superintendent’s Memo #058-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: March 6, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Virginia Governor and Science Museum of Virginia Seeking Applicants for 2020 STEM Awards

Help us help you celebrate inspirational STEM leaders in your school division.

Virginia’s Outstanding Scientist Awards program was created by the Science Museum of Virginia and the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia in November 1984. The first awards were presented on March 20, 1985, by Governor Charles S. Robb.

In 2016, two new award categories — STEM Catalyst and STEM Phenom — were introduced and the program was renamed the Virginia’s Outstanding STEM Awards. In 2018, a STEM Conductor award for a Virginia educator was added.

This year, we are trying to cast a wider net by asking school leaders across the state to identify inspiring educators and/or students who have sparked the enthusiasm for STEM learning.

* **STEM Coductor:** A Virginia educator who has created enriching experiences that inspire the next generation of STEM enthusiasts. We are looking for collaborative leaders who empower those around them — students, educators, school administrators, and parents — to think critically and creatively. The nominee doesn’t necessarily have to be in a traditional STEM position, but must be one who works tirelessly to integrate STEM instruction across grade levels and subjects.
* **STEM Phenom:** A Virginia student who helps inspire fellow students to better understand and appreciate STEM in their everyday lives. This student should be an inspiration to peers, helping drive a passion and interest in STEM and STEM fields, and should exemplify the Museum’s mission of inspiring Virginians to enrich their lives through science. We are looking for examples that go beyond the nominee’s academic recognitions, awards and media attention, but rather what they are doing to engage others and make STEM accessible to everyone. We would like to hear stories about how the nominee has positively impacted a peer audience, how STEM is part of their everyday life, and how they make connections to STEM in and out of the school setting.

The STEM Phenom nomination needs to be submitted with the approval of the school principal. Only one nomination can be made per school and must include a reference letter from the principal or superintendent.

Please consider submitting a nominee this year to highlight the award-winning work happening in your school division.

For more information and the application form, please visit the [Science Museum of Virginia's Outstanding STEM Awards web page](https://smv.org/about/virginias-outstanding-stem-awards).

Contact: Chuck English, Virginia STEM Coordinator at cenglish@smv.org.

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