

**Opening Statement**  
**The Honorable Vernon J. Ehlers (R-MI), Ranking Member**  
Subcommittee on Research and Science Education  
*Engineering in K-12 Education*

Thursday, October 22, 2009

Today's hearing will look at what we know and what we need to know about bolstering K-12 engineering education. Though engineering is a part of the "STEM" acronym, it faces unique challenges not shared by math and science. Our witnesses today will help us explore how we can more effectively integrate engineering into our elementary and secondary schools.

I suspect that many innovative teachers have been including engineering in their classrooms for years without explicitly calling it such; however, there is a benefit to students knowing that it is indeed engineering they are learning and how it may be applied in the workforce. Furthermore, it is impossible to research the engineering in the classroom without a common nomenclature. It is critical that we understand the current types of engineering being taught in order to have a strong research base supporting future policy actions to strengthen engineering education.

To advance K-12 engineering education, it will also be necessary to improve communication and collaboration between the various STEM disciplines. Knowing that we all share the goal of our students receiving a high-quality education, I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about how engineering can be a part of that goal.