

STEM Wars 2026 for Grades 3-5; Wednesday, May 20, 2026; 9:30 am – 1:30 pm at Northwest Arena.

Grade School Competition Criteria – Please contact Shannon Sauder at ssauder@swcsk12.org with any questions.

Please note: Each school may bring a maximum of 20 students. Your team will move through a variety of competitions. We try our best to ensure that your whole team can move together. Each competition criteria will list the time allotted for this activity and the number of participants. Not all students on your team will compete in ALL areas. Some competition areas are made ahead of STEM Wars and will be brought with you to the competition (noted in blue below.) When not competing, check out other exhibits maker faire, presenters, science posters, career/tech fair. **Registration ends Friday, April 2, 2026** (Schedules are created and distributed following this date.)

Competition Area	Participants	Time	Made Ahead/ Description
Marble Run	2-4 (You can have 3 separate teams)	10 min.	Students will be given a box of materials, the goal is to build a marble run of a given length (start tape/end tape) with only the material given. First team in the heat to finish wins. Examples of materials to practice with- cardboard, tubes, tin foil, blocks, popsicle sticks, paper.
Robotics	4-6 (You can have 2 separate teams)	15 min.	Students will be using Dash robots and iPads, using the Blockly platform in Wonder. These will be provided, as well as the competition mats. The challenge could consist of ANY of the three components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speed- First finished 2. Accuracy- most accurately hitting the coordinates 3. Fewest lines of code to complete the task
Catapult	4 max (You can have 3 separate teams of 4)	10 min.	BUILD AHEAD AND BRING WITH YOU Catapults are built ahead of the competition and brought with. The only materials to be used are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One standard plastic spoon 2. Standard sized popsicle sticks 3. Elmers white school glue 4. Rubber bands Students will have an accuracy challenge and will try to get pennies into a bucket. Teams with the most pennies hitting the target win.
Science Poster	Unlimited- One poster per school	Due Day of	MAKE AHEAD AND BRING WITH YOU Science Poster Criteria- Problem: Chautauqua Lake has harmful algae blooms Create an informational poster that informs the public ways they can help reduce algae blooms in the lake. Label with index card on the back- school name/participants Judged by Chautauqua Lake Association
Maker Faire	Unlimited- 3 Entries per school	Due Day of	MAKE AHEAD AND BRING WITH YOU If you are passionate about making this is for you.... let your creativity run free- open ended no constraints- digital or physical entries accepted. Judged by Chautauqua Institution
Shark Tank (formerly Hack-a-thon)	4-6 (1 team- for the day)	Entire Day	PREPARED AHEAD AND PRESENTED DURING STEM WARS Create a team(s) to solve the Sustainability Challenge and choose to be campaigners, innovators or inventors. Choose 1 of the following Challenges: Life on Land, Protecting Our Water or Emergency Preparedness. Click here for all the challenge details. A schedule and presentation time (8-10 minutes) will be sent out on May 13 th . <i>Fawn Schuster of Chaut. Lake, will lead Shark Tank; contact her with any questions at fschuster@clake.org</i>
T-shirt Design	One design per school	Due Day of	MAKE AHEAD AND WEAR- MAKE AHEAD AND BRING WITH YOU Design your own team shirt Your design should include: -Your school name or mascot -An aspect of this theme: "DARE TO DREAM!" *Please bring one extra shirt for display and judging