

Idaho STEM Action Center Board Meeting
September 2, 2015
State Capitol, Room WW17
Boise, Idaho

Chairman David Hill called the meeting to order at 1:00

Members present included Chairman Hill, Ken Edmunds, Jeff Sayer, Von Hansen, Lorna Finman, Todd Allen, Dee Mooney, Tim Corder and Jeff Williams. Superintendent Sherri Ybarra was also present.

Governor Otter joined the meeting to answer any questions the board members might have about their role and responsibilities. Lorna Finman stated that she would like to see the board be active participants in the work of the Center. She mentioned that Utah had been very successful in engaging industry and that the Center needs to be driven by business. The Governor also addressed questions about the budget development process. As a state agency, the Center was required by statute to submit a budget request on Sept. 1. As the Governor explained, modifications can be made to the request based on board input. Board members expressed their desire to understand the budget and the details.

Discussion of FY 2016 and FY 2017 Budgets

David Hahn with the Division of Financial Management gave the board an overview of the agency budget process. The board has flexibility to change next year's request and flesh it out between now and Nov. 1. Executive Director Angela Hemingway provided the board with an overview of the budget request for FY 2017. The budget request does include some additional funding for memberships in organizations and additional funding for the program manager position. Ken Edmunds asked if there would be a strategic plan created to direct current year funding. Director Hemingway noted that a discussion of some near-term funding opportunities is on the agenda. She explained that she would be meeting with the Utah STEM Action Center in mid- September to gather information and would be proposing a plan at the next board meeting.

Discussion of Program Manager Position

Director Hemingway provided the board with a job description for the program manager, which she created based on several position descriptions at other STEM centers. The board directed her to proceed with reviewing applicants and conducting interviews. Director Hemingway will provide the board with resumes and cover letters of the top candidates.

Director Hemingway also discussed with the board the need for the Center to have a technical records specialist or similar position as grant programs are set up and funding is being provided. A technical records specialist could also do other administrative tasks that are time consuming, which would free up the time of the director and the program manager. The board agreed that may need to be part of a budget request but not for the next year until the Center is established and programs are running.

Needs Assessment: Baseline Data Collection

Director Hemingway has met with the research staff at the State Board of Education regarding getting baseline data from the statewide longitudinal data system. This data will be important in identifying needs and gaps and in providing data points to show the impact of STEM programs moving forward. One need is to get baseline data on teachers going in to STEM content areas. There are no projections on what we need and what we need to do to change our process. She will continue to work with the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education on data needs.

Website and Logo

The Center has a very basic website set up under state agencies of the idaho.gov website but getting a more robust web presence is very important. Director Hemingway asked the Board for their input on whether any of their organizations could help with this or if she should pursue contracting with an agency to develop a website and some additional collateral including a logo. Jeff Sayer offered to work have the agency Commerce uses work on the Center's logo and website. Ken Edmunds also offered help from Department of Labor.

Listening Tour Discussion

The Director would like to travel the state for the listening tour in the October/November timeframe. She would like to have the program manager hired before the tour so that individual can participate as well. The board suggested that Director Hemingway get a list of companies to visit from Idaho Business for Education and the Idaho Technology Council. The Director also indicated she would meet with the education association, including the Idaho Education Association, Idaho Association of School Administrators and Idaho School Boards Association, as well. Superintendent Ybarra stated that having teacher input and buy in would be very important to the success of the Center's efforts. Chairman Hill requested that the Director keep the board updated on the timing of the tour and that she report back to the board on common themes from her meetings.

SAC Support for Competitions, Professional Development, Awards, Associations and Organizations

The Board discussed some near-term projects and efforts that the Center might consider supporting.

The INDEEDS award was established in 2001 (originally known as the GIANTS award) recognizes Idaho teachers who integrate science and technology into their classrooms. The award is supported by industry funding. Industry representatives select two teachers from a field of applicants. The winners are honored at the annual Idaho Technology Council's annual Technology Hall of Fame event. This year's event is Oct. 21. The program has been administered for the last several years by the State Department of Education. They are no longer able to perform this function. The board agreed this is a program the state should continue and is an appropriate program for the Center to administer.

A Statewide STEM Fair has been identified as a need and efforts have been made in the past to start a

competition. Idaho is the only state that does not have a statewide STEM fair that would then qualify students to compete in a national fair. Students currently must go to a state competition in another state to qualify. Director Hemingway met with the Idaho Science, Mathematics and Technology Coalition about coordinating this effort with funding and support from the STEM Action Center.

Director Hemingway discussed using some funding in the current year to purchase access for higher education to the Smarter Balanced digital library in science. This would be targeted to pre-service teachers.

The board discussed how to help schools implement project-based learning and how to keep students interested in STEM by improving math instruction and making math relevant.

Lorna Finman noted that creating more awareness of STEM jobs and education opportunities is essential. Idaho needs a business partnership similar to Utah's partnership with Comcast to create and launch an awareness campaign. Director Hemingway noted that she has an upcoming meeting with KBOI regarding their proposal to help the STEM Center with an awareness campaign. She will report back to the board at the next meeting with the details of that meeting.

Ken Edmunds expressed his hesitancy to make decisions about funding programs without understanding how it fits into an overall strategic plan.

The board discussed what they will need and want to convey to the legislature about how this year's funding was used and what the plan is for next year.

Future Meeting Schedule and Wrap Up

The board discussed needing two meetings before Nov. 1 to work on the budget request. The next meeting will be held in late September with another to be scheduled before Nov. 1.

Meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.