

STEM Action Center

Board Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2015

I. Call to order

Dave Hill called to order the regular meeting of the STEM Action Center on September 24, 2015 at WW17, Boise Capitol.

II. Roll call

Dave Hill conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Chuck Zimmerly, Jeff Williams, Dave Hill, Von Hansen, Angela Hemingway, Lorna Finman, Dee Mooney and Marilyn Whitney.

III. Open issues

a) Trip to Utah, Angela Hemingway

- I. Utah has a similar program to Idaho; other states to keep in mind with similar programs are Iowa, Ohio, Maine, and Washington.
- II. The bulk of Utah's funding comes from General Fund, they are looking to set up a foundation, and potentially hire an additional foundation manager.
- III. Bulk of Utah's spending (\$8.5 million) in their first year went to digital learning, predominantly math based, mostly to teach educators and children how to use the products and study the results. Outcomes of study will come out in the end of October. Utah warned against focusing in one area too much initially. They focused primarily on 7th and 8th Grade. Lorna Finman said Idaho should think about starting younger.
- IV. The Utah STEM center was also able to reimburse teachers who went back and got their STEM endorsement in 2014.
- V. Utah shared their mini-grants process with the Idaho STEM center. It is their most popular program. Because the mini-grants are such a small part of their budget, it has been difficult to evaluate whether or not they are actually effective. Some ways to evaluate could be STEM camp attendance and standardized test results in STEM areas compared to test results of students who were not in mini-grant funded programs. Chuck Zimmerly was an external evaluator on an NSF grant for engaging college students in STEM. He said they used surveys

with students to evaluate their perceptions. Zimmerly also suggested asking parents and teachers.

- VI. Utah offered a selection of 10 products to different school districts and allowed the districts to choose which ones they were interested in, and then went from there. A product is just something supplied by a vendor. In Idaho we have selected Think Through Math as our product, which is a math curriculum supplement. A number of vendors in Utah weren't able to offer their product for free, so Utah didn't use them. Data will evaluate which product showed the greatest levels of student achievement and engagement. The results of their studies on the free products will be available in late October. A potential goal for Idaho is to endorse 2 to 3 products. Not yet sure whether or not the STEM center will be able to fund them, so they will just study and endorse products so districts can choose and pay for them.
- VII. Utah offers a STEMfest, in which industry personnel were invited to present a hands-on exhibit for a three day hands on fair that 7th and 8th graders from across the state. The Utah STEM Action paid to bus students to the event. They had almost 14,000 kids. This year they are expanding the fair and hope to have 30,000 kids and have hired an event planner. Different districts across Idaho are doing small scale editions of STEM fairs and an expansion could be worth looking into.

b) STEM Action Center Working Document, Angela Hemingway

1. Working document contains initial goals, STEM Action Center section of Idaho Code, and Board of Ed STEM strategic plan.
2. Uses these things to create 9 goals that line up in all of them.
 - I. Have budget submitted by September 1st.
 - II. Move INDEED, the STEM industry rep teacher recognition program, into the STEM action center.
 - III. A working goal for this year is to financially support First Robotics through competition financing or travel reimbursement. Look into getting First Robotics sanctioned. To be discussed further in November.
 - IV. Where is a good home for i-STEM and how can we support it.
 - V. Supporting classroom projects; potentially mini-grants that go towards mainly materials or possibly in state travel. Need to look into grant rubric creation.

- VI. Develop a state-wide science or STEM fair, try to have a regional one by next fall.
- VII. Ask Board to meet with Channel 2 news. Channel 2 wants to do some industry fundraising and then use those funds to create an awareness campaign.
- VIII. Take an inventory of measurements.
- IX. Work with Idaho Technology Council on Code.org Hour of Code and creation of computer programming initiatives.

3. Other Possible Goals

- I. Continue to work on a “listening tour” of the state to see where need is.
- II. Investigate legislative initiatives and possible directions for math and science standards.
- III. Three year budget plan.
- IV. Curriculum pilot projects.
- V. STEM teacher endorsement.
- VI. STEM mentors, connecting students to mentors through their teachers.
- VII. A foundation through the Action Center.

IV. New Business

- a) Budget evaluation on action items.
- b) Prioritize one unique thing to finish before January to establish budget legitimacy.
- c) Vet the initial action points.
- d) Build industry contacts at INDEED dinner.
- e) Idaho School Boards meeting and Math and Science conference.

V. Adjournment

Dave Hill adjourned the meeting.