

STEM Action Center
Board Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2021; 1pm-4pm
Zoom Meeting due to COVID

Listen here to IPTV Stream: <https://www.idahoptv.org/shows/idahoinsession/archive/#stem>

Call to Order

Chair Dee Mooney called to order the regular meeting of the STEM Action Center at 1:03pm on January 7, 2021.

Roll Call

Due to COVID the STEM AC Board meeting was conducted via Zoom. On the Zoom meeting were Dave Hill, Tim McMurtrey, Wendi Secrist, Jeff Rosser, Dee Mooney, Paul Casey, Jennifer Jackson, Jad Mahnken, Jake Reynolds.

STEM Action Center Staff: Kaitlin Maguire, Erica Compton, Crispin Gravatt, Finia Dinh,

STEM Action Center Contractors: Cory Compton, John McFarlane, Joanna Madden

Absent: None

Past Board Minutes Approved: Dee asked for comments on the July 7th minutes. Since there were none, Dave moved to approve, and Wendi seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Opening remarks:

Dee congratulated Kaitlin for taking on the role of interim Executive Director and turned the meeting over to her. Kaitlin thanked the board for their support. She explained that she would like to establish a new format for board meetings by providing more of a high level overview of STEM AC goals and accomplishments allowing more time for discussion.

Impacts of COVID:

Kaitlin briefly described and acknowledged that COVID has negatively impacted the STEM AC programs, professional developments and events. Erica explained that the PD's she is responsible for have either had to be cancelled or pivoted to online virtual events. STEM Day at the Fair was canceled as was STEM Matters at the Capitol. We are currently working to move STEM Matters to a week of virtual social media events so stay tuned. Future opportunities will be either hybrid or virtual events. She explained that it is very challenging to plan in uncertain times. We do not want to plan and then have to pullback. May use the virtual experience Finia created with Hour of Code as a template. Dee questioned whether CS was a success and well attended. Are organizations asking for virtual PDs'? Erica commented that the need is huge with organizations and schools are looking for help in dealing with the virtual world. Finia provided an update on the success of Idaho Codes. Hour of Code was virtual this year with the Governor, Kaitlin and many others participating with students via Zoom. Crispin shared that we did not move as quickly at first not anticipating the length of time that COVID would impact programs. Now that teachers are mostly virtual, they are stretched for time. Applications are down and reporting is delayed or incomplete.

Goal 1: Advance equitable access to high-quality STEM+CS opportunities for educators, students, and communities.

Professional Development:

Finia is now the lead on the statewide i-STEM PD. This is our largest PD with 6 sites statewide with educators as the strand providers for other educators. The 2020 i-STEM institutes were postponed and will be held as i-STEM 2021. For 2021 we will conduct all sites virtually with the same educators who signed up in 2020.

Erica commented that the Early STEM PD will be held in late January. Drones PD opens in February. Last summer Drones ran all online and received very positive feedback. The IDX competition has been cancelled. Erica shared the good news about the Early STEM grant that the IAAYC received over the next 3 year. We were written into the grant and are looking to receive ~\$250K which will allow us to have a huge impact on early education.

Goal 2: Align STEM Education and workforce**STEM School Designation:**

For 2021 STEM designations will be on hold due to COVID. We have 2 schools in the pipeline and will go next year when schools can participate fully. We continue to provide support to the current schools that have received the STEM Designation.

STEM Diploma:

John commented that 4000 students were eligible in 2018 for the diploma but there was inadequate tracking to know how many actually received it. We are working to incentivize the awarding of the diploma, have it noted on student's transcripts or maybe provide honor cords to wear during graduation. Having conversations with higher ed institutions to determine what a STEM diploma would mean to admissions. John has received positive responses from colleges but mostly silence from universities. Scholarships are available for STEM related ed. Kaitlin added that we are looking for industry partners to help by providing money for scholarships. This is a statewide initiative, but each district or school decides what courses will count towards the diploma.

Externship Program:

John stated the application for the extern program is open now and will close Feb. 12. This is year 3 of the program. Last year we had 28 externs. We have applied for 2 grants to support the program that would allow us to provide up to 60 externs.

STEM Ecosystem:

Kaitlin informed the board that we launched our statewide Ecosystem last year and have over 100 participants from a broad range of organizations. April 16 will be our next statewide convening. We have several working groups meeting on a monthly basis and regional networks being developed to work together. Kaitlin shared examples of several ecosystems partners commitments. These can be found on the ecosystem website. Erica commented that we are also involved in the national ecosystem work as well. We belong to a national organization working to develop plans for workforce with the incoming administration. The goal is to have recommendation to the Biden team by next week. We will share that once it is complete.

Grants:

Kaitlin advised the board that we now have a new contract grant writer to replace her. She briefly laid out the grants we have successfully been awarded and ones that are in the works.

Fundraising Update:

Joanna reported there is growing awareness about the Foundation. Partners and other donors are taking advantage of the tax advantages of donating to the Foundation. To date we have raised almost \$600K,

which is 60% of our goal. The Board for the Foundation is also growing with the addition of Christine Frei and Angela Hemingway.

Year end giving was very successful bringing \$21K most of which was unrestricted. New donors are utilizing P3 as a means of giving. General Fundraising to date totals \$933K with an uptick in individual donors. We anticipate surpassing our \$1M goal. P3 remains the most popular mechanism to give followed by support for Educator PD.

Goal 3: Increase Awareness of the importance of STEM throughout Idaho.

Erica reported that we will be presenting for the 5th year at the IETA conference which will be virtual this year. STEM Matters typically held in the Capitol leading up to our JFAC presentation has been cancelled. Kaitlin commented that we need to have a presence with the legislators. Crispin outlined how we are creating a social media strategy to do just that. The virtual Hour of Code was so successful we will use that as a template for a virtual STEM Matters. In addition, Crispin shared that last Fall we conducted “Listening Sessions” which were very successful. We received outstanding input from educators across the state. We will continue this outreach by including people missed in the fall mainly school administrators. We hope to learn what STEM education looks like to them and how we can help them achieve their goals. Kaitlin shared the trailer to our new awareness video “This is STEM” which premiered on our Facebook page. The goal of the video is to increase interest and an understanding of STEM and what it is. We will encourage our partners to use it. The video can be found on our YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCekulEqWhdaGVGFEnVGB7lg>

The YouTube link to the full English version for “This is STEM” video is:

https://youtu.be/1MM_oToOVEI

A brief discussion ensued around the idea of rethinking our goals and look at whether our goals still fit or need to be amended. Will add this to the next meeting agenda.

Equity Statement:

The board gave feedback on the newly developed Equity Statement. Kaitlin reported that we used other organizations equity statements and definitions to develop ours. An equity statement is important to communicate our commitment to equity, especially to potential partners, fundraisers and for grant writing. After a lengthy discussion it was recommended that the first paragraph of the Statement stand alone as the equity statement as a forward-facing document. Perhaps there are 2 separate statements with different purposes. We will rework the statement as suggested and bring it back to the Board for approval and then on to the governor’s office for final approval.

Fact Book Review presentation from Wendi Secrist:

Wendi presented an overview on the High School graduation data and the go on rates by gender, economic diversity and ethnicity. Kaitlin referenced the document “Vital Signs” sent out to the board. The general take away was that this data was critical to building our path and creating our programs. The data is also important as we reach various constituents with our message. It was determined that a one pager of the data would be very helpful for board and staff to have as we take our message out to legislators and donors.

Budget Discussion:

Present FY21; Future FY22

Kaitlin gave a brief overview of our FY22 budget requests which includes maintenance of benefit costs, IT billings etc; a line item to move 1 FTE from the Dedicated Fund to the General Fund and to remove the miscellaneous revenue fund. Funding request break down; General Fund \$3,045, 700 with \$500k earmarked for Computer Science. Dedicated Fund with a spending authority of \$2,929,900 for a total

budget of \$5,975,600. Kaitlin commented that the Governors recommendations are embargoed until his announcement on Monday the 11th. Additionally, Kaitlin presented an analysis of spending by project for FY20 and FY21 sharing that we are on target with our spending.

Legislation: There is no proposed Legislation for the coming year.

JFAC Prep and Performance Report:

Kaitlin began the discussion by reviewing the STEM AC Mission and Vision as well as our 3 Goals. She stated that she will be using the FY20 Performance Report Data in prepping for our JFAC presentation. Crispin shared that due to COVID we will be reporting a lower level of impact. The discussion turned to how best to explain the lower impact and the \$1.746 going out of the STEM AC but not actually spent. Dave and Wendi advised that we make a clear delineation between Planned spending vs Actual spending. Further we need to highlight how we were able to pivot during COVID to show how we were innovative and creative. It is important to manage expectations for legislators. The impact of COVID has resulted in missing final reports, delayed and cancelled programs and that this could be the new normal for 2-3 years as we recover from the impact of COVID. As we move forward intentionally refocus our impact. In terms of developing a strategic plan Kaitlin would like to develop a 5-year plan not just an operational plan. Look at new ways of gathering data and data management like conducting site visits once we are back in person and collect more qualitative data. Kaitlin presented the key points that could be used for the JFAC presentation. Comments included that continuing to use the unfilled STEM jobs and subsequent loss of tax revenue is stale; any discussion of the Ecosystem is not relevant to JFAC; need to support digital literacy which is supported by the Governors goal of literacy by the 3rd grade. Kaitlin asked the board to send her questions she should anticipate getting from JFAC. Dave commented we may not get this question but should have an answer to “what would we do with more money?”

2021 Legislative Session:

Kaitlin asked the board what they would need to help communicate with legislators? Discussion resulted in creating a one page talking points/fact sheet so everyone is on the same script. Keep it simple.

Board Updates:

Todd Driver from SDE presented an update on the process and timeline of developing the new curriculum standards.

Wendi provided an update on the status of cyber education and security in Idaho and an update on a recently submitted proposal with ITC for Idaho Codes 2.0.

Ongoing Board Support:

Kaitlin asked the board to continue to introduce us to potential donors and supporters. She also advised them that the P3 application is now open until mid-May. Erica also asked the board to consider hosting one of 5 Vista Makers we have received in the state. John explained the host commitment.

Public Comment: None

Upcoming Events: JFAC Presentation is January 29th. We will be last to present so should be around noon and due to COVID it is closed to the public but can be watched via IPTV. Let Kaitlin know if you would like to attend and she will provide the link. Kaitlin asked to set the date for the next Board meeting. The meeting was set for April 1st via Zoom. ISEF awards ceremony will be virtual live on March 25th. The next Idaho Ecosystem convening is April 16th.

Dee adjourned the meeting promptly at 3:52pm.

Next Board Meeting is April 1st and will be a Zoom meeting.