

**STEM Action Center
Board Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2024 1:30 – 3:00 pm
STEM Action Center Conference Room**

Members Present: Ed Atienza, Jennifer Jackson, Steve Christiansen, Jake Reynolds, Linda Clark, Allison

Staff Present: Dee Mooney, Stephanie Lee, Morgan Howard, Francine McGrew, Sarah Howard, Nate Dean, Meliah Anchustegui, Katie Bosch-Wilson, Matthew Reiber, Wendi Secrist

Call to Order

Jennifer Jackson called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm.

Review of Board Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2024 – Ed asked about a question in the notes about AVID. Katie stated that the regional partner could be included in parentheses and the question could be removed.

July 10, 2024 -

Allison moved to approve the April 10 and July 10 minutes, Ed seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Review of Recent Changes

Jenn stated that the STEM Action Center is moving in a new path forward. A formal transition has started to take place. Jennifer would like to publicly and officially recognize the STEM Action Center's staff during the time of changes that happened in the earlier part of the year.

Jenn discussed the new structure at the STEM Action Center for a STEM-literate workforce and the transition over to the Workforce Development Council. She then passed the floor to Wendi to continue the conversation about the transition in the STEM Action Center to the Workforce Development Council. Wendi emphasized the close partnership between WDC and the STEM Action Center, noting that very few jobs don't require some level of STEM Literacy. She mentioned that the transition is a structural move and that the STEM Advisory Board will likely be integrated into the committee structure in the future. However, this will not happen immediately. Wendi and Jani are working together to determine who will represent the Idaho Department of Labor on the Advisory Board. The transition is focused on how the STEM Action Center can further its work and collaborate with external stakeholders. Wendi highlighted Dee's attendance at the Workforce Development Council Meeting and discussed the potential collaboration between WDC and the STEM Action Center. The specifics of how the two

organizations will work together will be further explored, and updates on this will be provided in the coming 30 to 60 days.

The meeting then shifted to updates from the Governor's Office. Matthew stated that the Governor's focus has been on education and the workforce, aiming to connect industry with education through WDC, which is entirely made up of industry. Jennifer emphasized that the next step is to integrate the work of the STEM Action Center and WDC with industry.

Steve inquired about the timeline for more clarity on how WDC and the STEM Action Center will work together to which Dee responded that she would keep the board updated and ensure that everyone is comfortable with the path forward. Jake asked about potential statutory changes, and Matthew explained that, as both the STEM Action Center and Workforce Development Council are under the office of the governor, changes can be made as the Governor sees fit. There is no requirement for legislative change, but it is not confirmed that no changes will be made. He is having continual conversations with the Governor's general counsel.

Jenn introduced Dee Mooney as the new Executive Director of the STEM Action Center, and Dee expressed her excitement about the upcoming changes. Dee also mentioned that she is working on board expirations and including new board members as they are appointed, welcoming Linda as a new board member. Matthew took responsibility for the delay in filling all the board member vacancies.

STEM Action Center Program Highlights

Dee Mooney shared that she is just getting started, but because she has been a part of the Center, she feels that she isn't stepping into something completely new. She talked about her 30-60-90-day plan. During her 30-day plan, Dee is learning all that she can from the team members about their programs and processes. She also mentioned attending the Workforce Development Council and participating in input gathering. She sent out a survey to educators and business members to get input on the center, and she will send that to the board as well as have phone conversations with each of them. She wants to understand how the board is feeling about the center strategy-wise and program-wise. Allison asked how broad of an answer Dee would like. Dee stated that she would like it to be pretty broad just to get feedback on how people think of the STEM Action Center. Katie mentioned that there were strategic picks made with urban and rural schools to get feedback from this survey. Dee stated that the STEM Action Center Staff will be having a Strategy Session on a tentative date of October 1st, which will be one of many. Members of Micron will be guiding the Center through this change. Dee stated that any kind of changes to Strategy will be presented to the board, which could be on a more regular basis if that were what the board would like. Dee echoed Jenn's sentiments of thank you to the STEM Action Center team. There are not many program updates today from Dee, but she is working on looking into strategic updates. Jenn asked for summary reports of the feedback from the survey that Dee sent back. Dee noted that as an action item. Ed asked if the board would be discussing

the regional fairs. Dee stated that the fairs have been planned and Nate is working on the International Fair piece. Jenn asked if all of the regions were included, and Katie confirmed all of the regions were included. Dee stated that in 2017 there was legislation passed to allow for STEM School Designation to be provided for schools. As of 2023, 9 schools have received Designation. She also shared with the board that the STEM Action Center's role is to prepare schools to receive Designation status. Dee transitioned the time to Katie for STEM School Designation.

STEM School Designation Application Requirement Approval

Katie discussed the support that the Center provides to schools. The support provided is not all required by legislation. Professional Development, i-STEM, Externships, and working with partners are aimed at preparing schools for STEM School Designation. Another support provided is coaching and connecting designated schools with those interested in accreditation. The Idaho STEM Action Center provides funding to designated schools as an incentive, which is received after designation. Designated schools receive \$5,000 per year for five years. There are 705 schools in Idaho, not including Charter Schools, and currently, 11 schools are designated. Steve inquired about different levels of designation that could attract more schools. Dee also expressed interest in expanding the program. Katie noted that schools must meet all criteria and choose to participate to become designated. Steve and Jenn expressed concerns about the process and incentives potentially working against each other. Linda highlighted the need for better marketing and addressing concerns about the application process being too difficult. Nate was tasked with providing an overview of the application process, and the process will be reviewed for future improvements. Allison inquired about the feasibility of meeting the timeline, and Nate expressed confidence that it is achievable. An annual cycle was deemed helpful by Katie and Jenn. Nate mentioned ongoing efforts to make the process less onerous and noted that it could take 3 to 5 years from the decision to be designated to approval. Nate also mentioned that a work group comprised of STEM Designated schools actively works on changing the process. The estimated number of hours required to go through the process varies based on school, grade level, and administrators. Katie and Allison echoed that rural schools take less time to train staff for the Designation. Jenn inquired about the breakdown of rural and urban schools that are designated, prompting Dee to suggest collecting and compiling data for the future. Jenn also highlighted the potential impact of STEM School Designation in the rural community. Nate mentioned that the STEM Action Center uses funds raised from its Foundation Manager to provide funding to designated schools, as the legislation does not provide fiscal support.

Jenn moved to approve the STEM School Designation Application Requirement, Allison seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Jenn opened the floor to the board for any questions. She also suggested that a poll be sent out to get another meeting on the books. Dee suggested sending a poll that included dates for the rest of the year, which the board agreed upon. Jenn adjourned the meeting at 2:33 pm.