

**STEM Action Center
Board Meeting Minutes
March 18th, 2025 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
STEM Action Center Conference Room**

Board Members Present: Jenn Jackson, Ed Atienza, Linda Clark, Steve Christensen, Jani Rivera, Allison Duman, Erin Simms

Board Members Absent: Jake Reynolds

Staff Present: Dee Mooney, Katie Bosch-Wilson, Morgan Howard, Wendi Secrist, Meliah Anchustegui, Alayna Utt

Call to Order and Introductions

Jenn called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm and welcomed everyone to introduce themselves.

Review of Board Meeting Minutes

Jani moved to accept the minutes for February 2025, Allison seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Linda moved to adjust the agenda by switching, Ed seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Update on STEM AC and WDC Integration

Dee introduced Chad Biggs with Red Sky PR who has been helping with the messaging for the merge into Workforce Development Council. Dee took the advice to have clear and consistent messaging for the board and staff. Dee stated that they presented the first draft to the STEM AC and WDC staff to give feedback a couple of weeks ago. The WDC Council presented the edited draft last week, which is the same draft presented to the board today. Wendi added that the focus is to answer the big questions and if there is anything that is missing to please provide feedback. Once feedback is provided from the board they will take the revised document to the Governor's office for final approval. Once approval has been provided the messaging will be sent out to important stakeholders, hopefully prior to the kickoff of i-STEM in June.

Linda stated that the consensus of the Council last week was that the transition was very timely and that she didn't hear any negative feedback on the transition. Allison stated she has received the question of where the Department of Education and Board of Education fit this integration. Clear communication on representation for education needs to be clear. Jenn stated the piece that she wants more clarity on is the relation between the STEM Action Center and the Idaho EcosySTEM, as she anticipates being asked those questions and not currently having the answers.

Dee stated there were questions on the STEM AC Foundation, which will be created more clearly. She also stated there are still a few moving pieces and parts to figure out for the relationship between the STEM AC Foundation and Idaho EcosySTEM.

Katie asked if the current goal is finalizing the current draft or if changes and drafting will continue to be iterated. Wendi and Dee verified that there will be continued iterations until the draft feels complete.

Wendi highlighted the section on the STEM AC board FAQ and asked if there were any questions regarding the statement on STEM AC's board integrating into WDC's Council committees. Wendi also stated that there is a bylaw that needs to be worked out regarding committee members having one sitting council member. Ed asked if a new committee is necessary or if the STEM AC board could be integrated into a current committee. Wendi stated that it is her opinion that a STEM specific committee represent STEM and Computer Science. Jani added that the committees are not siloed, and often multiple committees will meet for joint sessions to have collaboration. Jani asked if the board would have final decision authority outside of the Executive Committee, and Wendi stated that the STEM AC committee would probably have some independence in decision-making when it comes to granting.

Dee asked the board to provide further input and feedback by Friday, March 21st.

Review and Approval of STEM Designation Schools

Dee provided a brief history of the STEM School Designation program, which highlighted 12 schools being currently designated with potential for two new schools being designated.

Katie introduced the Standards and Scoring process for STEM Designation. A school needs to score a 6 systematically and consistently to be passed the evaluation process.

MOSAICS: passed all standards systematically and consistently, except for professional development systematically. The committee recommended MOSAICS the school passes, with a recommendation to continue developing systematic professional development.

Allison asked if the three schools were the only ones who were ready to be evaluated, and Katie stated that the three schools that were evaluated were the only schools who requested to be evaluated. Linda asked if once a school becomes designated there is not a re-evaluation process. Katie stated re-evaluation happens every 5 years.

Katie highlighted MOSAICS school's strengths and growth opportunities, one strength being the lack of out of school program engagement due to STEM opportunities being integrated into their school day.

Steve asked how a parent would know if a STEM school was credible or not. Dee stated that the STEM Designation process is one way to indicate credibility. Jenn asked how many public charters vs public schools are STEM designated. Katie stated that there are 9 of the current 11 schools are non-charter schools. Allison asked if the program could work with the schools to adjust their branding to indicated they are a STEM Designated school, eg. "MOSAICS Public School a STEM Designated School".

Bear Lake Middle School: passed all standards except Technology & Resources, which the evaluation team recommended changes, but still moved to pass due to a great STEM education is possible to be provided without extensive Tech. An area of strength is professional development opportunities and community engagement.

Katie noted that after the evaluation process there was an influx of registration for i-STEM this summer.

Southside Elementary *Renewal*: passed evaluation. Strengths include the implementation of in-school and after-school opportunities, adaptability in meeting students' needs, and career exploration.

Katie noted the importance of the evaluation team being able to visit this school in person to see the work in STEM that this school is doing. Allison asked if there could be different designations for renewed schools and new and emerging schools to distinguish effort. Dee stated that the refresh of this program could potentially lead to that direction of distinguishing effort to showcase the impact of this program. Dee also stated a more strategic approach on how to focus attention on schools and district the program would like to involve in the future.

Alayna highlighted that teacher turn-over is very high, which shows how deep the STEM integration is at Southside Elementary.

Allison asked if the administration from designated schools could be presented to the State Board to show the value of this program and highlight the great work. Further considerations will be made with Linda offline.

Allison moved to recommend MOSAICS Public School (Caldwell SD) and Bear Lake Middle School (Lake Pend Orielle SD) to be sent to the State Board of Education to be named STEM Designation Schools and Southside Elementary to be renewed as a STEM Designated school, Steve seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Dee stated that there have been many conversations about this program and noted that there are 800 schools in the state. There will be 15 schools that are STEM Designated. She noted the team been looking at the strategy of the program. Dee highlighted that Meliah has been collecting data on the STEM Designated schools to see growth to proficiency as well as ISAT testing outcomes. Dee recommended that in May or June the data will be presented to the board to allow for further recommendations.

Steve asked if there are any states that are exceeding outcomes that the STEM Action Center could model their program after. Katie stated that during the PLC process, other programs were considered when developing standards for this program.

Jenn stated that there are a lot of different models in the STEMX space, and the board could tap into those resources.

Adjournment

Allison moved to adjourn the meeting; Linda seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:47 pm.