

STEM Action Center Board Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2014 • 3:00pm

UTC: 2755 East Cottonwood Parkway #500, Salt Lake City, 84121

Members Present:	Blair Carruth, Reza Jalili, Jeffery Nelson, Gene Levinzon, Robert Brems, Bert VanderHeiden, Rich Nelson, Norm LeClair, Tami Pyfer
Members Absent:	Val Hale, Brad Smith, Jefferson Moss, Stan Lockhart
Staff:	Tami Goetz, Sue Redington, Gina Sanzenbacher, Sarah Young, Jenna Johnson, Kaitlin Felsted
Visitors:	Sarah Brasiel, Clarence Ames, SooJeong Jeong, Scott Smith, Martha Castilla-Felton, Brent Peterson, Ivan Alfaro, Connie Ronkt, Senator Howard Stephenson

I. Welcome and Related Business

Jeff Nelson, STEM Action Center Board Chairman, called the meeting to order, introduced and welcomed the group and thanks UTC for hosting the meeting. Due to the fact that some board members were absent at the beginning of the meeting, there were too few members to vote to approve the minutes. Chairman Nelson moved forward with the agenda until more board members were present.

II. Board Discussion**i. Legislative Session Discussion**

Dr. Tami Goetz introduced the topic and stated that the STEM Action Center is focused on outcomes instead of introducing new initiatives, and being able to communicate the progress of the current initiatives to the State Legislature. However, there are two new initiatives being discussed, one for computer science and one for physics that could be part of the Center, but no decision has been made. Senator Stephenson brought up the point that providing devices for each student, such as a one-to-one initiative may not be as effective as providing the software with feedback and achievement to each student in the State.

Dr. Goetz also discussed the capacity and capability of partnering with higher education in the State to use as a network for collaboration. Blair Carruth, with the Utah System of Higher Education and a STEM Action Center Board Member, brought up that each higher education institution is unique and there is a need to respect that uniqueness as they respond to the workforce needs of their individual areas. Dr. Goetz then talked about a meeting with Representative Chavez-Houck where she expressed an interest in the STEM Action Center being involved in the Hispanic and Latino community, whether it being financial support, brainstorming, etc. Dr. Goetz brought up the Women in the Economy Commission and Council, and a potential partnership that would support their reach across the State.

ii. Policies and Procedures

Chairman Nelson asked for a briefing on the STEM Action Center's Policies and Procedures, and Dr. Goetz began by expressing the need for the STEM Action Center to be "audit ready" and the importance of being transparent and accountable to the entire State, and not only the Legislature. Since what the STEM Action Center deals mostly with internal policy, policies and procedures will be sufficient as opposed to rules. The STEM Action Center has been able to adopt policies and procedures that are not necessarily specific to only the Center, but it was mentioned that there are a few policies that need to be created specifically for the STEM Action Center initiatives such as those for sponsorship and for the Fairs, Camps and Competitions Grant.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION: BLAIR CARRUTH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES, SECONDED BY ROB BREMS. THE MOTION WAS UNANAMOUSLY APPROVED.

III. Project Updates

Sarah Young began with the projects she oversees, the Elementary STEM Endorsement and STEM Schools Designation. Sarah updated the Board on "Grants Day" where applicants for the Endorsement were able to come and write their proposal and collaborate together. The applicants represent a large part of the State, with seven total proposals. Sarah then began her summary of the STEM Schools Designation and the need to make sure there are opportunities for success for all students across the State, and currently the schools that are focused on STEM curriculum. Currently, STEM schools are self-labeled without any certifications, etc. and Sarah is researching the shared characteristics of these schools in order to form the criteria for a State recognized designation. Sarah then proposed a maintenance program for these schools with visits and opportunities for achievement. The Board Members had questions about schools that have self-labeled as a STEM school, and the potential for schools that have low outcomes currently, but would still want to be endorsed as a STEM school. They also asked about the incentives for a school who becomes designated and Sarah answered that there are no current financial incentives, but that there is community recognition. Chairman Nelson suggested that those schools that would be designated could be part of a collaboration or council that would allow them to support and mentor other schools or continue to develop the criteria for STEM schools.

Kaitlin Felsted reported on the website by giving the Board updates on the statistic from visitors to the website and social media. She then discussed the STEM Festival and the support and effort the STEM Action Center is giving, as well as how Board Members/industry can be involved. Kaitlin then updated the Board on the contest portion of our website and the plans and criteria given for the STEMi nomination awards as well as the STEM Doodle contest. Dr. Goetz wanted to announce that Utah was selected for a national conference to be happening, with Ogden City taking the lead and hosting at Weber State University. More details will come in the future.

Brent Peterson then presented on the STEM Assembly from October, and also reported on local and State news coverage for STEM. Brent gave a financial summary of the value of the news coverage and media spotlights for the STEM Action Center. Brent estimates that the total monetary value of the media campaign is 1.6 million dollars, which he claims as a good start.

Gina then gave an update for the Professional Learning Grant and Middle School Applied Science Grant. The Applied Science Grant is for 7th and 8th grade students enrolled in CTE type courses. Gina informed the Board of the vendors, the total cost and the amount of students impacted. The target for the Professional Learning Grant is educators who want to improve their teaching skills through an online, video-based platform. Gina has been visiting schools that are implementing both grants and has received good feedback and been able to listen to unique solutions to individual constraints in some school districts.

Dr. Goetz then presented to the Board about the High School STEM Certification initiative, which is meant to address the need to create new or expand the capacity of existing certification programs in high schools that align with high-demand jobs in the State. Dr. Goetz explained that the requirements for this grant were that the districts remain the fiscal lead in their partnership with local colleges and applied technology centers. The next requirement was that their outcome of certificates of high school students must be recognized by industry and increase the competitiveness of the employment they were seeking. Dr. Goetz then discussed the application results and those that were awarded. Board Members had some questions relating to specific applications and entities, and Dr. Goetz was able to answer those questions. She also made a point that the applicants that focused on manufacturing were asked to come together and work collaboratively to have the same industry-recognized certificate along with the Utah Manufacturing Association.

The Board Members requested more information via email on recipients of the awards and the reviewing process.

Jenna Johnson then gave a brief update on the Fairs, Camps and Competitions by stating the number of applications received and the amount of funding awarded along with the number of students impacted. Board Members asked questions about the process of awarding the grants and how much impact per year this grant has. Rich Nelson specifically asked that the Board Members have the opportunity to participate in the review process. Rich also mentioned that he feels there should be more Board engagement and inclusion in the process of grants and awards.

Rich Nelson had previously asked for time to update the Board and STEM Action Center Staff on the progress and initiatives of Utah Technology Council that work towards finding talent and retaining employees in Utah. Rich showed his presentation given to State leaders to inform and excite them about solutions to Utah's workforce situation. Rich also mentioned calendar items that the Board and Staff should attend to show support and involvement. Rich pointed out that academic officers and industry are out of sync and are using different data and information, and there should be a way to work together using the same information.

IV. Presentation: Dr. Sarah Brasiel, Math Technology Utah Data

Dr. Sarah Brasiel and her graduate students presented their collected data and information for the Math Technology Grant concerning the usage across the State of Utah. Dr. Brasiel states that about 52% of the licenses awarded are being used since implementation in July, August and September of 2014. Dr. Brasiel and her team monitor the usage each month in cooperation with each software vendor. Senator Stephenson asked from the audience why the usage data was low, and Dr. Brasiel turned to teacher feedback that had been collected to answer the question. While teachers using the software with their students show excitement and see achievement, some teachers are concerned about bandwidth, accessibility to devices, and other technical issues outside of their control. The students who have been using the software for three months have made similar progress as the usage last year, and even making greater progress than would be expected under other conditions. Dr. Brasiel then discussed what the process of gathering data will be like for data that does not come from the vendors. This external data comes from the Utah State Office of Education, but is to be evaluated by Dr. Sarah Brasiel and another specialist who analyzes state data.

Senator Stephenson then asked the Board and the Staff to report with fidelity and to make sure the focus is on outcomes for students. Chairman Nelson promised Senator Stephenson that the Board would make sure of the validity of data being reported.

Reza Jalili, Board Member, brought up the point that Khan Academy offers math technology for teaching and learning, but it is cost-free, and he asked why the State does not implement Khan Academy in schools. Some members of the Board and Staff commented that not enough is known about Khan Academy for it to be endorsed by the State.

V. Presentation: Tami Pyfer, Two-Year STEM Degrees

Tami briefly informed the Board about a group of employers that need employees with STEM tech degrees that are offered through Weber State University by way of a two year program. These employers would like to connect with the STEM Action Center to help market to parents and students have access to information about these degrees and also to help form scholarships and have more students seek these two-year degrees. Tami has been working with this group of employers to obtain their objective along with connecting them with State resources.

VI. Closed Session

MOTION: PURSUANT TO THE OPEN AND PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT, I HEREBY MOVE TO CLOSE THE MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE CHARACTER, PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OR PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL. THIS VOTE REQUIRES 2/3 VOTE OF THE BOARD. THE CLOSED MEETING SHALL BE HELD IN THE GOED OFFICES LOCATED AT 60 E SOUTH TEMPLE, THIRD FLOOR, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

RECORD THE NAME AND VOTE OF EACH MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC BODY BELOW:

Name of Member of Public Body	VOTE TO CLOSE MEETING
Bert VanderHeiden	Yes
Blair Carruth	Yes
Reza Jalili	Yes
Tami Pyfer	Yes
Gene Levinzon	Yes
Jeffery Nelson	Yes
Brad Smith	Yes
Rob Brems	Yes
Rich Nelson	Yes
Norm LeClair	Yes

VII. Adjournment

MOTION: CHARIMAN JEFF NELSON MOTIONS TO CLOSE THE MEETING AND HIS MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.