

STEM Action Center Board Meeting Minutes

September 29, 2021 • 2:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Members Present:	Vance Checketts, Chiao-ih Hui, Trish Baker, Scott Hansen, Jamie Morningstar, Sarah Lehman, Brittney Cummins, Mark Sunday, Jill Love, Andrea Ibanez
Members Absent:	Nate McDonald, Sydnee Dickson, Scotty Nowlin, Jessica Gilmore, Mark Ripke
Staff:	Tami Goetz, Sue Redington, Jack Markman, Becca Robison, Colleen Fisher, Lynn Purdin, Julianne Bailey, Allison Spencer, Kellie Yates, Clarence Ames, Gina Muhlestein
Visitors:	Katherine Potter

I. Welcome and Related Business

Vance Checketts called the meeting to order. Vance Checketts requested approval of minutes from June 23, 2021. Sarah Lehman motioned to approve the minutes. Jamie Morningstar seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved. We have three new board members: Trish Baker, Andrea Ibanez, and Chiao-ih Hui. They each introduced themselves.

II. Share Out:

Vance Checketts asked if anybody had any STEM related news to share. Sarah Lehman shared information about ENVE. Vance Checketts shared that he made a career shift earlier this year into health tech. Artemis Health is also currently hiring.

Tami Goetz presented Gina Muhlestein, the newest team member to the STEM Action Center. Jack Markman has now been hired on full-time as the AmeriCorps Grant Manager. Tami shared that David Wicai is leaving the STEM AC, but is taking another position within the Department.

III. Board Discussion

Sue Redington gave a brief overview of the FY21 budget. Please see the budget report for details on how money was spent.

Julianne Bailey shared information about To Learn Early math kits. Our kits have been based on a program out of Washington State, Project Child Success. Original programs included Cook to Learn, Move to Learn, and Paint to Learn. Our kits integrate fun activities with early math skills. We wanted to do an in person model, but COVID forced us to change our plans. Early pre-k STEM content is needed throughout Utah, so we made a kit for that group. This created an opportunity to address math proficiency on a

much larger scale. Each kit has 3 activities that are aligned to early math standards. We are working with the CCE design team to ensure all of our kits look cohesive. The instructions are made to be simple enough for children to work through activities on their own. Also, tips are included to help parents continue the conversation. As we have started the process to apply for grants, we realized this project has a larger potential than we first suspected. We received funding through Boeing and Comcast. Kits were distributed through Tooele Library system (a 600 kit pilot program.) 75%-80% of the kids responded that they enjoyed the activities. Teachers and library partners reported that children were more excited for school activities as the new school year started and were more proficient in the types of skills introduced in the kit. 4500 total kits are planned. 5 topics are planned with two age ranges (2-4 years old and 5-8 years old). Davis School District, Weber School District, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Salt Lake, and YMCA of Northern Utah are our current distributors. There is a survey link in the kits to get feedback. The first kits will be in the hands of the kids as soon as we can arrange it with the partners (1-2 months). The last two kits planned will be distributed early 2022. All of our kits have been assembled by volunteers. Julienne spoke briefly about the future of the To Learn kits and what that might look like.

Becca Robison shared information about our Innovation Hub. The Hub was originally started to help meet the need for competitive robotics teams to have a place to meet. Current capacity for robotics teams is 15. Currently, we have 5 teams. We are focusing on: community teams, girl participants, and students with differing abilities. The Hub also gives us the availability to connect teams to coaches and mentors – virtually and in person. One of our goals is to help build youth leadership skills with near peer mentoring. We are trying to address misconceptions about what is needed from a coach or mentor of robotics teams. You don't have to be an engineer or a genius to help these teams be successful.

Becca then shared information about our STEM Artist-in-Residence program. This is a program that will have a rotating artist with a STEM focus. We want to share that STEM and art are closely related. Introducing STEM through art is an easy way to introduce people to STEM. Hoping to work with teachers to build after school programs. There is a lot of potential for partnerships: arts and museums, Clever Octopus, Discovery Gateway, Leonardo, and the Beverly Taylor Sorensen Foundation. We have an initial donation to support our pilot – thank you to the Nelson Family Foundation.

Becca then shared a bit about STEM Spots. These are inspired by the free Little Lending Library Project. The Hub is helping by being a space for volunteers to come and build the structures. People can book time through Becca Robison.

Becca then shared information about the Makers for Equity program. Crowdsourcing 3D printed education models and manipulatives. Educators and students will assist in the design and prototyping. Local makers will scale production. Potential to expand to

support a broader range of students. Creating tactile models will help enhance the learning experience for students involved.

Becca then shared information about our community classes and field trips. Looking to work with afterschool programs, summer camps, and schools. We are looking to book our maker space with all sorts of groups!

Successes with the Innovation Hub:

- Nearly 500 participants since June 16.
- Partnering with Girl Scouts for maker classes.
- Home to/in support of 5 competitive robotics teams.
- Working on website and registration process for school day field trips.

We envision creating and maintaining a Makerspace Network and designation program. We would like to create a Makerspace playbook to help others create their own Makerspaces. What we hope to accomplish with a Makerspace Network: Technical support/expertise, professional development opportunities, evaluation support, Innovation Hub designation program, and Innovation Hub playbook.

Allison Spencer shared information about the Foundation next. Allison shared with the new board members information about the Foundation and how/why it was started. \$4.5 million has been raised since we started in 2017. Donations have been down since the pandemic started, but Allison suspects that things will change as the world goes back to normal. It already is looking good for this year due to the donations we have already received this year. Allison shared success stories that the Foundation has been a part of this year. The Industry Coalition information was shared. STEM AC board members were invited to be a part of the Industry Coalition.

Next, Lynn Purdin shared information about STEM Education and Equity Coalition (SEEC). Elevate all Utahans through equitable access for each Utah student, educator, community, and family to quality STEM resources (STEM AC Core Value). Increase community programming that responds to and meets the needs of communities, which are underrepresented in STEM. Coalition Structure: STEM Action Center, in partnership with USBE and USHE, will act as backbone organization for facilitation. Voices of the underrepresented communities at the forefront. We have worked/are planning to work with: American Indian Services, Indian Affairs, Multicultural Affairs, Curly Me, Columbus Serves, and Women Tech Council. Identifies themes: greater awareness of inequities, communication strategy to parents/caregivers, and leveraging resources and best practices. Second group working to bring in is higher education organizations. Third group is informal stem groups. Would like to bring in groups from rural areas of Utah. Next steps: identifying additional participants, develop common definitions of STEM Education and Equity, formulate assessment rubrics and process with underrepresented communities, completion of self-assessment by all participating organizations, joint

review by communities and organizations, and development of strategic plans through identification of common barriers or gaps.

Due to lack of time, Tami Goetz reminded board members of upcoming STEM Fest. Also shared information that we will update the board next time about STEM School Designation, STEM Spots, and How'd You Think of That with Temple Grandin.

Colleen Fisher shared brief information about the STEM Backpack project with the State Library. This is funded through the State Library. Students will be able to check out these backpacks through the library. The backpacks will focus on helping kids overcome stresses related to COVID and help overall mental health. Started with 180 backpacks, but there was so much interest we were able to get the funding for 400 backpacks. Back to summer backpacks will be next.

The floor was open to the board for comments/questions. Mark Sunday shared his thoughts about how positive and enthusiastic the STEM AC team is. Vance Checketts also shared how excited he was about our projects and team. The slides from the Zoom meeting were requested by some. Tami Goetz asked the board to think about having a joint meeting with the STEM Foundation board members. December 8th is the next meeting scheduled for the STEM AC board meeting.

IV. Meeting Adjourned at 4:00 pm.