

**STEM Action Center Board Meeting Minutes**

April 10, 2024 at 2pm

Zoom Meeting

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**Members Present:** Vance Checketts, Sydney Dickson, Chiao-ih Hui, Sarah Reale, Donna Law, Scott Cheney, Mark Sunday, Vic Hockett, Andrea Ibanez Kuntz, Kennedy Mpungu

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**Members Absent:** Jamie Morningstar, Aniza Brown

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**Staff:** Tami Goetz, Sue Redington, Becca Robison, Julienne Bailey, Kellie Yates, Clarence Ames, Gina Muhlestein, Emmett Speed, Jana Alexander, Shelby Averett, Torin Agnelli, Viena Zeitler

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**Visitors:** Susan Hannah and Kristin from Paradise Canyon Elementary, and Timothy Clark, Heather Linley-Sickes, and Gerald Wright at Gerald Elementary

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**I. Welcome and Related Business** Vance Checketts

Vance Checketts called the meeting to order at 2:05pm.

- a. Approve December meeting minutes  
Checketts requested approval of minutes from December 6, 2024 meeting. Andrea Ibanez Kuntz motioned to approve the minutes and Sydney Dickson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- b. Introductions  
Checketts requested that all Board members present introduce themselves as there are several new members.
- c. Swear in (Vic Hockett and Kennedy Mpungu)  
Vic Hockett and Kennedy Mpungu were sworn in immediately prior to the meeting.
- d. Budget review Sue Redington  
Redington went over the budget with the Board and explained the budget breakdowns for STEM Action Center programs and reviewed reporting requirements for grants. Kellie Yates answered questions regarding her budget around professional learning and STEM education innovators. Redington also answered questions regarding the 6910 administrative budget and grant application process.

**II. Presentations & Board Discussion**

- a. Utah STEM Foundation Update Tami Goetz  
Spencer spoke to the Board about the relationships around Green Our Planet (GoP) hydroponics, currently in 12 libraries and 47 schools with 20% Foundation funding and 80% GoP. Hydro-farm (10 3-tier industrial systems) projects are the newer priority, in partnership with GoP and San Juan School District, to pilot the hydro-farms at Monument Valley High School and Navajo Mountain, allowing dedication to longer turn-over produce like tubers and flowering vegetables. Spencer is also working on long-term partnerships with Calm Our

Spirit/Marathon/Intermountain Health. The STEM Action Center is looking to place two more hydro-farm systems for next year to expand capacity.

b. Legislative update

Donna Law/Tami Goetz

- There are 11 different Boards and Commissions in Cultural and Community Engagement (CCE). Our governor says that employees are most important all the time, and I think that's reflected in an effort to provide compensation. The State has made a financial commitment to the employees of 3% COLA this year with an additional 2% available for Pay-for-Performance increases.
- Our Arts and Museums program has a statewide grant program that had received a cut last year of 2 million dollars. CCE is hoping to get that reinstated and in an ongoing way that that came through as one-time money. So, we'll be continuing to work towards that.
- Grants were a focus in the HB335 grants and grant processes bill, but should not be too distracting and gives extra eyes on funding before it is released.
- Across the State there has been an effort to reduce the number of boards and commissions, and reduce the size of our boards and commissions, and that the recommended size of boards and commissions by law is now 9. So, that's something we'll be mindful of as you have people who are eager to participate. We may be looking at different task force or working groups or committees rather than Boards, in order to accomplish the things that we do across the department.
- Some bills got a lot of a lot of press, specifically, House Bill 261, which is the equal opportunity bill. We are still waiting for direction from the Governor's office and the Governor's office of planning and budget as to how to operationalize that for good or bad. Nubia Pena and Donna Law will sit on the working group. The group will have their first meeting next week so we will be ever mindful of the work that is done, not only by our STEM Action Center, but by the other divisions. Our work across this department is so much into the communities and is about community building. So, the fact that we have an opportunity to be part of this working group and sit at this table to help sort through the best solutions to provide equal opportunities all across the State is something that's important to us.

III. **STEM School Designation**

**Guests**

Kellie Yates introduced the STEM Designated School program, explaining that these designations are voluntary, comprehensive, and competitive. Once a school has a STEM designation, that lasts for 5 years, and they would then re-apply. This year, 11 schools were designated and there are currently 34 STEM Designated Schools. Yates then introduced the two schools she requested present on their experience becoming a STEM Designated school.

***Susan Hannah and Kristen (STEM coordinator) from Paradise Canyon Elementary in Washington School District*** spoke about their experience going from Bronze designation to Platinum.

*"I feel like our school has gotten to where it is because of that thought process that we're thinking of our students as thinkers, that we want them to think. Just that load for our students and them taking leadership roles and service learning, and all of those things that are on that application. We, in fact, started math Olympiad because of the application. So, there's a lot of things that we learned just from looking at that application that has made us better, that we've been doing for a*

*couple of years now that have just gotten us where we are, and that probably is what got us off of the Tsi for the subgroups.” -- Susan Hannah*

**Timothy Clark and Heather Linley-Sickes (designation overseer/6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher) from Gerald Wright Elementary in Granite School District** spoke about their experience also going from Bronze to Platinum.

*“So, I do credit that (exiting 3 TSI categories) to the designation, and having us reflect on ourselves and reflect on our practices to improve learning, for not just one group of students, but for the entire*

*population of our school...We're not doing stem activities. We're doing stem strategies that improve our learning outcomes.”—Timothy Clark*

Both groups took questions from the Board and discussion followed.

c. Other business

Various

There was no additional business.

#### **IV. WRAP UP & ADJOURNMENT**

Vance Checkett

As there was no other business, Checketts adjourned the meeting at 3:56pm. The next meeting will be on June 5, 2024 at 2pm, location TBD.