



Governor's STEM Advisory Council
Executive Committee 21
July 17, 2014
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Vermeer Andringa, co-chair (via video conference)
Brad Buck
Kacia Cain
Sara Gimm (proxy for John Carver)
Rob Denson
Cathann Kress (proxy for Steven Leath)
Barry Butler (proxy for Sally Mason)
Cindy Dietz (by phone, proxy for Kelly Ortberg)
Sunny Eighmy (proxy for Mark Putnam)
Michelle Gowdy (proxy for Paul Schickler)
Gary Scholten
Lori Adams (proxy for Teresa Wahlert)
Jeff Weld, Executive Director

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Regional STEM managers Bullock, Campbell, Derry, Frazee; Governor's office and STEM Council staff; Hub institution representatives; technology support professionals, Strategic America; guests.

AGENDA

Welcome:

Co-chair Mary Andringa opened the meeting via videoconference, welcoming executive committee members and guests to yet another significant agenda aimed at moving Iowa STEM further along on its defining pathway. Three central points she made are (1) The myriad skill sets of a modern STEM teacher can be readily acquired in partnership with industry as she has been able to observe the growth of a junior high mathematics teacher externing at Vermeer this summer (applying his mathematics skills to just about every aspect of manufacturing operations); (2) Mary has come to know of numerous, outstanding examples of STEM education taking place across our state, some of which is fostered by the STEM Council but often not – and that it is important for us to share those best-practices in building a culture focused on STEM; and (3) Mary spoke of Jacci Linn's imminent transition to graduate school from her current position as

the Council's Communications Specialist (a search is underway), and Jacci's broad array of responsibilities in her post for which she has left an indelible impact on Iowa STEM that will last well beyond her exit. We are grateful for Jacci's contributions.

Jacci Linn followed, remarking to the executive committee how tentatively she entered the post last September only to evolve to her current state of constant thought about STEM wherever she goes – how to better grow, support, and improve her work and our cause. She envisions not disconnecting but staying involved via distance, due to the gains her involvement has enabled.

Mark Gruwell, Executive Dean of Instruction at Iowa Lakes Community College announced an addition to Iowa's STEM regional network: ILCC hired Molly Faber s the new NW Regional Manager, to start on July 28. Molly's background in communications/marketing will bring a great perspective to the team. Credit was cast by Weld to Mark and the team at ILCC for steadily sustaining STEM in the NW during the transition period and for their great work in corralling an outstanding new teammate for the Council. A round of applause was directed to ILCC.

Weld shared preliminary findings from Year 3 (year 2 of programming) that will debut at the Governor's press conference at 9:00am on Monday, July 28:

- Three fourths of teachers who participated in the Scale-Up program reported greater confidence and improved skills in teaching STEM.
- We have a 58 % increase in awareness of the acronym STEM in one year.
- 750 Iowa educators utilized business partnerships last year as part of Scale-Up programs.
- Regional STEM Network Managers last year collectively conducted 257 speaking engagements, held 37 community STEM festivals and made 723 new connections with workforce, business, and education leaders.
- The legislature's investment in STEM (\$5.2M) was nearly matched last year by grants, development donations, and cost-sharing (approximately \$4.8M).

ITEM 1: Discussion and Recommendation to “Flip” Council Meeting Frequencies

- Weld opened with the genesis of this item being a convergence of multiple forces and conversations with notable individuals – Isa Zimmerman, Cathann Kress, Rob Denson, (the late) Tom Hobson, the regional managers, the Council, administrative teammates, and the Council co-chairs. Executive Committee members (and proxies) were canvassed regarding their thoughts around one or two annual executive committee gatherings and bi-monthly or quarterly full Council meetings. Opinions were unanimous based on the following contributions to the discussion:

- Visioning and big news or decisions are best uses of the time of the executive committee.

- Long term sustainability and systemic integration questions are matters for this group. Communication would be enhanced with more frequent meetings of the Council.
- Decisions that arise for which votes of the executive committee are needed could be dealt with via phone conferencing as has been established protocol.
- Great advantage can be seen by more frequent convenings of the Council, including the engagement of more enthusiasts.
- Larger meetings of the champions for STEM is an empowerment move that is always beneficial.
- Meetings need to be “worth the drive” in terms of substance and time. We may want to consider four meetings per year of Council.
- Schedules of individuals of the stature committed to Iowa STEM are complex – careful consideration of their gatherings for maximal payoff is healthy for the cause.

Thus the recommendation to convene the full Advisory Council four to six times per year and the executive committee one or two times per year plus the possibility of teleconferencing on voted matters, is now before the Council’s co-chairs for a decision, expected to be announced shortly.

ITEM 2: Discussion and Recommendation regarding Scale-Up program moving forward: (1) Three year cap on providers? And (2) Automatic renewal of current 10 providers plus a small RFP cycle?

- Weld opened the conversation on question 1 by speaking on behalf of the regional STEM network team unanimously of the opinion that the (informally generated) policy of three years-and-out is not an ideal rule. Four programs – EiE, AWIM, CASE, and HyperStream are at this point. Data indicates each remains a strong and attractive option for educators across Iowa, and that each is having a significant positive effect. Discussion among executive committee members ensued in which the following key points emerged:
 - Sustainability planning on behalf of these program providers ought to be strongly factored in to today’s decision.
 - So long as the basic question “Are these programs showing positive results with children?” is answered affirmatively, why cease?
 - The goal of the Scale-Up initiative ought to steer this decision – Is it to seed the landscape so that schools can then take over? Or, is it to maintain

support until some critical adoption point? Or is it to sew and sustain STEM?

- Do these programs bring new dimensions to the table each successive year? [CASE was highlighted as a program refreshing each year with new curricula and training.]
- Do these programs target areas of high demand in terms of skills, fields, occupations?

The consensus recommendation going forward to the Council co-chairs is to consider each program independently with no hard and fast rule as to renewal beyond year 3. These four programs will be asked to file a report detailing (a) evidence of impact on youth in terms of interest and ability in STEM; (b) Costs adjustments (reductions) in subsequent years accounting for efficiencies and repeats; and (c) Sustainability measures in place to transition educators to non-Council support over time. Reports will be factored in alongside new proposals to be invited for Scale-Up 2015-16. Speaking of...

- Weld also opened up question 2 on behalf of the STEM regional network team who are of the consensus that for the coming year, the ten currently empowered Scale-Up providers be automatically renewed for a second year (excepting the required report of year 4 aspirants), and that a small-scale request-for-proposals cycle take place this winter to add up to approximately five additional programs to the educator menu for spring of 2015. Discussion among executive committee members ensued in which the following key points emerged:
 - LEAs really need to be the ones to attest to sustainability plans- we ought to bolster the LEA application reflective of that.
 - A new cycle of provider proposals needs to consider the high-demand post-secondary majors and career fields of Iowa in selecting new programs.
 - The selection process ought to also take in to account areas of weakness in the current STEM spectrum of offerings, such as computer science, mathematics, life science, earth science, even areas such as professional development (all the while, keeping in mind a hallmark of STEM – interdisciplinarity).
 - Educators would benefit from a second year of considerations of currently offered programs.
 - Excitement continues to grow among teachers – sometimes it takes a bit of time so switching out programs annually can be hard.
 - It can seem as though these programs just get going and providers just figure out the system when their arrangements expire.
 - Needs assessment should drive decision-making.

- Sustainability can be enhanced by Council effort – we ought to do more to highlight ‘rock star’ educators who continue to thrive after Council “seed” investment. [Network team will work on that.]

The consensus recommendation going forward to the Council co-chairs is to keep the current ten providers for a second year (pending satisfactory evaluation from all, and satisfactory reports of the four that have hit the three-year threshold) and open up a small RFP cycle this winter to bring in up to five additional programs to appear on the educator menu in spring of 2015. The Council, depending on responses to the RFP, may target areas of emphasis to be favored, such as computer science, mathematics, life science, career awareness, interdisciplinarity, etc.

ITEM 3: Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service – STEM Opportunities

- Special guests Adam Lounsberry, executive director, and Rachel Bruns, Strategy and Development Officer, of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service shared with the executive committee the various programs operating under the Commission and the opportunities to connect to STEM. They conduct a mentor program certification program, and employer volunteer initiative, volunteer awards, and administer the new Governor’s Council on National Service which could include a STEM Corp akin to the Peace Corp (among numerous other functions of the ICVS).

A Powerpoint of their presentation is archived with meeting materials. An action step will be to propose to the Council co-chairs the creation of a Working Group of the STEM Council to explore STEM volunteerism in partnership with the ICVS.

ITEM 4: Draft Debuts

- SE Regional Manager Kristine Bullock presented her committee’s draft request-for-proposals for the new CAPS model incentive plan. The plan was well-received and set for release after minor details regarding timeline and budget allowance are addressed. The draft committee will convene once more (July 28) after which the rfp will be scheduled for release through channels that target school leaders and business leaders (SAI, IASB, ABI, IBC, etc.). The draft RFP is archived with these meeting materials.
- Director for Development Carrie Rankin postponed debut of the Business Engagement plan so that the product can be further streamlined. Meanwhile she shared the development progress to date (document archived with these meeting

materials) and informed the executive committee that Kemin Industries is supporting the design and financing of a new STEM educator award in partnership with the STEM Council to be distributed one to each region in the coming year. Kemin commits to a three year investment in the award program with the hope and intent that other partner(s) adopt it from there. Strategic American is devoting significant time and talent as well.

- Program manager Kari Jastorff detailed the financial report for FY 2014. The report was unanimously approved on vote of the executive committee. It is archived with these meeting materials. Weld observed that Jastorff manages the clean flow of multi-million dollar state investment along with numerous grants and gifts with such skill that despite dozens of sub-grants contracted to partners across Iowa and thousands of invoices and no carry-over allowed, she has for the third year in a row landed STEM at \$0 balance. Applause for Kari ensued.
- Weld wrapped up with a few announcements: (1) The Council co-chairs have approved a new Working Group on STEM Support of the Arts (STEAM?). Please alert Jeff if you are interested in serving. (2) OECD scores will come out any day now, to be the topic of a panel at our Sept. 12 meeting. (3) All are invited to the Governor's Press Conference on July 28, 9:00am to debut the annual report year 2.

CLOSING

Co-chair Mary Andringa closed the meeting by highlighting the work being done, observing that the outcomes of today's meeting once again vault STEM forward in Iowa. The important work of this group is clearly changing lives and by all indications, is beginning to deliver on its commitment to drive a resurgence in interest in STEM for the benefit of education, for business, for Iowa's economy at large, and ultimately for the benefit of individuals Iowans whose lives will be better with strong STEM educations. She thanked everyone for lending their time and expertise to Iowa STEM.

ADJOURNED: 12:03 PM

NEXT MEETING: September 12, 8:00am to 12:00pm, at ACT, Inc, Iowa City (full Council meeting).

Compiled by Jeff Weld