

Massachusetts STEM Advisory Council

One Ashburton Place, Suite 1403, Boston, MA 02108 | www.mass.edu/stem

STEM Advisory Council Executive Committee Meeting

Approved Minutes

October 3, 2016

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location

State House, Room 157

Members

Executive Committee Members attending:

Lt. Governor Polito, Co-Chair

Jeff Leiden, Co-Chair

U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III, Co-Chair

Secretary Jim Peyser

JD Chesloff

Sheila Harrity

Marcy Reed

Ira Rubenzahl

Michael Tamasi (by phone)

Steve Vinter

Agenda: Updates from Subcommittees

I. Computer Science and Engineering

Secretary Peyser gave an update on the computer science and engineering pathways and highlighted the significant roles of Project Lead the Way and WPI, as well as the Jacobson Family Foundation. He discussed the plan to rapidly scale up the number of students enrolled but also bring new schools in to broaden the number of computer science and engineering pathways. He mentioned that the real challenge is spreading the curriculum from vocational technical high schools into comprehensive high schools.

II. Regional STEM Networks

Blair Brown gave an update regarding the progress that the STEM Networks have made since this past spring. Alignment of STEM Council priorities has been at the forefront of conversations and have placed a specific focus on creating a broader base of business and community engagement across the Commonwealth with regards to these priorities.

Four grants were awarded over the summer, and in the months ahead, the STEM Council is aiming to expand geographically to increase access and involvement. Blair also discussed the main questions that STEM network managers are keeping central:

- How do we make this work collaborative? (create a structure that engages a larger portion of the state)
- How will we move forward, get activities off the ground, and create appropriate, actionable goals?

Lt. Governor Polito asked how the engagement currently is with the business community, and Blair discussed the immense variation in levels of engagement across the Commonwealth. This variation has led to the desire to expand the regions in an attempt to create a more pointed focus and work-based learning initiative can serve as a big support along the way.

III. STEM Early College Career Pathways

Chris Gabrieli, Chairman of the Board of Higher Education, discussed the current state of STEM early college career pathways across the Commonwealth. He gave an update regarding the current partnership with Parthenon and other experts in the field to address the gaps we currently have with regards to early college career pathways and to better align pathways that already exist. He reviewed data outlining college completion rates for students who identify as low-income and the challenges that students from all socioeconomic backgrounds face in attempting to complete college, and where early college programs can help to ameliorate these challenges. He noted that several superintendents and colleges across the state are already providing early college opportunities; however there is a current lack of uniformity in relation to regulation and financial structures for these existing programs. Lt. Governor Polito noted that North Carolina and Texas are currently incentivizing participation for early college career pathway programs, and emphasized that this may be something that MA could look into doing as well if appropriate.

IV. Work-based Learning

Jeff Leiden outlined Connecting Activities as a platform for recruiting more STEM-based companies for high school internships and the importance of taking this to a larger scale by first identifying 5 regions in the state that have a strong infrastructure (Greater Lowell, Lawrence, New Bedford, Central MA, Springfield-Holyoke), allowing us to recruit major companies, building momentum to expand statewide. He stressed that three “parties” need to all line up for this to work: the school, the facilitator, and the companies. The plan is to develop a template of programs that we can take to these regions and how they work and the hope is to recruit the first set of these 5 regional programs by next summer.

V. Approval of March 24, 2016 Executive Committee Minutes

The minutes from the March 24th Executive Committee meeting were unanimously approved.

Minutes from October 3, 2016 Approved at March 24, 2017 Executive Committee Meeting