

Massachusetts STEM Advisory Council

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

STEM Advisory Council Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes

December 7, 2015

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location

State House Room 488
Boston, MA 02108

Members

Executive Committee Members attending:

Marnie Burke (on behalf of Jeff Leiden)
Nick Clemons (on behalf of U.S. Rep. Kennedy)
Lt. Governor Polito
Sec. Jim Peyser
JD Chesloff
Sheila Harrity
Anne Marie Levins (by phone)
Laurie Leshin (by phone)
Michael Tamasi
Steve Vinter

Not in Attendance:

Marcy Reed
Ira Rubenzahl

Minutes

I. Welcome and Framing

Lieutenant Governor thanked Secretary Peyser for leading the conversations and his forward thinking on workforce development, closing the skills gap and creating opportunities as the Council continues to spread this work across the Commonwealth.

Secretary Peyser followed and expressed his pride in the STEM Council's work together and that he looked forward to reviewing the constructive feedback.

II. Approval of 9/28 Minutes

Executive Committee approved minutes from September 28th Executive Committee Meeting.

III. Discussion of Recommendations and Next Steps

Secretary Peyser began a discussion of modifications to "Slide 3" of STEM Advisory Council's Recommendations Deck:

- i. Most changes were to be made in the "Principles" section

1. For the line “Support a vital few”
 - a. Encouraged greater alignment to K-12 standards and needs to be aligned to broader standards in place from DESE.
 2. Suggest the line “All sized employers” as to denote the Council’s commitment to work with employers across the size spectrum
 3. Re-evaluate and possibly use better language for the line “Move beyond awareness” as this is not the end of awareness, but awareness lays the foundation for further work. Suggest: “Build upon” awareness
 4. Suggest “School leaders”- not just teachers
- ii. There were suggestions to involve students and parents, particularly those of underrepresented populations and parents to reinforce what children are learning within the programs.

Following that discussion, Secretary Peyser invited the committee to discuss the Work Based Learning component of the recommendations and the partnering organizations.

Secretary Peyser highlighted the Council’s focus on efforts to strengthen and expand Connecting Activities. There was discussion about incorporating Youth Works as leaders in the organization met to discuss infrastructure and how we could help support and scale.

Secretary Peyser recommended a statewide convening to initiate a process to better integrate programs, and attempt to use summer experiences to move along pathways. It was also noted that Youth Works pays and subsidizes student wages and the Secretary highlighted an opportunity to leverage these subsidies to encourage participation from the private sector.

Next, the Secretary discussed the recommendation to “Develop and Grow STEM Early” and suggesting an expansion on the conversation. In order for IBM to engage as a partner they require a commitment of at least three P-Tech schools and a government commitment.

This led to a conversation of the Commonwealth’s efforts to “Broaden and Deepen Computer Science and Engineering”. An example of these efforts would be the #HourOfCode event exemplifying a commitment to integrating Computer Science to the core curriculum.

Laurie Leshin then spoke about Project Lead the Way and asked how Council can get more districts and schools involved in the program.

This then led to a discussion of Advanced Placement exams. Studies also found students are prepare to take AP exams but do not have access to them. This led to a discussion of how to keep programs sustainable over time. While subsidies on the front end engage schools and train teachers, there can be difficulty in keeping momentum.

All suggestions and changes were then approved.

IV. *Overview of Noyce Grant on Career Pathways*

Bob Schwartz from the Noyce Foundation Board of Trustees and Nancy Hoffman from Jobs for the Future provided context on Pathways to Prosperity and Jobs for the Future partnership. The partnership began as a strategy to address the skills and attainment gap. The work has focused on high-growth jobs and education beyond a high school degree but not necessarily a four-year degree. Within the partnership, a network of schools pays an annual fee for technical assistance and consists of partnerships between the workforce, community colleges and high schools.

The Noyce Foundation has now made the decision to bring together Jobs for the Future and math reform work. They have decided to pick two states to support for two years under the following framework:

- All college courses be free for participants
- Students can (but are not required) to earn a two-year degree
- Career counseling that is Common Core aligned and STEM focused
- Participation of an Industry partner
- Commitment from State Leaders

The “ask” to the Executive Committee was for buy-in as stakeholders. The Executive Committee would be asked to provide strategic guidance, public accountability and policy development. Council members stressed the importance of relationships within the new partnerships as this project could offset costs for community colleges.

The Executive Committee agreed to participate and play the necessary role for the new partnership.

V. *Wrap Up and Next Steps*

Secretary Peyser then began a discussion of Committee Structures going forward. He proposed to align the committee with three core initiatives and regional networks. Subcommittees would be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee but involve council members and would address common challenges faced by all committees. These committees would be formed offline.

This led to a final conversation regarding the Grant making process, it was recommended that the Council is actively engaged in how grant funds are allocated but not involved in the decision making process. The Executive Committee would create the criteria for the STEM Council grants without directly being involved in the grant decisions.

Secretary Peyser said the Executive Committee would meet again early in 2016.