

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

September 28, 2015

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location

Governor's Council Chamber
State House Room 360
Boston, MA 02133

STEM Council Executive Committee Members Attending

Sheila Harrity, Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School
Hon. Joe Kennedy, U.S. House of Representatives
Jeff Leiden, Vertex
Anne Marie Levins, Microsoft
Jim Peyser, Secretary of Education
Hon. Karyn Polito, Lt. Governor
Marcy Reed, National Grid
Ira Rubenzahl, Springfield Technical Community College
Michael Tamasi, AccuRounds
Steven Vinter, Google

Not in attendance

JD Chesloff, Massachusetts Business Roundtable
Laurie Leshin, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Minutes

I. Welcome & Framing

Secretary Peyser kicked off the meeting with introductions of all STEM Council Executive Committee members in attendance and those in audience. The Secretary said that he hoped the discussion at today's meeting would be focused on the most high-impact categories and criteria and that the discussion would enable the group to narrow their focus from 20-plus recommendations to a smaller number of proposals that can be brought before the full STEM Council in November.

Representative Kennedy followed Secretary Peyser, welcomed the Executive Committee members and thanked them for their work to date. Jeff Leiden did the same, and said he is looking forward to jumping in and narrowing the focus of the STEM Council's work.

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II. *Discussion of Criteria and Categories*

Secretary Peyser outlined the criteria he believes are important for the STEM Council's work. He said he hopes the STEM Council works in areas that:

- Drive significant engagement from the business community
- Go beyond simply elevating awareness of STEM in young people, to engaging them in STEM activities
- Develop teachers' as high-quality instructors of STEM content
- Target pre-high school students

During discussion of these criteria, which the Secretary clarified are not meant to be exclusive, Marcy Reed said that she believed that teacher development is crucial. There was general agreement that the criteria outlined by the Secretary were on target.

Following that discussion, Secretary Peyser invited Steve Vinter to discuss MassCAN given the level of interest on the initiative from members. Steve spoke to the activities of MassCAN as well as to its current fundraising activities. Steve Vinter mentioned that one place he sees clear overlap with the STEM Council is in the need for MassCAN to start thinking about internships. Marcy Reed asked him how he is thinking about coordinating with industry and he said that's one place he is thinking about that, but that is an area that they need to build out more.

At that stage, the Secretary opened the conversation up for each member to highlight which categories they believed the STEM Council should focus on:

- Rep. Kennedy: focus on the unique leverage point of the STEM Council
- Michael Tamasi: workplace experience; teacher development
- Marcy Reed: focus on building both short-term successes and longer-term successes; teacher development; workplace experience
- Sheila Harrity: workplace experience; teacher development; career pathways
- Anne Marie Levins: Curriculum and policy is important but not a good focus for this Council. Focus should be on teacher development.
- Ira Rubenzahl: Teacher Development; Workplace experience
- Lt. Governor Polito: Scalability and durability of programs (i.e. "stickiness" is key)
- Secretary Peyser: Following up on the Lt. Governor's point, we need to make sure that what we choose to support is connected to the larger system.

III. *Small Group Working Sessions*

The Executive Committee broke into small groups to each discuss the recommendations under one category.

Career Pathways: Lt. Governor Polito, Ira Rubenzahl, Steve Vinter

Teacher Development: Secretary Jim Peyser, Rep. Joe Kennedy, Anne Marie Levins, Marcy Reed

Workplace Experience: Michael Tamasi, Sheila Harrity, Jeff Leiden

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IV. *Report out from Small Groups & Discussion*

- Career Pathways

Lt. Governor Polito reported out that the small group thought that STEM Starter Academies were a program already underway in 15 community colleges that could potentially be strengthened and better connected to industry and be a focus for the STEM Council. Additionally, the question about how it could connect to Early College High Schools was brought up by an Executive Committee member from a different group.

- Workplace Experience

Jeff Leiden reported out that the summer jobs program that the Boston PIC runs and that is funded by the state's Connecting Activities grant is one that the group is interested in seeing group across the state. The summer jobs initiative also uses federal WIA money and many industry partners. Sheila Harrity added that this work based learning program can be done during both the summer and school year, and include some classes on site on MCAS as well as work on soft skills (e.g., presentation, punctuality, etc.).

- Teacher Development

Secretary Peyser reported out that the teacher development group did not agree to a specific program or model, but rather to characteristics on what they wanted a teacher development program to look like, including: high-quality, sustainable teacher training with a corporate partner (examples: Microsoft TEAL, Project Lead the Way) and an institutional driver. There was also discussion among the group members about how career pathways and workforce experience could be coupled with teacher development.

V. *Next Steps & Wrap Up*

Secretary Peyser said that he and his team would synthesize and circulate a summary of where the Council Executive Committee is to date. With the full STEM Council set to meet on November 10 at the STEM Summit, that would need to be circulated by the end of October. The Executive Committee agreed to also hold a conference call in mid-October to check in on progress and make sure that everyone agrees with direction.