

Virginia STEM Education Advisory Board Virtual Meeting Minutes



November 4, 2022
STEM HUBS

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

In Attendance:

Board Members Present: Victoria Chuah, Chris Dovi, Edward Monroe, Amy Sabarre (Chair), Dr. Padmanabhan Seshaiyer, Zaina Tarafdar

Ex-officios and Staff: Dr. Brendon Albon (Department of Education), Rich Conti (Science Museum of Virginia Director), Emily Salmon (Senior Associate for Strategic Planning and Policy), Sec. Bryan Slater (Secretary of Labor Office), Madison Biedermann (Secretary or Education Representative), and Ada Sue Siler (Science Museum of Virginia Staff)

Topics:

- Approval of minutes from September 9, 2022
- Review current definitions
- STEM regional Hubs and ecosystems
- Next Steps and December Meeting

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Ms. Sabarre called the meeting to order at 1:06pm. She welcomed everyone and noted a quorum was present. Discussions continue on the transition of Chuck English from the Science Museum and the impact of that on the STEM Advisory Board. Ms. Sabarre welcomes ideas or suggestions of Board members on ways to facilitate this change. The Science Museum will continue to provide administrative support. Ms. Sabarre has consulted with the Attorney General's office regarding a potential Executive Board to help with delegating some of the responsibilities.

Approval of Minutes (September 9, 2022)

Ms. Sabarre asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2022 board meeting. No corrections noted. Mr. Slater made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dovi. Ms. Sabarre called for a vote, which passed with no objections. Mr. Monroe did abstain from the vote because he was not present at the September meeting.

STEM Advisory Board Mission and Goals

Ms. Sabarre reviewed the mission statement. *"The Virginia STEM Education Advisory Board provides continuous recommendations, establishes and aligns integrative STEM education*

efforts, and expands resources for all Virginians.” Our overall aim in all efforts is to lead, inform, formalize and engage. A key goal for today is to set the vision for STEM hubs, provide background, get a regional STEM ecosystem updates, and review a draft hub structures document.

The board is keeping a good pace with the three year transformation map. Continued effort is needed to engage with stakeholders and bolster infrastructure to allow for true and quality STEM education throughout Virginia. STEM ecosystems and Hubs are forming throughout the state. This is a pivotal time to explore the ecosystems and hubs to glean effective methods and strategies while also noting what needs improvement.

Defining STEM Hubs

Mr. Padhu noted that Virginia is unique in its view of STEM ecosystems across groups, not limited by K-12 or higher education. The view that STEM education expands to the workforce is a much broader scope than other states. Ms. Sabarre added that the House Bill #2058 grants the STEM Advisory Board the power to create a unified vision regarding STEM education initiatives, a common vocabulary and the promotion of collaboration efforts.

Ms. Sabarre reviewed some of the methods and modes used to research STEM hubs. Other state’s models, flagship organizations, and prominent STEM partners are explored. Also the Organic STEM Network collaborative 2013-2015 is utilized.

Ms. Sabarre shared a working definition of STEM hubs:

Each region would identify their regional niche and would serve as the connector and facilitator of resources for that area. Although hubs may look different based on their regional job market, each hub would learn from one another and share resources and professional development offerings. The hubs would collect and share data with the state and convene semi-annually with the state STEM Board.

Members discussed the definition and shared thoughts.

Dr. Albon shared that hubs in each area need to meet the specific needs of that particular area. We need to ensure each area has access to and awareness of available resources. STEM is from birth to retirement, not just K-12. Look to existing partnerships between universities and community colleges for models. May need to ask the General Assembly for funding.

Mr. Dovi added that the hubs may be a means of leveraging state initiative and disseminating already available resources. A question is raised as to the governance of these hubs. Who would govern these hubs: superintendents, members of community or industry?

Secretary Slater noted that simplicity is key. A straightforward directive with simple management and a central authority may be an effective approach. A working group may be needed to dive deeper into this discussion. Also, marketing efforts cannot be overlooked. We need to find creative ways to get the word out.

Dr. Seshaiyer added that a human centered approach is paramount. The transitions from school to college and then from college to workforce are important to keep in mind.

Ms. Salmon expressed the importance of assessing existing hubs. How well do they communicate and collaborate? What can we learn from them and apply in a meaningful way? No need to reinvent the wheel, we can leverage what is already there.

Mr. Monroe reminded everyone of the importance of ensuring students know the paths to STEM fields. We must look to local needs and be better positioned to share information.

Updates from existing STEM Hubs

Ms. Sabarre shared pertinent updates from existing hub areas: Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, Richmond, CodeRVA, and others.

The Northern Virginia region is working with a three year system and has compiled a list of partners. Hampton Roads is further along with 19 districts participating. Hampton Roads has completed three years of assessments and interviews and is exploring next steps.

STEM Hubs Structure Draft

Ms. Sabarre shared a working draft document on STEM Hub structures. She invited all board members to log into the google document and share comments and thoughts.

Clarification was given that the intended audience for the document is any participating regional partner; no single group, in-school, out-of-school, formal, informal, research, community, industry partners.

Ms. Chuah asked if there is a website planned as a repository for all this information. The suggestion was noted.

Ms. Sabarre suggested creating a subcommittee to dive deeper into the Stem Hubs Structures Draft. The committee will meet two times before the December 9 meeting. Ms. Salmon, Mr. Dovi, Dr. Albon, Mr. Conti expressed interest in joining the subcommittee.

Ms. Sabarre asked the Board to consider inviting stakeholders and STEM advocates from these existing STEM hub regions and from community partners to join the Board at the December 9 meeting. All members present were amenable to inviting partners and representatives to attend.

Mr. Dovi made a motion to allow stakeholders and STEM partners to join the December 9 meeting. Ms. Salmon seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all those present were in favor. Motion carries.

New Business

No further new business was presented.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Dovi adjourning the meeting. The motion was seconded by Dr. Aldbon. A vote was taken by show of hands, all approved, non opposed. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 2:33pm

Zoom Recording Available

Next Meeting is December 9, 2022.

