



## MEETING NOTES

### Idaho STEM Ecosystem October Convening

October 30, 2020

## MORNING SESSION

### NOTES

During the morning and afternoon sessions, participants added their thoughts and comments to this [Padlet](#). This is a live document to which additional ideas can be added.

**Update on Needs Assessment Survey** - Despite a 50% increase in survey responses, October statewide quantitative data was little changed from what was presented at the September convening. New respondents had the same community perceptions of STEM in general as previous respondents, and the degree to which certain assets were identified by communities as supporting STEM opportunities was the same. The same held true for qualitative data where all regions identified surveys as the best way for measuring success, agreed more guidance from industry is needed, and singled out funding as a significant barrier to success.

**Participant Feedback** - Three polls were conducted during the morning session that found that 90% of respondents would participate in regional STEM meetings (10% uncertain), and 88% would utilize a directory of STEM organizations/individuals in Idaho (12% uncertain). When it came to inviting student/parent groups to be a part of the decision-making and strategic planning groups, the respondents were somewhat split, with 56% saying yes, 5% no, and 39% uncertain. Further discussion is needed on this point before moving forward.

**Introduction to Governance Structure** - The final topic discussed in the morning session was the critical role planning plays in the structural development of a STEM ecosystem. Alyssa Briggs and Veronica Gonzales, from TIES (Teaching Institute for Excellence in STEM), lead the discussion. Key points included the need to establish systems that allow partners to collaborate and share information, setting up clearly defined metrics to track progress, the importance of elevating community leaders, and how vital it is to celebrate successes. This discussion served as a lead-in to the afternoon presentation on potential statewide governance models for the Idaho STEM Ecosystem.

## AFTERNOON SESSION

### NOTES

Participants were encouraged to add their thoughts and comments to the [Padlet](#).

**Governance Structure** - The afternoon began with a discussion of potential governance structures of the Idaho STEM Ecosystem. Three structures were proposed (see PowerPoint presentation slides 6-8 for details on each proposed structure or they are available [here](#)).

A poll was launched in which participants chose which model they felt was best for the Ecosystem. Poll Results:

Model 1=19%

Model 2=48%

Model 3=33%

Participants were divided randomly into 8 breakout rooms to discuss the structure models for 20 minutes. When everybody was pulled back together, each group provided a 2 minutes summary of their discussion:

Group 1 – Their top model was #2 - a blend of statewide and regional. They were concerned that the regional component is important in this model, and they were unsure if there was enough bandwidth at the regional level to support his work. They were also concerned with where funding will be located for this model - if it is centralized, then the regional voice needs to be heard because that is where the work is being done.

Group 2 – They liked model #2 but needed more information to make a decision. Their top concerns were communication, representation, funding, and people staying engaged. People are busy so it is difficult to stay engaged or commit to being on an advisory or executive committee. They want to make sure the regional voices are heard but don't want a fully regional model because it may result in silos. A concern with funding was if a regional model was chosen, will there be enough funding to go around?

Group 3 – Overall, they liked model #2 the most. A benefit of this model is having consistent metrics to report back to policy makers and funders. They were concerned about more regional models that lead to division or over/underrepresentation. They discussed communication, what are the barriers, and how to overcome them.

Group 4 – They ranked the models with model #2 on top, then model #3, and model #1 last. They would prefer a combination of models 2 and 3. They liked how a regional model can build up to a statewide effort because good things are going on in the regions. However, we don't want to isolate these efforts so one central organization is needed to connect them. They discussed how we need a way to measure impact and to record it.

Group 5 – They felt model #1 could result in a Treasure Valley/Boise area hub that would isolate other regions. They liked model #2 to grow into model #3 over time with STEM AC as a strong leader. With regard to model #3, they discussed that leadership could grow in each of the regions independently of one another. They liked the idea of grouping regions 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and 5 and 6 together.

Group 6 –They preferred a hybrid of models #1 and #3 – a combination of a state and regional approach. This may have been the intention of model #2, but they weren't sure based on how it was written. They discussed what a regional/state combination would look like and how it would function and discussed other examples of regional leadership that reports to a statewide group. Communication is essential in whatever model is chosen. It is important to share best practices simply so that regions don't reinvent the wheel. The group is concerned that model #3 may lead to competition and want to use this opportunity to start fresh and not do what other state efforts have done before.

Group 7 – Regional representation is key in the model that is chosen. The regional voice needs to be heard. They were split between model #1 and model #2. They liked that model #1 has capacity building and leadership in communication. They liked that with model #2, regions are distinct the model would support the great work already being done regionally. They felt it was not good to combine regions.

Group 8 – Liked models #1 and #2. They felt that model #1 provides capacity building and a central clearing house for communication. It would also allow ecosystem members to volunteer more through time and build confidence in their roles with central leadership. With a more regionalized model, they were worried about competition, and it would be more difficult for statewide organizations to have a voice in each of the regions. Most important is to be collaborative, share, and communicate.

Where do we go from here? To be further involved, please respond to the survey STEM AC will send out about the meeting and indicate if you are interested in being part of the leadership to choose the Ecosystem structure. This group will use the feedback provided in this meeting to make a decision. In the survey, there is also an opportunity to join a focus group or be interviewed by the TIES team (consultants hired to support the development of the Idaho STEM Ecosystem). Once a structure is finalized, it will be sent out to the Ecosystem for feedback before the Spring 2021 meeting.

The poll was re-launched in which participants chose which model they felt was best for the Ecosystem after their group discussion. Poll Results:

Model 1=13%

Model 2=79%

Model 3=8%.

**Strategic Priorities** - Angela went over how our strategic priorities led to the formation of the four working groups for the Ecosystem (the working groups are explained on slide 19 of the PowerPoint presentation). These strategic priorities/working groups help the Ecosystem attain its aspirational statement.

Participants split into four breakout rooms according to the working group they belong to or wanted to join. In the working group discussion, the following components were discussed:

- Is this still an appropriate strategic priority for the Ecosystem?
- If so, do we need to clarify or change the priority in any way? If not, what is a more appropriate priority?
- What are the goals of the strategic priority? What should be accomplished in the working group to work toward our collective aspirational statement?

Each group should work on developing goals for their strategic priority and use the [SMARTIE goals worksheet](#) to develop these goals in the coming months.

The group reconvened and each working group reported out a summary of what they discussed:

Equity and Inclusion – Rich discussion on the challenges in communication of equity and inclusion. They did not get to goals but will work on them during monthly meetings.

Career Pathways & Exposure – Discussed the continuum of education for a student and the need to bring in all opportunities for students. They discussed pre-service educators taking a

course on career pathways, how to include industry partners more, and the ecosystem directory.

Outreach & Communications – Discussed a goal to create an internal communication plan and have this plan finalized over the course of their next four meetings, ready to present at the spring convening.

Educator Preparation, Training & Support – Discussed how to support educators and training in a virtual format. They discussed adjusting the PD database to include these new opportunities and how to take advantage of the virtual format to reach more educators. They also discussed funding to support PD efforts and the need to work with school administrators.

***Regional Planning Funding Opportunity*** - Angela explained a funding opportunity to support ecosystem work and planning in six educational regions. Details of the funding opportunity are in slide 29-30 of the PowerPoint presentation. It is encouraged that there only be one application per region to foster collaboration. Two regions can combine their efforts and apply for \$10,000. The application will be available Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> and due in mid-December. If you have questions or would like help from STEM AC, or if you would like to be on the review committee for the opportunity, please reach out to STEM AC.

***Regional Happy Hour*** – The group broke up into three groups (Regions 1&2, Regions 2&4, Regions 5&6) to discuss the next steps in planning for the funding opportunity in their region(s).