

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 24, 2022

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Thayn, Vice Chairman Lent, Senators Den Hartog, Blair (Johnson), Cook, Ward-Engelking, and Nelson

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senators Crabtree and Woodward

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Chairman Thayn** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Blair** moved to approve the minutes of **February 8, 2022**. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Nelson** moved to approve the minutes of **February 9, 2022**. **Chairman Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Den Hartog** moved to approve the minutes of **February 10, 2022**. **Senator Blair** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: **Kaitlin Maguire**, Executive Director of the STEM Action Center presented the **STEM Action Center Update**. **Ms. Maguire** explained that creating STEM and computer science educational pathways is incredibly important to meet the economic needs of Idaho. She stated that STEM jobs are broad and include careers in advanced manufacturing, agriculture, software development, cybersecurity and health care. **Ms. Maguire** said that there are three primary goals to increase awareness of the importance of STEM. Goal one is Awareness, goal two is Access, and goal three is Alignment. These three goals mirror a student's pathway in which interest and engagement in STEM begins through awareness and the pursuit of a STEM career as a result of access to programming that is aligned to the workplace. (See Attachment 1)

Senator Blair asked how much the agriculture industry is involved with the STEM curriculum. **Ms. Maguire** responded that the STEM Action Center is working with agricultural companies to make sure that what they need is incorporated into what they do. **Senator Blair** inquired what actions are being taken to solve agriculture needs in the future. **Ms. Maguire** stated that STEM is foundational to many of the traditional industries in Idaho, including agriculture, mining and forestry. She provided an example of a student drone program coming out of the University of Idaho to get students into science and engineering fairs centered around agriculture.

Senator Nelson asked about the STEM diploma, and if students and schools are valuing this as an option. **Ms. Maguire** stated that a number of students that are eligible remain steady and more schools are signing on to offer the diploma. She explained that there is more work to be done to bring awareness.

Senator Lent wanted to know how the STEM process might look in the future, as well as in the schools. **Ms. Maguire** replied that STEM education is hand-on project based, and the students learn as they go in a project-based environment. **Senator Lent** commented that STEM is almost a different pedagogy, with a student-centered hands-on problem based didactic teacher center.

Senator Thayn made a request for information on schools that are using the learning blade, which is a statewide resource for STEM and Computer Science awareness. **Ms. Maguire** will follow up with this information at a later time.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Thayn** adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.

Senator Thayn
Chair

Katy Morden
Secretary