

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING  
FOR THE JOHN C. DUNHAM STEM PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL  
Governing Board Minutes  
Tuesday, March 16th, 2021 at 1:00 pm

**1. Call to Order**

Dr. Craig call the meeting to order at 1:01 pm

**2. Roll Call**

Present: Dr. Craig, Dr. Hichens, Dr. Talley, Dr. Norrell and Dr. Sherrick

Also Present: Mrs. Carter, Dr. Patel, and Ana Buenrostro

**3. Public Comment**

None

**4. Adjourn to Executive Session**

Dr. Hichens motioned and Dr. Talley seconded to adjourn to executive session.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

**5. Adjourn to Open Session**

Dr. Talley motioned and Dr. Norrell seconded to adjourn to open session.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

**6. Consent Agenda**

6.1 Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

6.2 Approval of December 2020 and January 2021 bill listings

Dr. Hichens motioned to approved consent agenda items 4.1 and 4.2 as presented and Dr. Norrell seconded.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

**7. Information/Presentation/Discussion**

**7.1 Leadership Model**

**7.2 STEM Model – Committee Summaries**

Dr. Craig started the conversation talking about the committees within each of the districts and asking them to share the outcomes of those conversations.

Dr. Hichens shared that Batavia made several phone calls to families of STEM students, and everyone is extremely happy with the STEM school. Families shared they love the connections to the real world and the problem solving skills students developed. Dr. Hichens expressed that moving forward whichever model is chosen, it needs to have those same elements. She also shared that they have some challenges like social issues and students going to a different school outside their neighborhood. Other issues include staff capacity and cycling out teachers. Some families also expressed challenges when getting to middle school and missing out on that experience.

The number one issue is that it is a great model, but it is only available to a few students.

The district is looking for an opportunity to impact more students.

Dr. Norrell met with her Teaching and Learning department. The committee agreed that the STEM school brought engagement and opportunities for collaboration. They also spoke about the model, how to expand it and implement it in all of the other schools within the

district. One of the issues that was brought about is how costly is the program. The district is trying to implement STEM in the homeschools to keep cost down.

Dr. Talley shared that overall there is a strong belief that the STEM program has benefited students and teachers. Students received a benefit to their education. He also expressed that the committee had questions on the ability to bring the STEM knowledge back to the districts to impact more teachers and students in the district. The committee also had questions regarding the ability to provide more systemic professional development. Funding that serves only 50 students can be used to impact more students back in the districts.

Dr. Craig echoed all of the conversations everyone else had. West Aurora district struggles with how to bring that knowledge back to the district and how to implement it. He mentioned there was a positive response to the STEM program they were implementing back in the district, and he is looking forward to expanding that to kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. He would like to take the model and bring it back to the district to impact more students. The committee spoke about a comprehensive model and a way to say yes to more students.

Dr. Sherrick asked for clarification in the cost per student and Dr. Hichens expressed that in their district the cost is mostly transportation. The model was built on estimates, but in reality the cost surpasses the estimates in the original model.

Dr. Sherrick said that it has been a great experience for AU, and she enjoys having them on campus. She also shared that attending to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduations have been spectacular, and she has really enjoyed that.

Dr. Craig expressed that the districts should create an action plan to bring this back to the districts.

Dr. Talley agreed that an action plan is very helpful, a message to provide families for when the STEM school is not around anymore.

Dr. Sherrick asked if there is the assumption that next year is the last year.

Dr. Craig clarified that if that is the case, the districts should notify the president of the board of their intentions in writing no later than May of this year per the agreement. Then the districts will use this year to create the action plan to implement the STEM program back at their districts.

Dr. Sherrick also believes that there should be a communication plan for families, and she would like to take part in the communication plan.

Dr. Hichens reiterates that per the agreement the district should bring letters in May whether they want to dissolve the STEM school or not. The decision should be made by each board and a decision letter brought to the May meeting. It is important to clarify that we are cancelling the agreement, but we are not cancelling the partnership with the districts and the university.

Dr. Craig asked the members of the board to have the conversations with their respective boards and let the president of the board know of their decisions. The Board can have conversations with families and staff and also to create a concrete action plan.

Dr. Sherrick mentioned that she worries about conspiracy theories. She believes that there should be a statement of issues and a message carefully crafted.

She believes that acting instead of reacting is a better way to approach this. Dr. Sherrick also volunteered to draft a message and share it with the board.

Dr. Craig asked if there is anything the board needs to do in regards to the Aurora University board or partners, and Dr. Sherrick said she will reach out to them in the appropriate moment.

Dr. Sherrick also suggest to have policies and procedures for the STEM school for the upcoming year for emergencies.

Future Meeting Date: May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**8. Adjourn**

Dr. Sherrick motioned to adjourn the meeting and Dr. Talley seconded.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:04 pm