



**Agenda Item No. 1  
April 4, 2012 Meeting**

**DATE:** March 26, 2012

**TO:** Children and Families Commission of Orange County

**FROM:** Michael M. Ruane, Executive Director 

**SUBJECT:** OC STEM Education Collaborative - Progress Report

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**SUMMARY:**

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County's investment in early learning programs expanded to include early math, which has been cited as a strong predictor of a child's scholastic success. A three-year partnership with the Samueli Foundation was approved in July 2011 to support Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) teaching and learning in Orange County. The first year deliverable is a strategic plan to guide the implementation of STEM programs, and the growth of STEM awareness in Orange County. The following is a progress report on the program.

**OC STEM Strategic Planning Process**

A group of interested local funders and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) experts met in January 2012 for a one-day Strategic Planning meeting at the Henry Samueli School of Engineering at the University of California, Irvine. The experts included representatives from early education; elementary, middle, and high school education; as well as the business community to represent the full continuum of learning. The meeting was facilitated by the president of Teaching Institute for Excellence in STEM (TIES). With a goal to improve STEM skills for all Orange County students to be competitive for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs, a logic model was created to identify gaps and begin the framework for the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan is in the final development stages and will include a situation analysis, an overall vision statement, and focus areas with specific goals, activities, deliverables, and short and long term benchmarks. The focus areas include organizational structure, communications, education, professional development, workforce development, and research and evaluation. The final Strategic Plan will be presented to the Commission prior to the allocation of the second year of approved funding.

The Strategic Plan includes early action projects that can begin immediately and show success. One early action project is the quarterly lecture series that began in March with a presentation by Jack Hidary who co-founded and served as President and CEO of Earthweb/Dice and is the founder and chairman of National Lab Network that connects K-12 students with working scientist and technicians for hands on learning. The STEM planning group also writes monthly articles on STEM issues that are posted to the OC STEM website and distributed to an expanding database to increase public awareness and provide information.

**Funders and Partners**

The Children and Families Commission and the Samueli Foundation are the initial partners for the OC STEM Initiative. Representatives from both organizations continue to meet with foundations and organizations with an interest in STEM. To date, over 15 organizations are interested in a funding partnership and will contribute between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to support the implementation of the OC STEM Strategic Plan.

**California STEM Learning Network**

The OC STEM Initiative is hosting the California STEM Learning Network (CSLNet) in Orange County next month for the Early Math Teaching and Learning meeting. CSLNet oversees the creation of regional networks to increase STEM teaching and learning in California. The meeting is intended to determine the role of CSLNet and the regional networks in determining what is known about the importance of early mathematics. Greg Duncan, from the University of California, Irvine and expert on early math will be presenting at the meeting.

**STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:**

No funding action is proposed for this item.

**PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:**

- February 2011 – Received a presentation by Gerald Solomon, Executive Director of the Samueli Foundation on the collaboration with the Commission on the OC STEM Initiative.
- July 2011 - Approved the Orange County STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Initiative for the three-year period from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2014 in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

Receive the OC STEM Initiative Progress Report

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. OC STEM Funding Partners

**Contact:** Kelly Pijl



## **OC STEM Funding Partners**

Children and Families Commission of Orange County

Edward Life sciences Fund

Orange County United Way

Tiger Woods Learning Center/Foundation

OCTANe

Samueli Foundation

Broadcom Foundation

JP Morgan Chase Bank

Orange County Department of Education

Cotsen Foundation

Opus Community Foundation\*

The Boeing Company\*

Time Warner\*

Western Digital Foundation\*

Southern California Edison\*

*\* Participant – funding commitment pending*