



Draft Minutes
Education Committee Meeting
3 East Conference Room, 3rd Floor
2500 West Broad Street

April 25th, 2019
1:00 p.m.

Present: Mary Anna Broadbent, Dr. Denise Walters, Chris Adams, Lauren Mathena, Patricia Nicoson

Staff Present: Rich Conti, Elizabeth Voelkel, Timshel Purdum, Eugene Maurakis, Matt Baker, Ada Sue Siler

Other Attendees: Cynthia Norwood, Office of the Attorney General

Dr. Walters called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Walters called for a motion to approve the January 24th, 2019 Education Committee Meeting minutes. Correction was requested by Ms. Mathena to correct how her name appears. Correction noted by administrative staff. Mr. Adams made the motion to approve the amended minutes which was seconded by Dr. Walters. The minutes were unanimously approved without objection.

Collections Report

Ms. Voelkel highlighted the following from the Collections Report:

- On January 6th 2019 we celebrated our Bicentennial of the first train leaving Broad Street Station in 1909
- We collected oral histories and added them to our archives, we will continue to collect oral histories
- Successful inventory and relocation of the Womack collection from the Danville Science Center to a staging location before items moved to permanent new home

Experience Team

Ms. Purdum highlighted the following:

- We are working on our strategic plan, involved over 30 staff members and volunteers in 4 different meeting to share voices and perspectives

- Conducted a SWOT meeting to identify our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- Key strength identified was enthusiasm of staff
- Main opportunity is our work with community spaces and partnerships
- Some of our weaknesses including our teaching spaces and need for new demo options/programming refresh
- Our threats include a crowded market and a mistrust of science
- The threat of mistrust of science will always be there, way we combat it is to stay on top of the fields and know what good ideas are, also differentiating content
- Discussion of focusing on relevant projects to our local community and interests, for instance the Heat Index project
- We aim to keep community involved by focusing on citizen science and informal education
- Team has compiled statistics on field Trips with the help of Marketing
- We are on par with the number of trips as last year
- Looking at new teaching spaces that we can utilize and better trip experiences
- We are analyzing the broad numbers, the number of repeat schools, or schools that came in one year but not the other
- What factors are playing into these trends?
- Mr. Adams highlighted the point that schools are often limited in number of trips they can take in a year and opt for choosing places that tie into current curriculum of the school
- Fifth and Third Grade are still the most common groups we see, because it ties into the science curriculum in our area for those levels
- Timshel, what are the standards of who goes where and when
- Currently we are not tracking homeschooling statistics
- Regarding workshops, Super Cool is the most popular workshop/demo, utilizes liquid nitrogen. Amazing Animals is second
- Workshop attendance
- Owl pellets are also very popular; most teachers comment that they like owl pellets because they don't have funds to afford them for their classes
- We also conducted a teacher survey, sent out 600 evals, got back 50, good response
- We have a net promoter score of 70%, which is excellent
- Previous visit is most common means of hearing about SMV
- Experiences can't be replicated at school is 59% of the reason that teachers say influence decision to book field trip
- Most useful resource according to teachers is the post visit activities to use in the classrooms
- We are developing guides to help chaperones navigate and videos to use in classrooms
- We want to calculate the stats on lab participation, demos participation and Dome engagement

Inspiration Index

Ms. Purdum discussed the items:

- Busy time since last meeting
- Earth day festivities are coming up
- Science After Dark coming up, Theme is archeology and Indiana Jones

Maker Education and The Forge

Mr. Baker discussed the following points:

- The Forge has been open 7 months now as of the end of April
- We offer survey to every guest after every workshop, those who are willing complete
- Largest age range we see is 11yo-15yo, make up 33.3% of workshop attendees
- We have two different workshops a day
- We saw that 26.2% are 5yo-10yo, we are looking to include them more and accommodate families with smaller children
- Intergenerational makers space
- We vary the workshop topics
- New topics coming up including etching, printmaking and routing
- Try to have high tech topics and low tech topics
- Stats on returning visitors, most are first time visitors, some repeat visitors with attending 3 workshops or more
- 83% say they love it
- Stats on times, some people want longer workshops or other time slots
- Most people are good with 45 minutes
- Most people said that workshop complexity was right on point, not too difficult and not too easy
- Workshop facilitators seem knowledgeable, most people give top rating
- Reviewing some of the upcoming topics for workshops and challenges
- We are developing growth objectives
- Looking at offering open making hours, new themes, simply open workshop hours, or focus on a new specialized discipline
- In June we are tying in workshops into Pompeii
- Look at starting “badging” and certification offerings in future
- Looking at expanding operational hours of the Forge, we are 7 days a week but not 8 hours a day
- Senior programming to increase inclusivity
- Compass Academy projects, we have been working with them for a few months, they are from Middlesex county, alternative high school, 10 students have been coming to the Forge regularly to do projects that support other volunteer projects
- We hosted a teacher group and challenged them to think of problems in their community and find a way to build a solution to help solve that problem in school or community

Dr. Walters inquired about opportunity to work with local schools or companies for formal certifications like 3d software or specialized tool certifications. Could we partner to get the kids certifications to increase job readiness? We have that potential in The Forge and we are looking into ways to make that a reality.

Ms. Nicoson asked how The Forge impacts attendance. Mr. Conti responded that The Forge offers deeper engagement not necessarily higher attendance.

State of Stem in VA

Ms. Purdum discussed the current efforts of Chuck English in STEM.

- Mr. English is continuing his efforts and partnership work throughout the commonwealth to create a main/standardized STEM plan for the state; aim of a cohesive goal across all institutions
- We are interpreting the new US STEM plan and see how we will incorporate that into the VA State plan

New Business

Dr. Walters then asked for new business. Nothing was heard from the committee.

Adjournment

There being no new business, Dr. Walters requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Broadbent made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion carried without objection and the meeting was adjourned at 2:13p.m.