



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
February 2, 2023

MINUTES

On February 2, 2023, the EdAdvance Board of Directors held a Zoom online meeting during which a quorum was present. President John Kissko called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM and recorded the following members in attendance:

1. Roll Call:

Name (District): Joseph Abdella, Region 12
Deb Bell, Region 7
Roxy Fainer, Thomaston
John Kissko, Torrington
Karen Kulesa, Plymouth
Alison Plante, Newtown
Marykate Terzini, Barkhamsted

**EdAdvance
Personnel:**

Jeffrey Kitching, Executive Director
Jonathan P. Costa, Sr., Assistant Executive Director
Richard Carmelich, III, Chief Operations Officer
Tracey Lay, Chief Talent & Development Officer
Michelle Anderson, Early Childhood & Family Programs Director
Susan Domanico, Adult Education Director
Carol Montory, Board Clerk

2. Approval of January 5, 2023 Minutes

Upon a motion by Deb Bell, duly seconded by Joseph Abdella, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the January 5, 2023 meeting.

3. Questions and Comments from the Public: None

4. Old Business: None

5. New Business:

- a) Update: Early Childhood & Family Programs – *Michelle Anderson, Director*

Jeff introduced Michelle Anderson, our Director of Early Childhood and Family Programs. Michelle explained that the Early Childhood and Family Programs department is a unique department that encompasses a combination of programs and services. Two of the larger programs, Birth to Three and Head Start, each have their own directors. The Early Childhood department received a large contract from OEC to establish a collective effort known as the Western CT Home Visiting Partnership aimed to develop a standardized intake process, designed to increase families' access to home visiting services using evidence-based models. The coverage area runs from the state's northwest corner to the greater Danbury area. Our Family Resource Centers have been providing school-based family support programs in Plymouth and Torrington for over twenty years. We also provide professional development trainings to districts on Connecticut's Documentation & Observation for Teaching System (CT DOTS) and Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS). We provide consultation services on Accreditation Facilitation Projects (AFPs) to support the quality improvement efforts of childcare centers, preschools, and other early learning programs.

b) Update: Adult Education – *Susan Domanico, Director*

Susan Domanico, Adult Education Director, provided an update on the department. Our Adult Education department is state and locally funded and serves seventeen school districts encompassing twenty-six towns, giving us the largest geographical area of any Adult Education program in the state. Our mandated programs include Adult High School Credit Diploma, National External Diploma Program, GED preparation, Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and Citizenship classes. Our enrichment classes are fee-based and are offered in a wide variety of subject areas such as arts & crafts, computers, finance, home improvement, languages, personal development, and more. The Adult Education catalog is mailed to 85,500 residential homes in our service area, and we offer both in-person and online classes. We also work with the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board to provide students with college and career readiness skills.

c) Action Item: WorkspaceCT Grant Submission

Upon a motion by Joseph Abdella, duly seconded by Marykate Terzini, the Board of Directors unanimously approved of EdAdvance's submission of a grant request to the Elizabeth Raymond Ambler Trust on behalf of WorkspaceCT for \$2,900 to purchase and install a combination water bottle filling station and single ADA water cooler.

d) Action Item: Head Start Carryover Grant Funds Request

Upon a motion by Joseph Abdella, duly seconded by Deb Bell, the Board of Directors unanimously approved of EdAdvance's Head Start: Prenatal to Five programs carryover request for the FY22 Head Start base grant for \$309,894.42 and a combined \$4,535.20 of Training & Technical Assistance (T & TA) Funding from both the Head Start and Early Head Start grants.

e) Action Item: Approval for the Financing of the Torrington Properties

Upon a motion by Deb Bell, duly seconded by Marykate Terzini, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the following motions regarding the construction projects associated with 95-104 Grove Street in Torrington and 215 Hogan Drive in Torrington:

1) To authorize EdAdvance's Executive Director to be the signatory on all loan documents between EdAdvance and Thomaston Savings Bank;

- 2) To approve the construction and renovation project at 95-104 Grove Street in Torrington at an estimated total cost of \$6,672,900;
- 3) To approve the renovation project at 215 Hogan Drive in Torrington at an estimated total cost of \$4,000,000.

f) Discussion: April Board Meeting Date

Jeff discussed the date of the April Board meeting. When the Board of Directors meeting schedule was completed, the dates of our district's April vacation schedule were not known, so we scheduled the meeting for the second Thursday in April. It seems that this date now conflicts with the vacation week for our districts. Jeff presented three options to the board: 1) leave the date of the meeting on April 13; 2) move the date back to the first Thursday, April 6, the day before Good Friday; or 3) cancel the April Board meeting. If we decide to cancel the April meeting, we will add the usual April agenda items to the agenda for the May meeting. No decision was made, so we will discuss it again at the March meeting.

g) Approval: Personnel Report

Upon motion by Deb Bell, duly seconded by Joseph Abdella, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Personnel Report for January 2023 as submitted.

6. Reports/Updates:

i. Executive Director's Report – *Jeffrey C. Kitching*

- Jeff reported that the agency closed on the Grove Street, Torrington properties today.
- We will be scheduling meetings across our region to discuss a regional workforce development and career path program for students.
- In March, we will host a roundtable for Special Education directors to discuss what we can do to regionally service Special Education students to assist districts in keeping costs down.

ii. School/Program Services – *Jonathan P. Costa, Sr.*

- Jonathan reported that the agency has opened the 2023 EdAdvance Scholarship application period for high school seniors and GED students. We are offering a \$1,500 college scholarship to four graduating high school seniors in our region – two in the north and two in the south.
- The state has revised the teacher evaluation guidelines to make them more flexible. They have revised the guidelines for administrators to match teachers. These guidelines will go into effect in the fall of 2024.

iii. Business and Operations – *Richard Carmelich*

- Rich stated that he is looking forward to the Grove Street, Torrington construction project. We have hired Premier Building Associates for the project. We worked with them on other projects, and they do good work at a good price. We anticipate breaking ground in the spring.

iv. Talent and Development – *Tracey Lay*

- Tracey reported that our Human Resources department and some of our department directors will be attending career fairs at local colleges.
- Tracey stated that she has started meeting with the directors that she supervises to discuss mid-year progress and growth goals.

- We will be conducting a second interview with an Early Childhood/School Age nurse consultant. The nurse will be shared agency-wide to assist in our BASES, Head Start, Birth to Three, and Early Childhood programs as well contracted to outside OEC licensed child care programs.

7. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Deb Bell, duly seconded by Marykate Terzini, the meeting was adjourned at 4:43 PM.

*Minutes recorded by:
Carol Montory, Board Clerk*

Deb Bell, Secretary