

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
May 5, 2016**

MINUTES

On May 5, 2016, EDUCATION CONNECTION's Board of Directors held a meeting during which a quorum was present. President, Chris Sanders called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM and recorded the following members in attendance:

a) Roll Call:

Name (District): Gary Waugh, Litchfield
Michelle Ku, Newtown
Deb Bell, Region 7

Robert Coppola, New Milford
Chris Sanders, Region 6
Janelle Wilk, Watertown

EDUCATION CONNECTION

Personnel: Jeffrey Kitching, Executive Director
Rob Parenti, Director of Finance and Operations
Jonathan P. Costa Sr., Director of Business Operations/Special Education
Mia Toimil, Director of Finance
Joyce DeAngelo, Board Clerk

Upon motion by Robert Coppola, duly seconded by Deb Bell, the Board unanimously approved to amend the agenda to add item 6.a.(0) Action Item: naming the EDUCATION CONNECTION building at 103 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, Connecticut, "The Dr. Danuta M. Thibodeau Education Center".

b) Approval of March 3, 2016 Minutes:

Upon motion by Gary Waugh, duly seconded by Deb Bell, the Board approved the minutes for the March 3, 2016 meeting with 5 in favor and 1 abstention.

c) Questions and Comments from the Public: None

d) Communications:

Written:

Jeff passed around the Board Communications. He highlighted a hand written thank you note from Mr. Jeff Newton, Superintendent of East Lyme Public Schools, for the presentation Jonathan Costa presented to his Board of Education.

Jeff referenced the receipt of the close-out letter from the State of CT, Dept. of Developmental

Services, noting our program closed out 10 months ago; in addition, the new award letter just came out.

He also highlighted confirmation of the RESC Contract with the CT State Board of Education and EDUCATION CONNECTION for the Family Resource Center Program Technical Assistance, Professional Development and Evaluation Project.

e) **Old Business:** None

f) **New Business:**

(a.0) Action Item: Approval of naming the EDUCATION CONNECTION building at 103 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, Connecticut, “The Dr. Danuta M. Thibodeau Education Center”.

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of EDUCATION CONNECTION wish to express their gratitude to Dr. Danuta Thibodeau on the occasion of her retirement after 15 years of service as Executive Director and her essential role in shaping the organization that exists today, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Thibodeau’s prudent management of EDUCATION CONNECTION combined with her vision for the future needs of the agency resulted in the acquisition of a new educational facility in Danbury that will strengthen our ability offer innovative new programs and to better serve the districts of the area for many years to come, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that from this point forward the EDUCATION CONNECTION building at 103 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, Connecticut shall be referred to as “The Dr. Danuta M. Thibodeau Education Center” in recognition of her many accomplishments, and

RESOVED, that the Executive Director is authorized by the Board to effect this change including the acquisition and placement of an appropriate sign memorializing this at the Miry Brook building.

Upon motion by Robert Coppola, duly seconded by Janelle Wilk, the Board of Directors unanimously approved naming the EDUCATION CONNECTION building at 103 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, Connecticut, “The Dr. Danuta M. Thibodeau Education Center”.

Jeff noted all necessary arrangements will be made for signage changes over the summer and a reception marking the new change planned for the fall.

(a) Action Item: Approval to submit the 2016-2017 Adult Education Program Improvement Projects “Comprehensive Initiatives” continuation grant application to the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education for grant award consideration.

Upon motion by Gary Waugh, duly seconded by Deb Bell, the Board of Directors unanimously approved of EDUCATION CONNECTIONS’s participation in these grants, which will be effective July 2016 – June 2017.

(b) Presentation: Proposed Agency Budget for FY 2016-2017

Jeff presented EDUCATION CONNECTION’s projected annual budget for 2016 - 2017.

(c) Presentation/Election of Officers for FY 2016-2017

Robert Coppola presented the Slate of Officers for FY 2016-2017:

President:	Chris Sanders
Vice President:	Robert Coppola
Secretary:	Deb Bell
Treasurer:	Melissa Miller
Member at Large:	Gary Waugh

Upon motion by Robert Coppola, duly seconded by Janelle Wilk, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Slate of Officers for FY 2016 – 2017.

(d) Presentation/Approval: Healthy Food Certification

Rob presented the process for recertification of the “Healthy Food” Certification for FY 2016-2017.

Upon motion by Robert Coppola, duly seconded by Deb Bell, the Board of Directors unanimously approved certifying that all food items offered for sale to students under our jurisdiction, and not exempted from the nutrition standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education (known as the Connecticut Nutrition Standards), will meet said standards for the 2016-2017 school year, and will exclude from certification food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards, provided that such food is sold in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, such sale is at the location of the event, and such food is not sold from a vending machine or school store.

(e) Presentation: Agency Goals/Objectives FY 2016-2017

Jeff gave a brief overview of the Agency Program Plan for 2016-2017. He indicated we will be faced with challenges created by current state economic conditions; however, we will continue to develop new programs and services that will benefit our districts. The 2017 Agency Program Plan will position us well to meet new challenges and to take advantage of opportunities that will result in continued agency growth.

(f) Presentation/Approval: FY 2016-2017 COLA Increase

Jeff presented the proposed agency COLA for FY 2016-2017. Based on the presented budget, a 1.8% COLA for FY 2016-2017 was recommended to the Board.

Upon motion by Deb Bell, duly seconded by Gary Waugh, the Board of Directors unanimously approved a 1.8% COLA for FY 2016-2017.

(g) Presentation: Workforce Analysis Information Sheet

Jeff presented the Workforce Analysis, which is updated annually. The Workforce Analysis provides demographic data on our employees.

(h) Presentation/Approval: Board Meeting Schedule for FY 2016-2017

Jeff presented the FY 2016-2017 Board Meeting Schedule to the Board.

Upon motion by Gary Waugh, duly seconded by Deb Bell, the Board unanimously approved the Meeting Schedule for FY 2016-2017.

- (i) Approval: Personnel Reports (2/20/16 to 3/18/16 and 3/19/16 to 4/15/16)

Upon motion by Deb Bell, duly seconded by Janelle Wilk, the Board approved the Personnel Reports as submitted.

7. Reports/Updates

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

Being in his new position for just a little over 2 weeks, Jeff said he has had an incredible warm welcome from everyone. He wanted to express his gratitude to the Board and Dani; he noted that Dani had prepared everything so well, that it was an easy transition.

Jeff reported that he has met with approximately 45 employees; he wants to know what we do, and what we can do better. Over the next few months he would like to just learn and listen. He is currently meeting with district superintendents and hopes to meet all of them by June. He is very excited to form relations and connections with our districts.

We received approximately 80 applications for our two scholarship offerings. Jeff announced the winners: (northern district) Taylor Smart, Torrington and (southern district) Ashley Gong, Newtown. Jeff will be contacting the winners by telephone on Friday.

Jeff also announced the upcoming Expo Fest 2016 featuring the Film Festival Red Carpet Event and the STEM Expo.

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

Jonathan encouraged Board members to attend the upcoming Expo Fest 2016 on May 13th and 14th at the Oakdale Theatre in Wallingford, Connecticut, and if attended, he would guarantee they received a VIP badge. This event is the ultimate experience for our high school students engaged in innovative, cutting-edge STEM, digital media, entrepreneurship education and an annual highlight for Skills21 at EDUCATION CONNECTION and affiliated organizations.

Friday, May 13th is the red carpet Film Fest and on Saturday, May 14th, we will host the exhibition trade floor, student presentations, and the Big Pitch 2016 to discover the ultimate Expo Fest winners.

Jonathan reported that our Medical Internship Program, which used to be subsidized by a grant, where students are placed in various medical provider locations as observers and receive a stipend for doing so, may be changing. With a reduction in grant funding, we are considering making it a non-paying observer experience – by dropping the “intern” language we are confirming that the students do not work themselves but are empowered to observe and learn about the profession they are watching.

Our interdistrict staff have been working hard to deliver our spring programming for students. These terrific employees are doing a great job serving the region's children while they watch with resignation as the state budget process goes through its deficit mitigating twists and turns. Any major cuts in funding may mean a dramatic curtailing of these services to our regions/s students.

iii. Business and Operations - *Rob Parenti*

Rob reported that we have purchased a generator. In case of a power outage, the generator will power our server room, freezers and refrigerators.

He reported that we have contracted to have work done in conference Room 110. We will be constructing a sound abatement that will help eliminate any noise from the kitchen area while a workshop is in session.

He also reported that he is meeting with our health insurance brokers. Due to high claims, it currently looks like our health insurance will be increasing 19%, however, they are negotiating to try and get it to 10-15%. He also reported that our liability insurance would be increasing 11-12%.

8. Adjournment

Upon motion by Gary Waugh, duly seconded by Janelle Wilk, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM.

Minutes recorded by:
Joyce DeAngelo, Board Clerk

Deb Bell, Secretary