**Advance CTE Board of Directors’ Meeting**

**MINUTES**

May 13, 2020

Zoom call

**ATTENDEES:** Sarah Heath, Marcie Mack, Heather Justice, Jeralyn Jargo, Victoria Crownover, Laura Scheibe, Sheila Ruhland, Barbara Wall, Bernadette Howard, Jay Ramsey, Katie Graham, Thalea Longhurst

**STAFF:** Kimberly Green, Kate Kreamer, Austin Estes, Katie Fitzgerald, Meghan Wills, Meredith Hills, Sara Gassman

**Welcome:** Heath called the meeting to order at 1:01 P.M.

Justice asked for approval of Board meeting minutes from January 30, 2020.

**MOTION:  To approve minutes from January 30, 2020, as presented.**

**Ruhland; Mack.**

**MOTION APPROVED.**

Heath asked for approval of Consent Agenda.

**MOTION:  To approve consent agenda, as presented.**

**Jargo; Howard.**

**MOTION APPROVED.**

**FY20 Financial Report:** Green shared that Advance CTE is on target for the fiscal year projected income, and that expenses are under budget- largely due to the mid-year shift of work to The Center to Advance CTE. Green walked through the status of investments and shared that losses were sustained in March and February, but that markets began to rebound in April. Advance CTE was advised not to make any changes in the investment strategy. Green shared that reserve funds are able to cover about two years of expenses. Although the spring meeting was cancelled, Advance CTE was able to reschedule for next year without having to pay a penalty or lose money. Green updated the Board that Advance CTE is holding on expanding the office space. Green discussed that while the most volatility in work due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) is with The Center, funders have been flexible and Advance CTE is rethinking this work.

Heath asked for approval of Financial Report.

**MOTION:  To approve financial report, as presented.**

**Wall; Mack.**

**MOTION APPROVED.**

**Update on FY19-FY21 Strategic Plan:** Kreamer presented an update on the Advance CTE /The Center to Advance CTE’s FY19-21 strategic plan. The organization is nearing the end of year two of its three-year strategic plan. The Center Board approved the overarching priorities and strategies of the strategic plan, and staff revisit activities each year to ensure alignment with member and grant priorities. Advance CTE uses a four-point color scale to rate the organization’s progress on each strategy; green and yellow indicate that work is generally on track, while orange and red indicate that there are more significant concerns or disruptions to that work. The information Kreamer presented covers work through April 2020. On the whole, Advance CTE’s work is on track, with some activities intentionally delayed in response to capacity limitations and/or reprioritization of work. Coronavirus is starting to show an early effect on the organization’s work, although a stronger impact is expected in the next quarter.

Under the federal and state policy priority, activities related to development of tools and resources are generally rated yellow, which reflects some grants nearing their conclusion and others just getting underway. Now that most projects are underway, staff capacity will start to be redirected in these areas. The strategy related to revision of The National Career Clusters® Framework is rated orange; this work is just getting underway and is not anticipated to be rated orange in the next quarter.

Under the professional learning priority, communications with Advance CTE members is rated as green, while the rest of the strategies are rated as yellow. The virtual learning strategy has been developed and will launch in the near future, and the 2020 Spring Meeting was cancelled as a result of coronavirus. Advance CTE is actively redesigning its professional learning work and has recently made a great deal of progress, and we anticipate that the color scores in this priority area will look different in the next quarter.

Under the promotion priority, many of the strategies are rated yellow. Advance CTE received its third grant from the Siemens Foundation to support communications and messaging work, but the launch of this project has been delayed as a result of coronavirus. The strategy to promote the 100-year anniversary of Advance CTE has been slowed down as other work has been prioritized; the organization plans to celebrate its 101-year anniversary in 2021. Fundraising and development work has been very successful and is rated green.

Under the partnerships priority, Advance CTE is in a very strong position. We have continued to deepen relationships with the organizations with which we partner and in what ways, and staff members have more diverse and more extensive relationships with partner organizations that leads to greater continuity of partnerships. Advance CTE’s partners have been strongly engaged in many activities, including Perkins V regional meetings and state plan expert reviews. In the future, Advance CTE plans to think further about how to measure the impact of its partnerships, not just the quantity.

Under the processes and protocols priority, Advance CTE has made a great deal of progress over the last year. The organization has streamlined its back-end operations, developed standard operating procedures for a number of processes, is undergoing a revision of its performance evaluation system, and is undertaking an internal equity training process that has strengthened the organization’s culture and processes that has led to a great deal of forward progress.

**FY21 Membership Projections:** Fitzgerald walked the Board through the new membership dues process and shared that moving to a digital system increased the dues received in a short period of time. So far, Fitzgerald has not heard from states that are unable to pay dues – although some prefer to pay in this fiscal year instead of the next. Fitzgerald discussed the anticipated drop off of organizational members because many of these are small organizations or vendors who are being impacted by coronavirus. However, this is not a significant part of the budget. Associate state and non-state memberships may also decrease, but Fitzgerald does not expect this to be a financial burden.

**Federal Policy Update:** Meredith Hills provided an update on federal policy activity before the coronavirus pandemic. This includes the administration’s Fiscal Year 2021 budget request, which proposed a $900 million increase for CTE. Advance CTE did not support the proposed budget in full due to overall decreases for the Department of Education and Department of Labor. Currently, the Fiscal Year 2021 budget is moving forward but is not an immediate priority for Congress. The House was supposed to hold hearings in March, but they have been cancelled and Congress has not put forward any budget proposals. Congressional staff are not taking meetings related to appropriations yet, as their focus has been on the coronavirus response.

In March, the National Apprenticeship Act reauthorization was brought up in the House. Only a discussion draft was released, which included plans to codify work related to youth apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships. Notably, the proposal did not include Industry-Recognized Apprenticeships Programs. While the proposal was well aligned with Perkins, Advance CTE did have some concerns including limitations in accountability. The proposal is at a standstill due to coronavirus.

Advance CTE continues to be involved with the Title IV-A coalition in advocating for funding for this title program of the Every Student Succeeds Act. Members of Congress have states that they are not planning to take up reauthorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which is up next year.

The Higher Education Act reauthorization has been largely halted due to coronavirus, and we are not expecting to see much movement. Additionally, reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which was on track to begin this summer, is on pause as well.

Other notable federal updates include Congressman Glenn “GT” Thompson’s floor remarks on Advance CTE’s 100-year anniversary as well as an op-ed on the value of CTE.

In regards to the coronavirus federal response, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which included significant funds for education and state governors. Advance CTE sent a letter to the U.S. Department of Education with ACTE about financial aid relief. Advance CTE and ACTE have been in regular communication with Congressional offices to ensure our priorities are included in stimulus bills.

The next stimulus bill, called Relaunching America’s Workforce Act (RAWA) was recently proposed. The bill includes $1 billion for CTE and $2 billion for TAACCCT. Hills also shared that the House of Representatives introduced the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, which includes $100 million for education. It includes some of the RAWA elements, including the ability to pool funds and waivers for the professional development definition, but does not include new funding for CTE or TAACCCT. It is not expected to pass and is more of a messaging bill to signal priorities. Advance CTE will continue to advocate for the inclusion of RAWA funding increases in the next stimulus bill.

Justice asked if there is any connection between FY21 budget priorities and stimulus funds and if Advance CTE is expecting funding to go back to the same levels. Hills responded that the most probably scenario is that Congress will pass continuing resolutions for the duration of the 2021 fiscal year.

The Board discussed whether Advance CTE should develop a formal set of apprenticeship policy recommendations. Advance CTE has been leaning on the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) and Apprenticeship Forward principles to guide recommendations. Heath suggested that it would be valuable to have formal recommendations to illustrate that work-based learning is a core part of CTE that encompasses apprenticeships. This could also help signal that apprenticeship should not be separate from CTE. Jargo agreed and suggested that at minimum we should better define terms and clarify what agency is administering programs. Justice added that there is concern about how to count apprenticeships in accountability systems. This is also challenging because apprenticeship data is one year further removed from higher education. Justice suggested that recommendations should be grounded in data and outcomes. Howard and Mack both agreed.

Additionally, the Board discussed whether Advance CTE should extend its federal policy reach to influence and inform other supports like TANF and SNAP. Justice suggested that Advance CTE should move into this space. She recently had a coalition call with the United Way about ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained) and that we should make sure students aren’t just pushed into another bracket once they have left CTE. Howard asked if Advance CTE has any capacity to venture into this policy area. Green responded that Advance CTE is taking input from the board to inform strategic planning and capacity building decisions. Jargo agreed with Howard but also suggested that Adult Basic Education should be included as well. Justice suggested engaging postsecondary partners and members to leverage their depth of knowledge. Mack agreed that the additional reach would be beneficial. Green asked board members to share additional recommendations for other policy areas.

**WIOA Recommendations Input:** Hills updated the Board on Advance CTE’s process for developing WIOA recommendations. Originally the organization had planned to engage members to co-design recommendations, but that work has shifted as a result of internal priorities and the coronavirus pandemic. Since the last board meeting, Advance CTE has convened the WIOA kitchen cabinet, including 20 members from 18 states.

Hills then shared the major themes for reauthorization with the Board for input. The first theme is systems alignment. It is unlikely that Perkins will be removed as an infrastructure partner, but Hills asked for input into what meaningful infrastructure partnership looks like, how Perkins can be a partner outside of infrastructure, and how infrastructure can be expanded. Ramsey shared that in Vermont there are only two postsecondary entities in the state and that the state education agency is getting the bill for infrastructure costs even though it should be passed down to the entities that are doing the partnering. This is something that could be clarified in legislation. Longhurst added that in Utah very limited information and data was provided about how funds were being spent. Crownover said that in Colorado partners aside from the workforce board are not able to see the full scope of the infrastructure costs and services, only the portion that they individually are supporting. Another concern is that CTE is about programs, not individuals, which is a systems alignment challenge. Howard added that Hawaii is experiencing similar challenges to Colorado.

The second theme is youth activities, specifically the split between in-school and out-of-school funds as well as additional programmatic supports necessary for high-quality implementation of WIOA. Justice suggested that the split should be determined by the populations served and be contextualized to the state. Also, this should not be a permanent split and should be flexible enough to adapt to shifts over time. Heath said that in Colorado it would be helpful for the language to be more flexible and state specific. It has been challenging for providers to spend the money just based on how the language is structured. For example, WIOA is not designed around programs in the way CTE is. Howard added that the pandemic will likely impact reauthorization and it will be difficult to plan for different scenarios.

The third theme is performance indicators. Advance CTE has heard from the kitchen cabinet that the performance indicators do not encompass success in the way they should. Howard suggested trying to develop a measure of well being as an outcome, and Crownover added (in the chat box) that WIOA performance accountability is much worse than Perkins V in being able to compare data across states.

The final theme is definitions and standards. Hills asked for input on how definitions and standards – such as the eligible training provider list or the career pathways definition – should be updated to create more uniformity. Heath said that the tightening up the eligible training provider list would be really important, particularly as more providers come up. Ramsey has taken a different approach by identifying the important sectors and credentials and only allowing providers to be on the list if they can provide training aligned to those areas. Crownover added (in the chat box) that apprenticeship would be good to look at as a definition or theme within WIOA given the board’s earlier discussion about identifying some policy statements around apprenticeship so that we all speak the same language.

Additional federal policy considerations include flexibility around supplement not supplant during coronavirus and how to adapt to labor market changes.

**FY21 Board of Director Elections:** Howard provided an update on the Nominations Committee’s work to approve the FY21 Board of Directors candidates. The tradition is to move all of the officers up one level. Secretary/Treasurer candidates include Colleen MccCabe, Laura Scheibe and Barbara Wall. The nominating committee met and approved the candidates, who were notified and accepted the nomination. Howard moved for the Board to approve the slate of candidates and succession of officers.

**MOTION: To approve the slate of candidates and succession of officers.**

**Justice; Graham**

**MOTION APPROVED**

**Virtual Learning Strategy Discussion:** Gassman shared an overview of the virtual learning strategy, which has been in the works for over a year and has been accelerated as a result of coronavirus. There are three phases of planned implementation between FY20 and FY22. The first phase, which is happening right now, is in direct response to member needs during the coronavirus pandemic. The design of this first phase was informed by feedback from the member services survey.

In Phase II, Advance CTE plans to develop role-alike spaces for members, including regular Zoom meetings and Moodle groups. In Phase III, Advance CTE will develop a virtual institute for emerging CTE leaders.

Heath shared that she is excited about the regional approach to virtual learning, as states often have commonalities by region in the way CTE and education are governed. The role-alike strategy will also be a great addition to foster learning and networking among members. In Minnesota, Jargo has been seeing more people take part in learning opportunities. She supports Advance CTE’s approach and suggested using metrics to see what is and isn’t working.

**Career Cluster Revision Update:** Wills shared that Advance CTE has developed an identity for the Career Cluster revision to help direct how we talk about the work going forward. “Advancing the Framework: A state-led Crowdsourcing Initiative Focused on Modernizing the National Career Clusters® Framework.” The key themes are that states are leading, modernization and being forward-looking. She also shared that the current plan incorporates the input the Board of Directors provided during the January meeting. Wills added that we are working with Vivayic on this initiative; we are currently in the process of finalizing scope of work and timeline with Vivayic and should have that done in the coming weeks.

Wills shared that we have developed some internal talking points to help frame why we are undertaking this initiative, with a focus on ensuring the Framework will be adaptable to the future of work, which is even more important now given coronavirus.

Wills provided an overview of the objectives of the initiative, including to better understand who and how the Framework is being used; to gather feedback on what is and isn’t working with the current Framework; and to solicit ideas to ensure the Framework is relevant and adaptable moving forward. Advance CTE is focusing most of the immediate attention on clarifying and defining the purpose of the Framework, which will be foundational to the entire initiative and our ability to ensure the Framework best meets the need of the field.

Wills shared the two defined phases of the initiative. Phase I (“Build Empathy”) is focused on understanding how the Framework is being used and where there are gaps between the intent of the Framework and current uses. This phase will largely include gathering input from the field and conducting research around the use of the Framework on the ground. Part of Phase I is the launch of a Career Clusters Kitchen Cabinet. Advance CTE have had great interest in this kitchen cabinet, with nominations submitted by 24 State Directors.

Phase II (“Generate Consensus”) will focus on identifying a collaborative path forward, anchored on an agreed upon purpose and vision for the Framework, with state CTE leaders engaged throughout. This will identify if and how we will make changes to the Framework

Wills shared that after Phase II there will be a reflection point to identify next steps, whether we are undertaking a major transformation of the Framework, making minor adjustments or some other path forward. We have extended timeline to provide more time to clarify purpose and based on feedback from the Board.

Wills asked if there were any questions or reactions to the information she shared. Heath shared that other groups – such as state supervisors around specific Career Cluster areas – were involved in the past in Career Clusters revisions and should be engaged going forward. Green added that OCTAE is working to update the non-trad crosswalks, which are based on the Career Clusters and we are collaborating on that project. The CIP and SOC crosswalks have been recently updated. Green shared that we are in touch with OCTAE and O\*NET and they are aware of this initiative. We are committed to staying connected so these tools remain relevant as a potential revision moves forward.

**Update on Stocktake actions:** Estes provided an update on the major discussion areas from the January Board of Directors meeting, specifically the virtual learning strategy and supports for non-State Directors. Estes shared that some next steps were put on hold and others were accelerated, due to coronavirus.

**Other Items to be Added/Next Steps:** Heath asked if there were any other questions or comments. Justice shared that this is her last Board meeting as she is leaving her role at the Texas Education Agency on June 1, 2020 to join Education Strategy Group working on the Global Career Readiness initiative, in partnership with Advance CTE.

Heath shared that the next Board meeting is June 29 at 3 pm ET to approve the FY21 budget. She thanked everyone for their time and attention. Green shared that we will be doing a 101-year birthday celebration next year. She thanked the Board and staff for their engagement and efforts during this transition time.

**The Board meeting adjourned at 2:54 pm**