



ADVANTAGE ARTS
A C A D E M Y

Advantage Arts Academy Board of Directors Meeting

Date: 11.17.2025

Time: 4:30 PM

Teleconference: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86858632614>

In Attendance: Suzy Mortenson, Crystal Thomas, Darren Marshall, Chris Joyce, Meche Mellor

Excused: Jodi Hart-Wilson

Others in Attendance: Kelly Simonsen, Dawn Benke, Heidi Bauerle, Hannah Jones

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER Suzy Mortenson called the meeting to order at 4:34 PM.

VOTING & DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Board Member Terms, Roles, & Elected Officers
Jodi Hart-Wilson stepped down from the position of Board Chair. The board will now consist of Suzy Mortenson as the Board Chair, Crystal Thomas as the Board Vice Chair, Darren Marshall as Financial Coordinator, and Mechelle Mellor and Chris Joyce as board members with 3-year terms.

Crystal Thomas made a motion to approve board member terms for Mechelle Mellor and Chris Joyce and have Suzy Mortenson take the role of board chair with Crystal Thomas as board Vice president. Darren Marshall seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The votes were as follows: Suzy Mortenson, Aye; Crystal Thomas, Aye; Darren Marshall, Aye.

CONSENT ITEMS

- September 22, 2025, Board Meeting & Closed Session Minutes
Darren Marshall made a motion to approve the September 22, 2025, Board Meeting and Closed Session Minutes. Crystal Thomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The votes were as follows: Suzy Mortenson, Aye; Crystal Thomas, Aye; Darren Marshall, Aye, Chris Joyce, Aye; Meche Mellor, Aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

REPORTS

- Director Report

Kelly Simonsen reported that enrollment is at 364 students. Forty-three percent of the student population are special population. Professional development is ongoing with the focus remaining on teacher clarity, PLC protocols, and using student data to inform instruction. The Veterans Day celebration and paint night were put on for students and families. Board members were invited to attend the school performance of The Nutcracker on Tuesday, December 16th.

- Finance Report

Dawn Benke reported on the school's financial statements. Local revenue has reached 47% of the annual budget, which is ahead of schedule for being only a third of the way through the year. This is largely due to club fees and facility rentals. State revenue is also higher because much of the funding is received at the beginning of the year.

Purchased services appear higher since insurance costs for the entire year were paid upfront. Supplies and materials were also purchased early in the year, leading to a higher-than-expected percentage spent so far. Operating cash is up compared to the same time last year. Additionally, restricted cash—which was at zero last year—is now at \$115,000.

VOTING & DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Approve LEA License

Kelly Simonsen informed the board of the need for an LEA Specific License for educator Emma Maag. Board members discussed the license and other teaching positions at the school. There was no further discussion.

Crystal Thomas made a motion to approve the LEA Specific License for Emma Maag. Chris Joyce seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The votes were as follows: Suzy Mortenson, Aye; Crystal Thomas, Aye; Darren Marshall, Aye; Meche Mellor, Aye; Chris Joyce, Aye.

Dawn Benke left the meeting at 4:57 PM.

- Amended Bullying and Hazing Policy
- Amended Paid Parental and Postpartum Recovery Leave Policy
- Amended Instructional Materials Policy
- New Hotline Complaint Policy

Heidi Bauerle discussed the changes made to the policies as well as the

requirements for the new Hotline Complaint Policy. There were no questions or concerns from the board.

Meche Mellor made a motion to approve the Amended Bullying and Hazing Policy, the Amended Paid Parental and Postpartum Recovery Leave Policy, the Amended Instructional Materials Policy and the Hotline Complaint Policy. Chris Joyce seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The votes were as follows: Suzy Mortenson, Aye; Crystal Thomas, Aye; Darren Marshall, Aye; Meche Mellor, Aye; Chris Joyce, Aye.

CALENDARING

The next board meeting is January 20th, 2026, at 4:00 PM. The board determined a new meeting time of Tuesdays at 4:00 PM.

ADJOURN

At 5:17 PM Darren Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meche Mellor seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The votes were as follows: Suzy Mortenson, Aye; Crystal Thomas, Aye; Darren Marshall, Aye; Meche Mellor, Aye; Chris Joyce, Aye.