

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

Draft Minutes of Meeting April 21, 2015

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, members of the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on April 21, 2015, at the H.C. Wilcox Technical High School, Meriden, CT.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Trefry called the meeting to order at 1:20 p.m. Due to the lack of a quorum, no action was taken.

Present: Mr. Robert Trefry, Chairperson
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt
Mrs. Patricia Keavney-Maruca
Commissioner Catherine Smith

Absent: Mr. John Barrasso
Mr. Stephan Bundschu
Mr. Matthew Nemerson
Commissioner Sharon Palmer
Mr. Fitz Walker

Mr. Trefry thanked Principal Witkin for hosting the Board meeting. Ms. Witkin thanked the Board members for their support. Principal Witkin introduced three students, Matthew Despres, Taylor Schuts, and Garrett Puckett to the Board members who spoke about their experience at H.C. Wilcox THS and their post-graduate plans.

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

III. Consent Agenda

The Board did not consider any consent agenda items due to the lack of a quorum.

IV. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

V. Consideration of Minutes

The minutes were not considered due to the lack of a quorum.

VI. Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Skills USA

Over 1,200 CTHSS Students participated in the annual SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Championships on March 27, 2015 hosted by Wilcox THS. The national competition is being held on June 24 and 25, 2015.

CTHSS Students Attend the 7th Annual Great Debate

Hundreds of students from the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) along with thousands of other students from across the state attended the 7th Annual Great Debate hosted by the Connecticut NAACP in Bloomfield, Connecticut on March 31, 2015. Students were able to view a spirited, thought-provoking debate on two topics deftly delivered by debate teams from Howard University and Harvard University. Superintendent Torres was very proud of the number of CTHSS students who attended. The debate was officiated by Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman who said it was one of the best debates that she had ever seen.

Ellis Tech Students are 2015 Rube Goldberg Engineering Competition Champions

H. H. Ellis Technical High School of Danielson recently took first place in the 2015 State Regional Rube Goldberg Engineering competition held at the University of Connecticut. Several other CTHSS schools brought their engineered machines to the competition as well.

CT Outstanding Art Educator Award

The CT Outstanding Art Educator Award goes to one of our CTHSS instructors Adrien Kiel who we have invited to the next board meeting to be recognized.

Admissions Policy Update

There will be an Admissions update at the May 19, 2015 CTHSS Board meeting.

Strategic Action Plan Update

There will be an update at the June 10, 2015 CTHSS Board meeting on the Strategic Action Plan.

VII. Items Requiring Action

The Board did not consider any action items due to the lack of a quorum.

VIII. Items for Discussion

A. Student Presentation on NAO Robot

Principal Witkin introduced Information Systems Technology Department Head Mr. Donald Mason to the Board Members. Mr. Mason introduced the following students to the Board members who presented on the NAO Robot: Robert Bellows, Matt Barr, Michael Beal, Sagan Shaw, Xavier, Rosa, Gabriel Vegas, Angela Cote, Nabil Hamideh, Romario Hana, Ben Matakaetis, and Carlos Rivera. The students programmed the robot to do a demonstration and an interactive explanation of how the robot works (including Board members talking to NAO) to the Board members.

The NAO Robot is a great tool for having students interact with Object Oriented Programming in Java, Python, C++ and the native IDE, Choregraphe. Students will be able to use concepts in computational thinking to identify real world problems that can be solved with robotic technology, then create programs that will teach the robot to solve those problems. Mr. Mason discussed some possible uses for the robot which included indoor positioning and how problem solving skills are essential to the IST trade and a key part of student growth and development.

Mr. Mason responded to questions the board members raised about the NAO Robot. Discussion included: How the CTHSS acquired the robot, how the NAO robot captures the STEM initiative along with

English progression and cross content areas, and the cost of the robot (\$8,000). Prince, Grasso and Cheney Technical High Schools—the schools with the IT location offerings have the NAO Robot on order. J.M. Wright currently has the robot in their IT program.

The Board members were extremely impressed with the presentation and thanked Mr. Mason and his students for presenting at today's meeting.

B. Student Presentation on Electronic Circuit Boards

Principal Witkin introduced Mr. George Wruck, Electronics Technology Teacher to the Board members. Mr. Wruck introduced three students demonstrating two projects which included; a RGB (color) Nightrider circuit, and the SkillsUSA heartbeat sign (chapter display).

The Board members were extremely impressed with the presentation and thanked Mr. Wruck and his students for presenting at today's meeting.

C. Employment Opportunities in “Green Careers”

Goal 3 of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan is to transform the CTHSS with innovative program designs that are responsive to Connecticut's workforce needs, thus positioning the system as a leading force in career technical education.

Superintendent Torres introduced Education Consultants Mr. Raymond Mencio and Pasquale Ciarleglio to the Board members who presented a progress update on Goal 3.5 of the Strategic Action Plan which is to prepare students for emerging employment opportunities in “Green Careers”. Their presentation outlined the goals of the project, green technology curriculum, industry involvement, year two of the CT Clean Trades Program, CTHSS Green Technologies and Energy Curriculum Initiatives—Project Learning Tree, Partnership with Connecticut Green Bank, CTHSS Students Trained in Green Technologies, Solar Photovoltaic Companies Adopt Schools, Industry Partners, and Action Plan.

On May 1, 2015 the CT Green Bank will update Contractors and System owners on pending legislation from the Governor that will create a solar home renewable energy credit policy. To assist the installer community, the Green Bank has partnered with the CTHSS to match skilled jobseekers seeking to enter the workforce to the solar PV industry. The Green Bank and the CTHSS seek to pair companies with technical high schools in their area to foster the skills needed to grow their businesses and the CT solar PV industry.

Mr. Mencio and Mr. Ciarleglio responded to questions the Board members raised on Green Careers. The Board members commented on what a great service this is to not only to the people of this State but also to the students.

A copy of the Green Career's presentation is included in the official file of this meeting.

IX. Report of the Chair

Mr. Trefry announced the appointment of the new SDE Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell.

He also announced that on May 14, 2015, the Hartford Business Journal will be recognizing eight remarkable women in business at the CT Convention Center. Mr. Trefry congratulated both Superintendent Torres and Commissioner Smith on this remarkable award.

Mr. Trefry also reported that the new CTHSS Board appointments to fill the three vacancies are still going through the approval process.

X. Committee Reports

A. Quality and Policy

Ms. Keavney-Maruca reported that her committee met on April 10, 2015. The committee received an update on the Board of Regents for Higher Education and Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information Network know as (P20WIN). The committee also received an update on the Teacher Evaluation Implementation the plan submission is due by May 15, 2015 and will be placed on the May CTHSS Board Agenda for approval. Ms. Keavney has been invited to attend Abbott THS TTAC meeting.

B. Outreach and Finance

The committee did not meet.

XI. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

XII. Adjourn

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Diane Curtis

Prepared by:

Diane M. Curtis, Administrative Assistant
Connecticut Technical High School System