

**CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD**

**Minutes of Meeting  
January 17, 2017**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on January 17, 2017 at 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT

**I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Trefry called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Mr. Robert Trefry, Chairperson  
Mrs. Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Vice Chairperson  
Mr. John Barrasso  
Ms. Gina Chiarella  
Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis  
Mr. Chris DiPentima  
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt  
Mr. Peter Hoecklin  
Commissioner Catherine Smith

Absent: Commissioner Scott Jackson  
Mr. Fitz Walker

**II. Public Participation**

Mr. Paul Angellucci, Vice President of the SVFT, spoke in advocacy of moving the Stratford School of Aviation Maintenance Technicians under the auspices of the Board of Regents due to the cost of tuition. Mr. Angellucci was encouraged to stay for the entire meeting as the tuition increase was an item on the agenda.

**III. Consent Agenda**

**A. Consideration of Minutes**

The board voted unanimously that the minutes of the December 13, 2016 CTHSS Board meeting be approved.

Vote: In Favor: Trefry, Keavney, Barrasso, Chiarella, De Filippis, DiPentima, Eichstaedt, Hoecklin, Smith  
Opposed: 0  
Abstained: 0  
Absent: Jackson, Walker

**IV. Executive Session**

The Board did not go into executive session.

**V. Report of the Superintendent of Schools**

**Three Kings Day**

On January 6, 2017, the CTHSS had the opportunity to celebrate Three Kings Day with a representative group of students. This was the first time the school community came together at A.I. Prince Tech to celebrate the diversity and

richness of the teaching staff and student body. Superintendent Torres thanked Principal Williams and the home office staff for all of their hard work in organizing this event.

#### **Partnership Conversations with DAS and OPM**

Partnership conversations continue with DAS and OPM colleagues regarding the upcoming challenging fiscal year. Conversations are about how the CTHSS can create system efficiencies and staffing at schools and home office. Superintendent Torres will continue to keep the Board updated as these conversations continue. She is looking internally at what these system efficiencies might be and has asked for a number of staffing reports in specific areas in order to determine how to continue to support the core mission with minimal disruptions.

#### **Principal Leadership Council Meeting**

On Thursday, January 12, 2017, recruitments efforts were discussed at the Principal Leadership Council meeting. The CTHSS is already actively recruiting for the Fall 2017 incoming class and working with the principals around a targeted recruitment plan for some sites. January is the prime time to review a number of applications.

#### **Update on the Early Care and Education Program – Bullard-Havens**

Superintendent Torres announced that there are plans to phase out the Early Care and Education Program currently at Bullard-Havens in Bridgeport. Bridgeport Public Schools is looking differently at supporting preschoolers; therefore priorities and needs have shifted dramatically from the program currently at Bullard-Havens. Ninth graders will not be placed into this program this year.

#### **Surgical Tech & LPN Partnership Follow-up Meeting**

On Friday, January 20, 2017, the CTHSS will be attending a follow-up meeting with the Board of Regents on the LPN Program and the Allied Health Programs. The Board of Regents is very interested in supporting the Allied Health Programs. Superintendent Torres will continue to update the Board on the progress. They are projecting the program would come on line in the Fall, 2017 but this will be contingent on the state's fiscal condition.

#### **Proposed Bill No. 5585 - An Act Establishing the Technical High System as an Independent Agency**

A new bill has been introduced by a number of State Representatives that the general statutes be amended to remove the technical high school system from the Department of Education and to make said system an independent agency for administrative and budgetary purposes. *Statement of Purpose:* To improve the administration and operation of the technical high school system. Superintendent Torres will continue to have conversations with Commissioner Wentzell regarding this bill and the exercise that will follow. The Superintendent will keep the Board members updated on the impact of this bill.

#### **Visit from the Association on Career and Technical Education (ACTE)**

On February 8, 2017, the CTHSS will welcome a visit from the delegation of the ACTE. This national organization has been very impressed with the district's Strategic Plan and outreach efforts and wants to visit to see first-hand what the CTHSS career pathways have to offer. This visit will take place at A.I. Prince Technical High School. All Board members are invited to attend.

#### **Community Outreach Dinner – Vinal Technical High School**

On February 15, 2017 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, Vinal Tech will be hosting a community outreach dinner. This dinner is an opportunity for the community to come in and see the number of career pathways the school has and to really see first-hand what the students are doing. This community dinner is a direct result of the Board's recommendation that the CTHSS conducts more outreach efforts during the legislative session.

## VI. Items Requiring Action

### A. Trade Reauthorization (Culinary Arts and Guest Services Cluster, the Human Services Cluster and the Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster).

Goal Number One of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan (Enhanced Employer Engagement and Alignment with Industry Needs) is to partner with business and industry to develop career technical education programs that provide CTHSS students with the skills and work habits to be successful in a dynamic 21<sup>st</sup> Century work environment. The Framework for Success 1.3 is to develop a clearly articulated trade/technology review process.

The Culinary Arts and Guest Services Cluster, the Human Services Cluster and the Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster is scheduled for reauthorization for the period, 2017-2022. On January 13, 2017, the Quality and Policy Subcommittee recommended approval of the Trade Reauthorization of the Culinary Arts and Guest Services Cluster, the Human Services Cluster and the Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster.

Superintendent Torres introduced Education Consultants Mr. Raasumaa and Ms. Heidi Griffen who presented the Trade Reauthorization of the Culinary Arts and Guest Services Cluster, the Human Services Cluster and the Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster. The presentation included the comprehensive process involved to develop the Trade Reauthorization by incorporating input from business and industry and input from internal and external stakeholders. The presentation also included an in-depth description of each of these trade technologies, anticipated changes, along with Department of Labor projections and wages, and graduate follow-up survey results. Mr. Raasumaa and Ms. Griffen also presented a PowerPoint presentation and shared student workforce brochures with the Board members. Mr. Raasumaa and Ms. Griffen called special attention to data and facts about millennials who make up 25% of the US population and 21% of discretionary purchases.

Mr. Raasumaa provided an overview of the Culinary Arts and Guest Services Cluster. On page seven of the report, Board members were asked to note a correction--bullet number nine has been removed. Mr. Raasumaa reported that Connecticut continues to see growth in this area.

Ms. Griffen provided an overview of the Human Services and Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster and how reported that Connecticut continues to see growth in this area.

Mr. Trefry noted that there was great discussion at the Quality and Policy Subcommittee meeting and most of the discussion and questions were incorporated into today's report. One of the interesting parts of the discussion during the subcommittee meeting was the small business management aspect and how the principals apply this concept to other trade areas.

Mr. Trefry asked Ms. Griffen to speak to the living wages. Mr. Trefry commented on how reinforcing the numbers are of students who graduate that are going into the same field. The Board members were very excited to hear that CTHSS culinary students will be able to have the nationally recognized ACF credential.

Mr. Barrasso moved, Ms. Eichstaedt seconded, that the CTHSS Board approve of the reauthorization of the following trades:

The Culinary Arts & Guest Services Cluster  
Culinary Arts  
Guest Services Management

The Human Services Cluster  
Hairdressing and Cosmetology

Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster  
Marketing, Management and Entrepreneurship

and directs the Superintendent of Schools to take the necessary action.

Vote: In Favor: Trefry, Keavney, Barrasso, Chiarella, De Filippis, DiPentima, Eichstaedt, Hoecklin, Smith  
Opposed: 0  
Abstained: 0  
Absent: Jackson, Walker

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board members expressed their appreciation for all of the hard work that went into the report.

A copy of the Trade Reauthorization Report, PowerPoint presentation and student workforce brochures are included in the official file of this meeting.

**B. Aviation Tuition Rate**

The Aviation Tuition Rate was discussed at the January 17, 2017 Outreach and Finance Subcommittee meeting and the Committee recommended approval of the current tuition rate of \$6,576.

The Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) currently operates two (2) aviation maintenance technician programs. The Stratford School for Aviation Maintenance Technicians is located on the grounds of Sikorsky Memorial Airport in Stratford, CT and serves approximately 50 adult students. The Connecticut Aero Tech School is located on the grounds of Brainard Airport in Hartford, CT and also serves approximately 50 adult students.

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. James Chasse, Education Consultant to the Committee members. In August, 2016, the CTHSS Board approved a tuition increase to approximately \$26,000 for the new cohort that is scheduled to start in March 2017 for the two aviation programs. Due to the off cycle of two major employers and the tuition increase, there is only interest from one to two students from each of the programs; therefore it is requested the Committee consider a continuation of the current tuition rate of \$6576 for the new cohort scheduled to begin in March 2017. On February 8, 2017, the Governor's proposed capital budgets for the next two years will be released at which time the Board members will be updated on what effect this will have and what program adjustments will be needed.

Mr. Barrasso reminded the Committee members that DOL Commissioner Jackson has received a federal grant in excess of \$1 Million to potentially offset a portion of the tuition costs of the aviation program. Details are being finalized with the companies who will be taking part in receiving the grant funding.

Mr. Trefry reminded the Committee members that the Board approved the submission of a legislative proposal to the General Assembly to authorize the aviation program at two sites as a postsecondary program and approval is pending. This would solidify a relationship with the US Department of Education and allow students financial aid in the form of a Pell Grant.

Superintendent Torres added that as she shared with the Subcommittee on Outreach and Finance that CTHSS needs more time to create a go-to marketing strategy. To date, the CTHSS has not focused efforts on the schools of aviation rather on the 9-12 programs and creating recognition for these. In the summary, Mr. Chasse has

clarified because of the savings from unfilled positions, the current operating budget for this fiscal year can continue to support the program.

Superintendent Torres responded to questions the Board members raised about the tuition rate. Superintendent Torres informed the Board members that she is having initial conversations with OPM on how our partners can help subsidize the aviation program and continue to help train students.

A motion was called at this time.

Mr. Barrasso moved, Ms. Eichstaedt seconded, that the CTHSS Board approve the continuation of the current tuition rate of \$6,576 payable over three installments for the Aviation Maintenance Technician Program effective for the new cohort scheduled to begin in March 2017.

Vote: In Favor:	Trefry, Keavney, Barrasso, Chiarella, De Filippis, DiPentima, Eichstaedt, Hoecklin, Smith
Opposed:	0
Abstained:	0
Absent:	Jackson, Walker

A copy of the report entitled "Continuation of Current Tuition Rate for the Aviation Maintenance Technician Program" is included in the official file of this meeting.

## **VII. Items for Discussion**

### **A. Budget Update**

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Chasse who provided an update on latest information impacting the district's operating budget for fiscal year 2016-17. The district continues to pursue the refill of critical instructional and operational positions.

Mr. Chasse provided a breakdown of the current vacant positions. The latest projections assume that 36 full-time positions approved for refill by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) will be filled by January 20, 2017. The projections also assume an additional 50 full-time time general fund positions (including two durationals) currently awaiting approval to post will be filled by February 3, 2017.

The fiscal year 2016-17 revised budget is \$158,466,509. There is currently a \$500,000 reserve for emergency building repairs in the event that additional bonding is not approved before June 30, 2017 to ensure funding is available in the event of unforeseen winter weather costs due to maintenance vacancies. The projected surplus is subject to change as a result of ongoing collective bargaining negotiations between the State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) and the State of Connecticut. Further rescission actions that might be taken during the 2016-17 fiscal year will greatly impact strategic planning efforts and require further programmatic reductions.

The district continues to experience an increase in overtime costs primarily driven by the delay in refilling maintenance positions. While savings in the full-time payroll line item is being achieved, overtime costs as a stand-alone budget line item are increasing. While progress was made in reducing the number of maintenance vacancies in fiscal year 2015-16, several retirements and separations from state service during the current fiscal year have resulted in further increases in the vacancy count. It is very unlikely that the desired goal of a ten percent reduction (10%) in overtime costs for fiscal year 2016-17 will be achieved as a result of the increase in the maintenance vacancy count and continued delays in the timely refill of these positions. Dr. Torres continues to advocate for the timely refill of these positions.

The Governor is expected to release his Recommended State Operating and Capital Budgets for Fiscal Years 2017-18 and 2018-19 in early February, next month's report should include some highlights of his recommendations.

The district continues to pursue two critical bond allocations. A request for \$2,575,000 for various infrastructure repairs was submitted to the Department of Administrative Services - Construction Services for forwarding to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) in October 2016 and awaits State Bond Commission consideration. An additional request for \$2,500,000 for classroom and networking technology equipment was submitted to the State Department of Education for forwarding to OPM.

Superintendent Torres noted that the CTHSS continues to be fiscally responsible especially with the two established reserves--one for building emergency repairs and one for the advanced degree stipend. The Superintendent also shared that she has been having conversations with the Deputy Secretary of OPM regarding positions and overtime analysis and brought to OPM's attention the significant impact to the CTHSS operating budget and overtime goal as a result of not filling those maintenance positions. OPM continues to work with the CTHSS regarding the refill of these positions.

Mr. Barrasso pointed out to the Board members and acknowledged that the overtime goal could not be achieved without the immediate refill of critical maintenance positions.

A copy of the Budget report is included in the official file of this meeting.

## **B. CTHSS Student Profile: Employability Assessment**

College and Career Readiness, Page 24 and 25 of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan states: Beyond demonstrating mastery of core academic skills and knowledge in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, the district has identified target indicators as measures of career readiness and preparation. The target indicators represent a progression of career-related experiences and performances in subject areas over the course of a student's career in the CTHSS. Life Ready – work ready, job ready, career ready and college ready.

Superintendent Torres introduced Dr. Nikitoula Menounos, Principal of Norwich Technical High School and Mr. Mark Ambruso, Principal of Windham Technical high School to the Board members. Superintendent Torres asked Dr. Menounos and Mr. Ambruso to present on their school's student portfolio requirements calling attention to the CTHSS Student Profile work-ready quadrant.

Dr. Menounos and Mr. Ambruso shared both hard copy and digital examples that contribute to student portfolios including model components of student work during a four year period. Components of student portfolios include: Introduction, Table of Contents, Cover Letter, Resume, References, Personal Data Sheet, Trade Checklist, Samples of Trade Excellence and Projects, Standardized Trade Assessment Scores, Certifications, Senior Essay, Unofficial Transcript, Optional Pages, and Portfolio Review Presentation.

Dr. Menounos and Mr. Ambruso responded to questions the Board members raised including: clarification of how going through this process helps students as they look and/or begin their job. Overall, the Board members were very impressed with how the schools can achieve the same goal with different processes.

A copy of their Senior Portfolio PowerPoint Presentation is included in the official file of this meeting. Handouts that Dr. Menounos provided will be mailed to the Board members participating via the telephone.

**VIII. Report of the Chair**

**A. SBE Update**

The National School Board Association will be holding their national meeting in two weeks in Washington DC. Mr. Trefry plans to attend and will report back at the next meeting.

**IX. Committee Reports**

**A. Quality and Policy**

The Quality and Policy subcommittee met on January 13, 2017. The Committee members received a presentation on the trade reauthorization of the Culinary Arts and Guest Services Cluster, the Human Services Cluster and the Marketing, Sales and Service Cluster and voted recommending approval to the CTHSS the reauthorization of the clusters for the period 2017-2022.

**B. Outreach and Finance**

The Outreach and Finance subcommittee met on January 17, 2017, just prior to today's Board meeting. The Committee members received an update on the budget, discussed the Aviation Tuition Rate and recommended approval of the continuation of the current tuition rate of \$6,576 payable over three installments for the Aviation Maintenance Technician Program effective for the new cohort scheduled to begin in March 2017. The Committee also received an update on the CTHSS Outreach efforts. Over the past three years, the CTHSS has had a retainer with a marketing partner and during the 2014-15 school year the CTHSS invested approximately \$2.5 million dollars which included launching websites for 20 schools, a complete overhaul of marketing strategies, signage, and advertising. During the 2015-16 school year, over one million was expended on marketing, and for 2016-17 so far the CTHSS has expended approximately \$200,000. The committee agreed that the funding expended on the CTHSS marketing campaign has been money well spent on the investment. Marketing efforts are greatly needed and the Board is seeing the results of the campaign. Superintendent Torres was commended on her efforts.

**X. Public Participation**

Mr. Paul Angellucci, Vice President of the SVFT spoke on behalf of the teachers and the importance of re-filling of teacher positions. Mr. Angellucci thanked the Superintendent for her advocacy efforts.

**XI. Adjourn**

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:12PM

*Diane Curtis*

Prepared by:

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