

# CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

## Draft Minutes of Meeting

December 17, 2013

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereinafter "Board") met via teleconference.

### I. Call to Order

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

Present: Robert Trefry, Chairperson  
Joseph J. Vrabely Jr., Vice Chairperson  
John Barrasso  
Stephan Bundschu  
Patricia Keavney-Maruca  
Matthew Nemerson  
Sharon Palmer  
\*Catherine Smith  
Fitz Walker

Absent:

### II. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

### III. Consent Agenda

#### A. Background Checks for Adult LPN Programs

Interim Superintendent Torres reported that the Quality and Policy Sub Committee discussed and recommended approval of Background Checks for Adult LPN Programs at their December 16, 2013 meeting. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all patients, background checks are becoming a standard requirement for employment in the health care field. Clinical placements for students are requiring that students have background checks in order for them to participate in clinical.

Ms. Keavney-Maruca moved, Mr. Barrasso seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent Agenda Item: III.A. Background Checks for Adult LPN Programs.

**Resolved**, That the State Connecticut Technical High School System Board approves the Proposed Background Check Contract as recommended by the Quality and Policy

Committee and directs the Interim Superintendent to take the necessary action.

Vote: In Favor: Barrasso, Bundschu, Keavney-Maruca, Nemerson, Palmer, Smith,  
Trefry, Vrabely, Walker  
Opposed: 0  
Abstained: 0  
Absent: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the executive summary is included in the official file of this meeting.

#### **IV. Executive Session**

The Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the appointment of an Assistant Superintendent, a pending litigation, and the Superintendent search. Present in Executive Session were Mr. Trefry, Mr. Barrasso, Mr. Bundschu, Mrs. Keavney-Maruca, Mr. Nemerson, Commissioner Palmer, Mr. Vrabely, Mr. Walker, Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Pryor, Interim Superintendent Torres. During the pending litigation Ms. Karen Zimmerman and Bea Tinty joined the call. Interim Superintendent Torres left executive session during the discussion on the superintendent search.

On a motion by Mr. Vrabely, seconded by Mr. Bundschu, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene in Public Session at 2:30 p.m., and to consider a motion at this time to vote on the recommendation to the CTHSS Board a candidate for appointment as Assistant Superintendent.

#### **Recommendation to the CTHSS Board Concerning a Candidate for Appointment as Assistant Superintendent**

On a motion by Mr. Barrasso, seconded by Ms. Keavney-Maruca moved, the CTHSS Board and the Commissioner of Education, support the appointment of Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, Assistant Superintendent of the Connecticut Technical High School System, effective January, 2014.

Vote: In Favor: Barrasso, Bundschu, Keavney-Maruca, Nemerson, Palmer, Trefry, Vrabely,  
Walker  
Opposed: 0  
Abstained: 0  
Absent: Smith

Motion carried unanimously.

\*Commissioner Smith left the meeting from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm.

## **V. Consideration of Minutes**

The board voted unanimously that the minutes of the November 19, 2013 meeting be approved.

Vote: In Favor: Barrasso, Bundschu, Keavney-Maruca, Nemerson, Palmer, Trefry, Vrabely, Walker  
Opposed: 0  
Abstained: 0  
Absent: Smith

Motion carried unanimously.

## **VI. Report of the Interim Superintendent**

Interim Superintendent Torres reported on the following:

### **Meeting with Secretary Benjamin Barnes – Automatic Refill- January 6, 2014**

A meeting has been scheduled with Secretary Barnes, Commissioner Pryor, Interim Superintendent Torres and Chairman Trefry on January 6, 2014 to discuss Automatic Refill for instructional, administrative, and health and safety positions to ensure that the teaching and learning of our over 11,000 student population along with the normal day to day operations of the school district can operate at the highest level of performance.

### **J.M. Wright Technical High School Principal**

A second round of interviews were held on December 16, 2013 with the two final candidates. A decision will be made shortly.

### **Strategic Planning Focus Groups**

Four focus group meetings were held on December 16, 2013. Interim Superintendent Torres thanked her staff and district leaders who helped facilitate the meetings. Present were Principals, Assistant Principals, Central Office Consultants, business and industry leaders and parents.

### **Grasso Welding Program**

The Grasso Welding Program project continues to move along. Specs are being created for a fume extraction system, fire prevention system, electrical wiring and plumbing of welding gases. Mr. Murphy is working closely with Electric Boat the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (WIB), representatives from Quinebaug Valley Community College, Three Rivers Community College, and the Regional manufacturing group. The bidding process will take nine months to a year and the Work Force Investment Board is in full support of this time line.

### **Interim Superintendent's Goals**

Interim Superintendent Torres presented her goals and objectives for the 2013-14 school-year which included teaching and learning, organizational systems and safety, families and stakeholders. Interim Superintendent Torres gave a description of each objective. The work of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Board of Regents will be added to her objective under families and stakeholders.

### **Board of Regents**

Relations continue and we are pleased how that is evolving. The next item is to develop a working group as a result of the memorandum of understanding and determine strategies and what grades 9-14 look like in terms of J.M. Wright.

### **Joint Standing Committees**

Interim Superintendent Torres reported she will be attending a hearing at the legislative office building on Thursday, December 19, 2013 regarding the report the CTHSS submits annually to the

General Assembly entitled “Assuring Connecticut’s success: A summary of Current Practices, Conditions and Forcasts in Technical Education at the CTHSS”.

**VII. Items Requiring Action**

**A. Budget Expansion Items for Fiscal Year 2015**

The budget expansion items for fiscal year 2015 were discussed at the Finance and Facilities Sub Committee meeting and approval was recommended to the CTHSS Board. The CTHSS recognizes the state’s current fiscal situation and hence has put forth what Dr. Torres feels a sound budget expansion request of 2% increase over the current FY operating budget. The areas included are Health and Safety and pertain to concerns the CTHSS has been raising with the CTHSS board for the past year. There have been no new programs requested. This budget expansion request is too maintain current operations and instructional services and comply with both federal and state requirements.

Mr. Barrasso moved, Ms. Keavney-Maruca seconded, that the Board approve the proposed expansion items for fiscal year 2015 as recommended by the Finance and Facilities Sub Committee.

Vote:	In Favor:	Barrasso, Bundschu, Keavney-Maruca, Nemerson, Palmer, Trefry, Vrabely, Walker
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Smith

Motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the executive summary is included in the official file of this meeting.

**VIII. Items for Discussion**

**A. Strategic Plan Update**

Mr. Trefry thanked Thomas P. Miller (TPM) and Associates for joining us today and providing an update to the CTHSS Board. TPM presented to the Board where they are in the strategic planning process, the areas of focus, and a snapshot analysis of both the Connecticut Labor market and CTHSS data leading toward a better understanding of the CTHSS trade cluster alignment with the Connecticut’s labor market needs.

The next step of the alignment process is determining the primary areas of focus for the foundation of the CTHSS Strategic Plan while keeping in mind the key benchmarks of the national and international models. TPM presented areas of focus which were derived from interviews, focus groups and best practice research including: Interviews with each CTHSS board members; interviews with over 25 additional individuals including education consultants, union representatives, employers and members of higher education; focus groups with students and teachers; and national and international best practice research.

The areas of focus points for discussion are:

1. Clarity, Consistence and Collaboration
2. Alignment of Trades with Industry Needs
3. Enhanced Employer Engagement
4. Alignment of K-12, Post-Secondary, and Adult Systems and
5. Flexibility, Responsiveness and Innovation

The Board members discussed key assets and challenges facing the system, began to identify which challenges are the most important to overcome and discussed and identified potential priorities for the CTHSS.

Commissioner Smith indicated that emerging employment areas include: green technology, digital media, health care, finance, manufacturing, and tourism and hospitality. Interim Superintendent Torres agreed.

Next Steps include sending board members a revised Focus Area document for the board's review.

A copy of the Thomas P. Miller and Associates presentation is included in the official file of this meeting.

## **IX. Report of the Chair**

There was no report of the Chair

## **X. Committee Reports**

### **A. Quality and Policy**

Ms. Keavney reported that the committee met on Monday, December 16, 2013 and discussed the SHEFF initiative, Project Lead the Way and why this program would not be suitable for the CTHSS. The committee recommended approval of the background checks for adult LPN programs and Mr. Bundschu presented information regarding the Skills Initiative Roadshow sponsored by the German Embassy. The purpose of the Skills Initiative Roadshow is to establish a dialogue regarding the German dual workforce training program. The SDE and CTHSS are interested in a partnership with the German Embassy to explore international career and technical education model.

### **B. Finance and Facilities**

Mr. Barrasso reported that the committee met on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 and discussed CTHSS inventory and the WFSB-3 news story entitled "You Bought It, They Lost It" regarding missing or lost inventory in the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) and how important points made in the story of critical information were omitted. Interim Superintendent clarified original cost values and the book values for Platt THS and Vinal THS for items not found during the official inventory at these facilities. The Committee also discussed and recommended approval of the budget expansion items for 2014-15.

### **C. Outreach & Stakeholder Partnerships**

Mr. Vrabely reported that the committee met on December 17, 2013 with the strategic planning firm, Thomas P. Miller and Associates. The present plan is to use the Outreach and Stakeholder Partnerships Sub Committee as a working group to flesh out ideas and

prioritize goals and strategies. The Committee discussed key assets and challenges facing the system, began to identify which challenges are the most important to overcome and discussed and identified potential priorities, and went over five areas of focus points.

**XI. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**XII. Adjourn**

The Board adjourned its meeting at 4:00 PM

*Diane Curtis*

Prepared by:

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Diane M. Curtis, Administrative Assistant