

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD
Draft Minutes
of
Meeting

April 16, 2013

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereinafter "Board") met on April 16, 2013, in Room 307A of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Trefry called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m.

Present: Robert Trefry, Chairperson
Joseph J. Vrabely Jr., Vice Chairperson
Patricia Keavney-Maruca
Dr. Lillian Ortiz
Sharon Palmer
*Catherine Smith
Fitz G. Walker Jr.

Absent: John Barrasso
Stephan Bundschu
Susan Davis
Matthew Nemerson

II. Public Participation

No one from the public addressed the Board.

III. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

[*Commissioner Smith arrived at 1:50 p.m.]

IV. Consideration of Minutes

Commissioner Smith moved, Dr. Ortiz seconded, that the Board approve the Minutes of the March 19, 2013, meeting of the Board.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

The board considered agenda item VIII, Report of the Superintendent, at this time.

VIII. Report of the Superintendent

Interim Superintendent Torres reported on the following:

J.M. Wright Technical High School - Interim Superintendent reported that the J. M. Wright project remains on schedule and will open in August 2014. She has had positive conversations with Stamford Public Schools Superintendent Winnie Hamilton and a recruitment plan should be finalized before the end of this school year which will actively recruit eighth graders for Fall 2014. Interim Superintendent Torres is also working with Norwalk Community College President Dr. David Levinson in creating a grade 9-14 pathway for students. Interim Superintendent Torres noted that she is hopeful that the initial hiring of J.M. Wright key staff can be completed by the fall of 2013, specifically a principal, building maintenance, guidance and clerical staff. Interim Superintendent Torres reported a school advisory committee is being formed including individuals well known and committed to the J.M. Wright THS project. Interim Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Al Sanseverino to the board members. Mr. Sanseverino, a lifelong resident of Stamford and 2007 Stamford citizen of the year, was part of the original J.M. Wright THS Ad Hoc Committee and will be serving on the advisory committee. Mr. Sanseverino spoke to the board about Fairfield County and the need for J.M. Wright THS to open with a new image. He thanked everyone for inviting him. The Board members thanked Mr. Sanseverino for sharing the enthusiasm from the community.

Ms. Keavney-Maruca moved, Commissioner Smith seconded, that the Board add to the agenda item V.C., Formation of an Advisory Committee for J.M. Wright Technical High School.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Items Requiring Action

C. J.M. Wright Technical High School Advisory Committee

Ms. Keavney-Maruca moved, Commissioner Smith seconded, that the Board form the J.M. Wright Technical High School Advisory Committee.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Trefry stated that this advisory committee would (1) act in an advisory capacity to the CTHSS Board and administration on the reopening of the J.M. Wright Technical High School in Stamford, (2) serve as ambassadors to the community for J.M. Wright THS, and (3) assist in establishing relationships between J.M. Wright THS and the business community for work-based learning opportunities.

A. 2013-14 Healthy Food Certification Statement

Interim Superintendent Torres introduced Marc Hussey, Education Consultant for the Culinary/Tourism, Hospitality Guest Management Trade Technologies and Katherine Atkinson, Consultant for the School Nutrition and School Meals to the Board members. Interim Superintendent Torres reported that on April 9, 2013, the Finance and Facilities Committee members voted unanimously to recommend approval to the CTHSS Board that the district not participate in the Healthy Food Certification for the 2013-14 school year and requested the board's support in opting out of the Healthy Food Certification Program.

Because of the efforts and the reasons outlined previously, the CTHSS requests the board's full support for the following reasons:

The CTHSS has opted not to participate in the past primarily due to the financial impact of the decision. While the district would receive approximately \$90,000 in the new revenue based on \$.10 per meal, the increased costs to the district to ensure compliance surpassed the additional revenue that would have been earned. Costs are two-fold—higher food costs for healthier products and increased staffing requirements.

The Connecticut State Department of Education Office of Child Nutrition recently conducted an audit of the central office program and noted that it is understaffed for a school district of its size and the current staffing is insufficient to take on additional responsibilities.

Since 2006 the district has made a concerted effort in serving more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains while decreasing saturated fat, trans fats and sodium in school meals in order to align with the dietary guidelines for Americans and comply with the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010.

Interim Superintendent called to the Board's attention the timelines of these efforts in their packets.

Mr. Hussey and Ms. Atkinson responded to questions raised by the board members specific to costs and maintaining the current standard for healthy food choices.

Commissioner Palmer moved, Ms. Keavney-Maruca seconded, that the Board pursuant to Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes, recommends to the State Board of Education that the CTHSS not participate in the Healthy Food Certification for the 2013-2014 school year.

Commissioner Palmer moved, Ms. Keavney-Maruca seconded, that the resolution be amended by adding the following phrase after the words "school year,": *although it will continue to maintain current Federal nutritional standards in its school meals and a la carte options.*

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

Motion to amend carried unanimously.

Vote on Motion, as Amended:	In Favor:	Keavney-Maruca, Ortiz, Palmer, Smith, Trefry, Vrabely, Walker
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Barrasso, Bundschu, Davis, Nemerson

Motion as amended carried unanimously.

A copy of the 2013-14 Healthy Food Certification Statement is included in the official file of this meeting.

B. Rolling Capital Improvement and Capital Equipment Plan 2014-2018

Interim Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. James Chasse, Fiscal Consultant to the Board. Interim Superintendent Torres reported that on April 9, 2013, the Finance and Facilities Committee members voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Rolling Capital Equipment Plan 2014-2018 to the CTHSS Board.

Interim Superintendent Torres reviewed the district's statutorily required Rolling Capital Plan for fiscal year's 2014-2018 with the committee. The plan requests \$72 million in capital funding in support of attractive, safe, and well maintained facilities and up-to-date equipment conducive to teaching and learning. The requested \$72 million is divided into six categories, trade/academic equipment, expansion of manufacturing, J.M. Wright equipment, infrastructure, technology and vehicles. Interim Superintendent Torres asked the board to note that once the district completes its new five year Strategic Plan and the CTHSS board has finalized its own environmental assessment, new or revised capital funding priorities may be identified. In the interim, the district submitted its Capital Budget request for FY 2014 and FY 2015 to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) last fall. The Governor's Recommended Capital Budget for the biennium supports the CTHSS request for \$28 million in FY 2014 and \$15.5 million in FY 2015. Interim Superintendent Torres also noted that the ability to accurately project trade and academic equipment needs five years out is extremely difficult given the rapid changes in technology and educational reform efforts.

Mr. Chasse and Interim Superintendent Torres responded to questions the board members raised specific to health and safety immediate needs, NEASC and the flexibility of re-allocating funds for future expansion. Interim Superintendent Torres asked for the board's approval of the district's five year rolling capital plan.

Commissioner Smith moved, Commissioner Palmer seconded, that the committee pursuant to Section 10-215b of the Connecticut General Statutes, agrees to recommend to the State Board of Education the approval of the Connecticut Technical High School System's Rolling Capital Improvement and Capital Equipment Plan 2014-2018.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Rolling Capital Equipment Plan 2014-2018 is included in the official file of this meeting.

VI. Items for Discussion

A. Update on the Connecticut Technical High School System Budget

Interim Superintendent Torres and James Chasse, Fiscal Office, Education Consultant, reported on the status of the CTHSS budget. The fiscal year 2013 operating budget for the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) was \$134.8M prior to several budgetary reductions. As a result of these reductions - totaling more than \$2.8M for the current fiscal year 2013, the CTHSS was asked to develop a deficit mitigation plan to reduce its proposed spending levels. The plan included the suspension of the NOCTI testing for the 2012-13 school year, delayed implementation of environmental permitting, and elimination of funding targeted for facilities maintenance repairs. In addition, the district has maintained a vacancy count of 40-45 full-time and 20-25 part-time positions throughout the fiscal year that has further reduced the district's projected expenditure levels.

The CTHSS is currently projecting total expenditures of \$132.9M resulting in a projected deficit of approximately \$800,000. Interim Superintendent Torres continues to discuss the district's financial status with agency leaders along with exploring a variety of contingency plans. The board was assured that this will not negatively impact student services. The 22 health and safety positions now have been formally approved and she is working on hiring qualified applicants. Mr. Trefry thanked both Commissioner Pryor and Interim Superintendent for getting these positions approved.

Interim Superintendent Torres and James Chasse responded to questions the board members raised such as accepting credit cards for tuition payments. Mr. Trefry requested that staff look further into this.

B. CTHSS Manufacturing Strategy

Superintendent Torres introduced John Murphy, CTHSS Manufacturing Consultant, to the board members. Mr. Murphy distributed packets to the board members which included:

- CTHSS Manufacturing Cluster Presentation “Responding to the current and emerging needs of Connecticut’s manufacturing industry”;
- Locations of CTHSS manufacturing cluster programs currently around the state;
- Senior portfolio performance skills checks for manufacturing, CADD, welding & metal fabrication;
- List of National Institute of Metal working Skills (NIMS) credentials and the CTHSS NIMS process;
- List of American Welding Society (AWS) certifications our students can achieve; and
- Plan to update and replace Manufacturing Technology equipment.

Mr. Murphy elaborated on key points from the CTHSS’ report on “Responding to the current and emerging needs of Connecticut’s manufacturing industry” and responded to comments and questions Board Members raised about Precision Manufacturing Technology.

A copy of the handouts are included in the official file of this meeting.

Mr. Trefry requested that by the next CTHSS Board meeting a short- and long-term action plan be developed with attention focused on adult programming in Welding at Groton. In addition, he requested a *Dream It Do It* representative come and talk to the board about connections with middle school students at the June meeting.

VII. Report of the Chair

Chairman Trefry reported that he attended the student congress meeting held on April 9, 2013, at E.C. Goodwin Technical High School in New Britain. He noted that the students are very articulate and serve as great ambassadors.

Mr. Trefry stated that national and international speakers will present to the Board on current trends in career and technical education at the next CTHSS Board meeting, to be held at E.C. Goodwin Technical High School.

VIII. Report of the Interim Superintendent - Continued

Interim Superintendent Torres announced the following events:

- Ella T. Grasso Southeastern Technical High School in Groton is opening its E-house and is holding a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 24, 2013 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Board members are invited to attend.

- A.I. Prince Technical High School in Hartford is honoring Outstanding Young Women 2013 on Thursday, April 25, 2013. Dr. Lillian Ortiz is the key note speaker at this celebration.
- Vinal Technical High School in Middletown will be holding its Spring Family Engagement Regional Meeting on May 8, 2013, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

IX. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

X. Consent Agenda

There were no items on the consent agenda.

XI. Public Participation

No one from the public addressed the Board.

XII. Adjourn

By unanimous consent, the Board adjourned its meeting at 3:37 p.m.

Prepared by: *Diane Curtis*
Diane M. Curtis, Administrative Assistant